

Lifestyle Coach Facilitation Guide: Post-Core

Staying on Top of Physical Activity

Content Overview

This session discusses barriers to physical activity and allows participants to brainstorm solutions to these barriers. It offers several suggestions for ways to be physically active indoors. Participants also learn ways to stay motivated. The session concludes with a description of the many benefits of physical activity.

Lifestyle Coach Preparation Checklist

Materials

- Post-core handouts:
 - The Inside Scoop on Inside Activities
 - Other Barriers to Physical Activity (4)
 - Staying Motivated, Staying Active
 - Health Benefits of Physical Activity (2)
- “Food and Activity Trackers”
- “Lifestyle Coach’s Log”
- Balance scale

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Key messages to reinforce

- Consider the wide range of indoor activities when determining where and when to be active.
- Identifying what barriers to physical activity you face can help you begin to plan strategies to overcome them.
- Lack of motivation is often the largest barrier to staying physically active. There are many ways to get, and stay, motivated.
- The health benefits of physical activity are numerous, and include both short-term and long-term benefits.

After the session

At the completion of this session, do the following:

- Use the “Notes and Homework Page” for notes and follow-up tasks.
- Distribute “Food and Activity Trackers” (4) for the following month.

Barriers to Physical Activity

Present: A barrier to physical activity is anything that stands in the way of you and activity. Time is often the number one barrier to physical activity. For example, you may find yourself saying “I really want to be physically active, but I just don’t have any time.”

Identifying the barriers that get in the way of your physical activity is an important way to start overcoming them. Take a look at what is preventing you from being active – is it too cold, too hot, or too dark? Do you not have anyone to be physically active with? Knowing what those barriers are can help you begin to plan strategies to work around them.

Ask: What kinds of barriers to physical activity have you encountered? How did you handle them?

In this session we will discuss some typical physical activity barriers and possible solutions – look for those that apply to you.



The Inside Scoop on Indoor Activities

When the weather is just too hot, too cold, or too wet, you may want to think about moving your activity plans indoors. There may also be other reasons for not wanting to go outside, such as concern for safety.

Ask: Can anyone give me an example of how you have been physically active when you could not or did not want to go outside?

Experiment with Indoor Activities	<p>In many areas, schools and colleges open their indoor tracks and other facilities to the public. Other choices may be shopping malls, community centers, or gyms with indoor walking areas.</p> <p>Try other indoor activities such as, indoor swimming, dancing, Zumba (Latin music and easy-to-follow dance moves), or salsa.</p> <p>Malls attract walkers because they are climate-controlled, have smooth floors, security, bathrooms, and easy parking. Many malls can provide maps to give you an idea of distance covered.</p>
Consider Joining a Gym or Fitness Facility	<p>Fitness centers and gyms have treadmills and some have tracks for indoor walking. These places usually offer televisions to watch or music to listen to while you walk.</p> <p>Many gyms and fitness facilities offer short-term (usually one week) trial memberships. Take advantage of these offers in order to try out the equipment and classes.</p>
Check out DVDs, Videos, Cable TV	<p>DVDs and videos for physical activity are often available at your local video rental store, on-line, or at the local public library.</p> <p>Many cable companies have fitness programs that you can use whenever it's convenient.</p> <p>Remember that many of these items vary in intensity and ability level, so it is important that you choose one that is appropriate for you.</p>

Ask: What are some new activities you might like to try?



Other Barriers to Physical Activity

BARRIER	ALTERNATIVES AND SOLUTIONS
<p>I HATE to do physical activity!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Talk to former exercise “haters” – find out what finally worked for them and how they overcame their hurdle. ✓ Try an activity that you have never done before, such as dancing, water aerobics, or a new exercise video. ✓ Ask a friend to join you; support and companionship may make the experience more enjoyable. ✓ Listen to music while doing activity. ✓ Other ideas:
<p>I don't have enough TIME.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Break total physical activity time into multiple, shorter times throughout the day. For example, do two 15-minute sessions or three 10-minute sessions instead of one 30-minute session. You will burn the same number of calories and will receive some of the same health benefit from doing short bouts of physical activity as you would if you did one long routine. ✓ Multi-task other activities. For example, use an exercise bicycle while catching up on your favorite TV shows or take the dog for a walk. ✓ Other ideas:

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BARRIER	ALTERNATIVES AND SOLUTIONS
<p>I need leisure time to RELAX, not to do physical activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consider that physical activity actually helps with relaxation; it reduces tension and brings on feelings of relaxation. ✓ Many leisure activities are fun, relaxing, and still count as physical activity (for instance taking a walk or going for a swim). ✓ Other ideas:
<p>I don't have the WILLPOWER or ENERGY for physical activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Keep in mind that physical activity actually increases energy; many people report feeling more lively after being active. ✓ Focus on just getting started with an activity – starting up is the hardest part. Once you're going, "willpower" becomes much less of a problem. ✓ Other ideas:
<p>My SPOUSE/ FAMILY doesn't want to spend their leisure time being physically active.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Find activities that everyone likes, such as taking a walk outside, playing a game in a park, or even walking through the mall. ✓ Take some time for yourself - enjoy some "alone" time doing something that you like. ✓ Other ideas:

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BARRIER	ALTERNATIVES AND SOLUTIONS
<p>I think I'm too WEAK or OUT-OF-SHAPE to be physically active.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Start small – or even smaller. Walk to the mailbox and back; walk up a flight of stairs or to a neighbor's house. ✓ Walk with a friend who can offer support and encouragement. ✓ Remember, lifestyle change takes time – allow yourself to work up to your goals gradually and safely. ✓ Other ideas:
<p>I feel SELF-CONCIOUS or ASHAMED. People judge me and think I'm lazy or unattractive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Walk with a friend who can offer support and encouragement; the company may help you take your mind off of any feelings of self-consciousness. ✓ Choose a setting where you will feel more comfortable - outdoors at a park or at a local community center. ✓ Other ideas:
<p>I don't like to SWEAT.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Do your physical activity where no one can notice you are sweating, such as at home. ✓ Keep a towel handy to wipe off sweat as soon as it develops. ✓ Try to make a positive association with sweating – after all, it is a sign that you are burning calories. ✓ Remember that sweating is not dangerous; it is part of your body's natural response to exertion. ✓ Reward yourself with a nice shower or bath after physical activity. ✓ Other ideas:

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BARRIER	ALTERNATIVES AND SOLUTIONS
I don't have any PLACE to get physical activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Pick activities that you can do as part of your normal routine, such as an exercise video for your home, or walking around a shopping mall.✓ Explore local options - parks, recreation centers, and health facilities.✓ Other ideas:
I don't have CHILDCARE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ If your children are young, put them in a stroller and bring them along.✓ If your children are older, use at-home equipment (for instance a stationary bicycle or exercise video).✓ Combine your physical activity with something they like - such as a family bike ride.✓ Other ideas:



Staying Motivated, Staying Active

Present: Motivation is often the largest barrier to staying physically active. Having a lack of motivation is when you know you should be active, but you just can't get yourself to do something about it.

Ask: What are some ways that you stay motivated to be physically active?

Stay positive

Remind yourself of your past successes, and picture yourself being active for a lifetime.

Buddy up

Physical activity can be a lot more fun when you do it with others. Take a walk with a co-worker, your family, your dog, or a neighbor.

Be prepared

Today's high-tech, fast-paced lifestyle makes it easy to be inactive with conveniences such as remote controls, escalators, elevators, and "drive-thrus." Come up with ideas for adding steps to "walk around" such conveniences.

Keep track and look back

Keeping track of the physical activity you get each day will serve as motivation later. Look back to see how you've maintained or increased your activity each week.

Seek support

Check your local newspaper or search the internet for information on walking and hiking clubs in your area. Many places have group workouts tailored to certain interests (singles, families, older adults, etc.) that can keep you inspired and active.

Don't expect perfection

If you get off track, learn from your experience and find ways to deal with similar situations in the future. Know that you can always get back on track.

Keep things in perspective

Think of all the good things in your life, and try to maintain a positive attitude.

Note the benefits

Recognize the benefits you experience from your increased activity, such as more energy, a more positive outlook, or a slimmer waistline. When the going gets tough, refocus on these benefits.



Health Benefits of Physical Activity

Present: We have all heard that physical activity is good for us – but have you ever sat down and thought of all of the reasons *why*?

Ask: Can anyone tell me what some of the health benefits of physical activity are?

- **Lower blood glucose and reduced risk of type 2 diabetes**
Physical activity is a powerful weapon against high blood glucose levels. Your blood glucose can stay lower for hours, even a day or more, after you are physically active. Why? Being active uses energy, which your body gets from glucose in your blood.
- **Weight control**
Physical activity burns calories. The more physically active you are, the greater your ability to achieve and maintain a healthy weight.
- **More energy**
The more physical activity you get, the better you feel. Physically active people report having more energy for work and play than inactive people.
- **Enhanced mental alertness**
Studies show that physically active people have better memory, reaction time, and concentration.
- **Less stress and anxiety**
Most people report feeling calm and relaxed for one to two hours following a brisk walk. Hormones and chemicals that build up during high-stress periods decrease when you are active.
- **Better heart health**
Physical activity can help lower blood pressure and total cholesterol in the bloodstream. It can also raise HDL (“good”) cholesterol, which lowers your risk for heart disease.
- **Improved self-image and better outlook**
Regular physical activity heightens your sense of well-being, self-esteem, and personal value. A daily dose of 10,000 steps can lift your mood and ward off depression.

➤ **Slower aging process**

Heart and lung fitness and muscle tone decline at a much slower rate in people who do physical activity regularly, compared to those who do not. Physical activity helps you maintain your flexibility as you age, increases your bone mass, improves your balance, decreases your risk of falls, and allows you to stay active into your older years.

➤ **Decreased cancer risk**

Some cancers – including colon, breast, and cancers of the female reproductive organs – develop less often in those who are regularly active.

➤ **Better sleep**

Researchers find that people who are regularly active - including regular walkers - fall asleep more quickly, sleep more soundly, and are more refreshed in the morning.

