

TIP OF THE MONTH

Adopting a Movement Mindset

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Adopting a movement mindset can alleviate many of the negative impacts the pandemic has taken on both our physical and emotional well-being. It is well-known that movement helps improve our physical well-being, but there is also a lot of research on the emotional and mental benefits movement yields. FEAP encourages you to “try on” the mindset of looking for more ways to move each day so that you receive the physical and emotional benefits of movement.

According to Kelly McGonigal, a health psychologist and author of *The Joy of Movement*, moving for even three minutes can kick in feel-better effect, leaving you feeling more positive and energetic. She says that, “movement will give you access to joy that will dramatically improve the quality of your life, help support mental health, and create more meaning and belonging.” For an extra positive bonus,

consider adding music to your movement. We also know that any action – doing something – can help create upward spirals that help us to feel better and better. In this way, our mindsets become self-fulfilling prophecies; another reason to choose a movement mindset.

If you find implementing a movement mindset or other healthy changes to be challenging, this article offers you ways to overcome obstacles in the change process.

Common challenges to change include:

- not being ready
- lack of understanding
- changing too many things at once
- wanting the result but not the process of

By creating a vision of what you want for yourself and answering the following questions, sustainable change is possible for all of us!

1. Why am I making this change now?
2. What do I want to get from making the change (motivator)?
3. What is going to get in my way? (Ex. what are my barriers)?
4. What are some of the things I might try to do in order to overcome these barriers (what are my possible solutions)?

The most common barrier to change is “All or nothing thinking.” In this mindset, you believe you are not successful if you are not following your plan perfectly. It creates a narrow path for change. In reality, we do not have to perfect to be successful! Change is not linear; there can be ups, downs, and plateaus along the way before we reach our goal. Here are effective strategies to overcome this thinking:

Widen your view of what constitutes success.

Take steps that are small enough to achieve daily but large enough to feel the promise of progress. This will help with motivation.

Remember that striving to do your best is often good enough.

List the benefits of the change and how it may also positively impact your loved ones. Post these benefits where you can see them often.

Find a support system, such as a groups, family, or friends. Partnering with others who are seeking the same change adds accountability and power.

Use self-compassion. An attitude of kindness helps us to remain positive, learn from our mistakes, and widens our perspective.

Making changes does require effort and focus, but with planning and good strategies, change is possible. So have some fun and move in a way that feels good to you.

Start small if you have not been moving as much lately or go bigger for more results if you have a good base.

If you need some help getting in a better place emotionally to make positive changes, reach out to FEAP for assistance.

If you are a UVA or UPG employee or spouse and want to connect with the UVA Health Coach, contact Beth Frackleton at UVA-WorkMed at 434.243.8199 or edw2z@virginia.edu.

Employees and spouses enrolled in the UVA or UPG Health Plan can access unlimited 1:1 telephonic health coaching sessions through the Hoos Well web portal, provided by Virgin Pulse. [Schedule your first session online.](#)

FEAP is here to assist you. [Explore resources on our website](#) or contact us at 434.243.2643.

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