

What's the right exercise for me?

Exercise is great for our wellbeing – it can improve our quality of life, mood, self-perception, social interaction and life satisfaction. Yet, it's not always easy to stay motivated to exercise.

If you're struggling to find the motivation to exercise, it could be that you haven't found the right physical activity for you. We all have different needs that affect our wellbeing and if our physical activities don't meet those needs, it's unlikely we'll stick at them. Answer the questions in each table below to discover what the best type of exercises for you may be. Read each statement and tick how much you agree with each one. Make sure to add up your score for each table.

Achievement	Yes	In-between	No
I enjoy setting myself goals and striving to achieve them	(2)	(1)	(0)
In all areas of my life I challenge myself to do better	(2)	(1)	(0)
Setting clear goals helps me succeed in life	(2)	(1)	(0)
I don't believe in failure	(2)	(1)	(0)
Total			

Stress management	Yes	In-between	No
I have experienced a lot of change in the last year	(2)	(1)	(0)
I rarely feel relaxed	(2)	(1)	(0)
Coping with pressure is something I face on a daily basis	(2)	(1)	(0)
I have felt burnt out by stress in the last year	(2)	(1)	(0)
Total			

Self-esteem	Yes	In-between	No
I feel like other people are better than me	(2)	(1)	(0)
When I make mistakes, I get upset with myself	(2)	(1)	(0)
I struggle to accept myself for who I am	(2)	(1)	(0)
If I had the option to be anyone, I would choose to be someone else	(2)	(1)	(0)
Total			

Search for meaning	Yes	In-between	No
I feel as if something is missing from my life	(2)	(1)	(0)
I often wonder about the meaning of life	(2)	(1)	(0)
It concerns me how shallow my lifestyle is	(2)	(1)	(0)
I find it difficult to connect to a deeper purpose in life	(2)	(1)	(0)
Total			

Mood and tension	Yes	In-between	No
I often feel anxious or uneasy	(2)	(1)	(0)
I often feel down or depressed	(2)	(1)	(0)
Much of the time my body feels tense	(2)	(1)	(0)
I am a worrier	(2)	(1)	(0)
Total			

Playfulness	Yes	In-between	No
I think I am a playful person	(2)	(1)	(0)
I've been told I'm fun to be around	(2)	(1)	(0)
I enjoy playing sports and games just for fun	(2)	(1)	(0)
I really value my sense of humour	(2)	(1)	(0)
Total			

The area for which you score highest is your current social-psychological need. Turn the page to discover which activities match these needs and which exercises you may not enjoy right now.

If you have the same score for two different areas, look at both area exercises to decide which activities to try.

If you scored highest on achievement:

You may enjoy activities that challenge you and have measurable outcomes.

Try: weight training, power walking, lap swimming, golf, athletics or rock climbing

Activities which don't involve measuring performance may not be for you.

You may not like: leisure swimming and aerobics

If you scored highest on stress management:

You may enjoy activities that provide a distraction.

Try: running, skating, aerobics, circuit training and Tai chi

Activities which may add to the stress you are already feeling may not be for you.

You may not like: competitive team sports e.g. football, racquet sports or strength training

If you scored highest on self-esteem:

You may enjoy activities where you just need to turn up and set your own standards.

Try: walking, jogging, rowing, stationary cycling and aerobics classes

Activities which involve set performance standards may not be for you.

You may not like: golf, ballet, tennis and other racquet sports

If you scored highest on search for meaning:

You may enjoy activities that are repetitive and rhythmical.

Try: cycling, long distance running, canoeing, dance classes and swimming

Activities which don't provide an opportunity for an inner journey may not be for you.

You may not like: body building, golf and racquet sports

If you scored highest on mood and tension:

You may enjoy activities that produce positive feelings and tension relief.

Try: aerobics, speed walking, yoga and jogging

Activities which may add to the tension you are already feeling may not be for you.

You may not like: weight training, competitive team sports and racquet sports

If you scored highest on playfulness:

You may enjoy activities that encourage self-expression and feel like games.

Try: dancing, social team sports, Frisbee or even hula hooping

Activities with rules and set standards may not be for you.

You may not like: stationary cycling and running on a treadmill

Which activities are you going to try?

Use the space below to plan how you can introduce these new activities into your life:

