

Fit Happens! Don't just do it. First - DREAM IT!

The Fitness That Works Program is meant to reinforce participation in a regularly physically active lifestyle. We are all aware that regular physical activity (PA) is important. Until a few generations ago, PA was an automatic part of almost everyone's daily life. However, in our current modern, high-tech world we can get through our normal day without having to do much, if any PA. It has become necessary to make a commitment to moving more and sitting less in order to get the minimal amount of PA that is required for promoting our health and well-being.

Before you lace up your sneakers, take some time to put on your thinking cap and create an action plan. Begin by establishing that becoming regularly physically active is important, really worth your valuable time and effort. If physical activity is perceived as just another responsibility that you must find the time to fit into your already very busy life, then regardless of how well organized your attempts are to change your sedentary lifestyle, success is unlikely.

Can you envision yourself living the dream?

What are a few of the specific ways that you could personally benefit by being involved in regular physical activity? Could you benefit by improving your physical capabilities? What could you do? Or do more easily? Could you benefit by improving your health, reducing your risk for disease or managing an existing condition better? Could you benefit by feeling better physically and/or psychologically? Could it assist with your attempts to manage your weight? Is setting an active example for family, friends, coworkers or patients important? Is the ability to age more effectively a priority? Do you need to prepare for an active event or just be conditioned to cope with the demands of your everyday life? Could physical activity be an opportunity to spend time with others? Could it be part of your attempt to deal with stress? Could a commitment to regular physical activity ultimately become a significant source of pleasure and satisfaction in your life?

Consider creating a compelling vision of your future active-self. Think about who you would like to become or what you want to be able to do and why that is important to you or others. What differences will this change make in your life or the lives of others? Reflect on the feelings, needs, values and desires that can help to motivate you and sustain your commitment as you develop your regularly active lifestyle. See if you can create powerful and palpable reasons why change is personally meaningful. Is it possible to develop a dream for your future you are so dedicated to, that you are willing to make sacrifices in order to achieve it?

Before you focus on changing your everyday actions in the present, take some time to dream about your future. Your practical boots on the ground efforts will be easier if they are seen as supporting useful purposes in the larger context of your life. What could a physically active lifestyle mean to you?

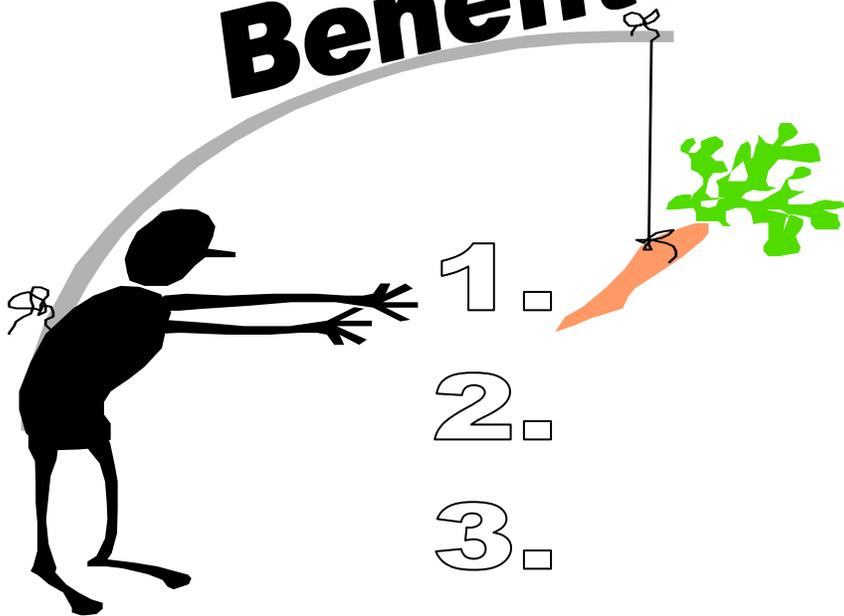
Assess your current situation. What are you already doing? What needs to be done? Come up with a realistic strategy that states exactly what you intend to do and when you are going to do it. Develop specific achievable weekly short term activity goals. Put your plan down on paper to increase the chance that you'll take the time necessary to really think things thru. Written goals also create greater accountability which increases the likelihood of you acting on your intentions. Continue to re-assess your plan on a weekly basis and make changes as necessary.

Focus on specific weekly short-term goals. They should be (1) **specific**; (2) **attainable** (doable); and (3) **forgiving** (less than perfect). "Exercise more" is a great goal, but it's not specific. "Walk 5 miles every day" is more specific and measurable, but is it doable? Not if you're just starting out. "Walk 10 minutes every day" is more attainable, but what happens if you have a schedule conflict on a particular day. "Walk 10 minutes, 5 days each week" is specific, doable, and forgiving. Shaping is a behavioral technique in which you select a series of short-term goals that get closer and closer to the ultimate goal. It is based on the concept that "nothing succeeds like success." No matter how small, start with a goal you know you can achieve if you make the commitment to do it. Scheduling 2 minute walks could be good start if are currently inactive. Some physical activity is better than none, and those who participate in any amount of regular physical activity gain some health benefits!

Here is a link with more ideas about leading a healthier lifestyle - [Changing Your Habits: Steps to Better Health](#)

Moving More & Sitting Less -

Benefits



What are a few of the specific ways that you could personally benefit by being involved in regular physical activity?

Could you benefit by improving your physical capabilities?
What could you do? Or do more easily?

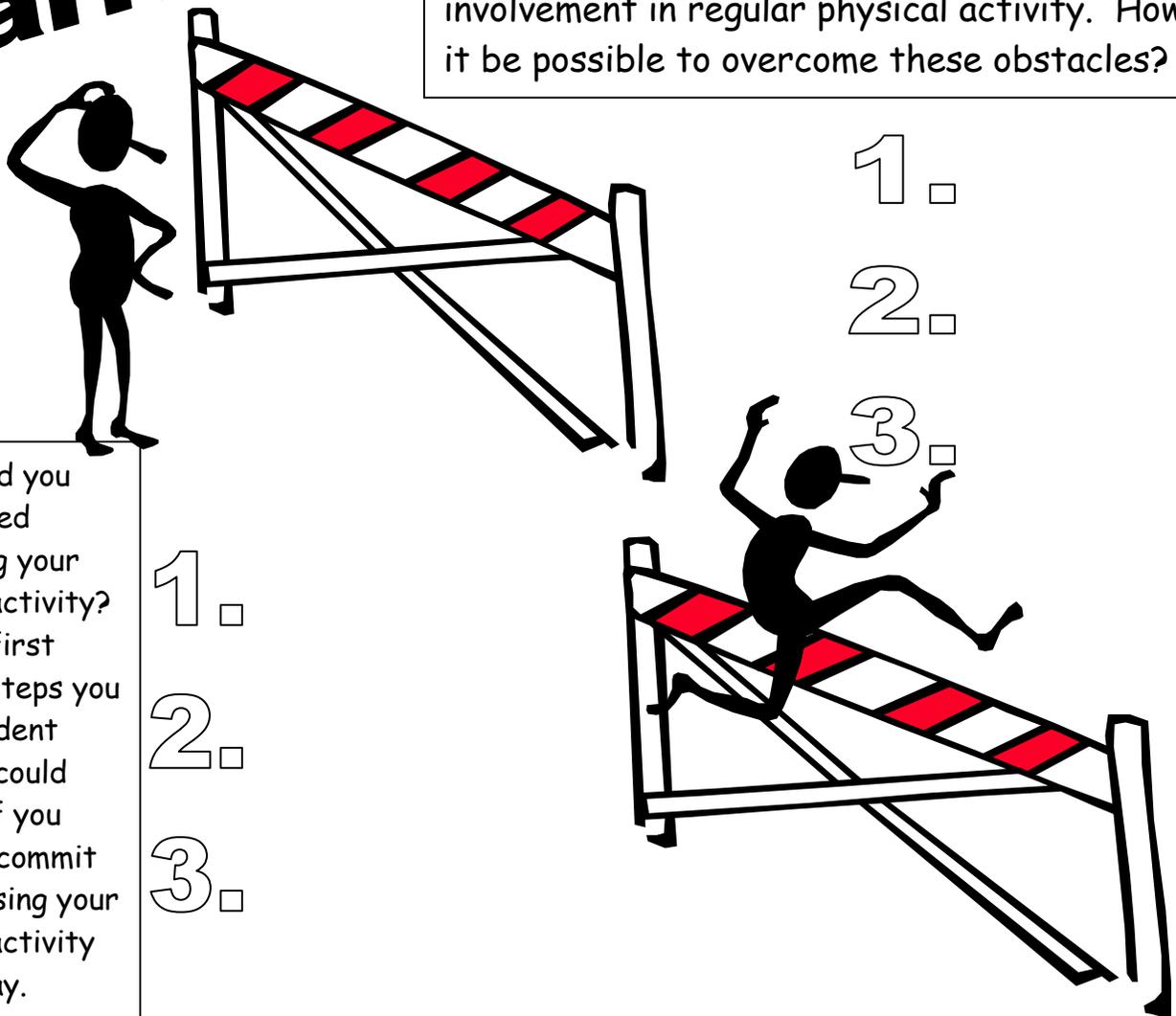
Could you benefit by feeling better physically and/or psychologically?

Could you benefit by improving your health, reducing your risk for disease or managing an existing condition better?

Could it be FUN?

Barriers

List your major barriers to increasing your involvement in regular physical activity. How might it be possible to overcome these obstacles?



How would you get started increasing your physical activity?
List the first specific steps you are confident that you could achieve if you chose to commit to increasing your physical activity level today.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.