

# Week 7

## Creating a Healthy Environment





## Week 7- Creating a Healthy Environment

### Spiritual Component

- Begin the session by offering a prayer.

### Physical Activity Component

- Include 10 minutes of physical activity before beginning the session, and 20 minutes after the session.

### Participant Handouts

- *"Building Physical Activity into Your Day at Home or Work"*
- *"Creating a Friendly Physical Activity Environment"*
- *"Creating a Friendly Healthy Eating Environment"*

### Learning Objectives

- To learn about the importance of incorporating physical activity into your workday.
- To learn how to build physical activity into your day at home.
- To learn how to create a friendly physical activity and healthy eating environment.

### ☞ Physical Activity Component ☞

Start with 10 minutes of physical activity (PA). Get moving and have fun!

### Teaching Content

### ☞ Review of Last Week's Material ☞

Plan to spend 5-10 minutes on this section.

- Review last week's PA and healthy eating goals.
- Review last week's PA and healthy eating logs.
- Encourage participants to share their feelings about their experiences with increasing social support for PA and healthy eating.

Begin the session by encouraging participants to share their thoughts, feelings and opinions throughout the session.

### ☞ Scriptures ☞

"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow is the road that leads to life and only a few find it."

*Matthew 7:13-14*

Offer this scripture to the participants, and ask how they feel it relates to PA and healthy eating.

By incorporating PA into our daily lives, we can help ensure that these changes become permanent. Participants should learn how to make small changes to their daily routine in order to include more PA.

### ☞ Building PA into Your Day at Home ☞

Plan to spend 15-20 minutes on this section. It's difficult to find time in the day to do everything for everyone else, and finding time for you is next to impossible sometimes. By making small changes in the way you do things at home, you can fit PA into your lifestyle without taking extra time to exercise.

This section helps participants to learn about different ways to build PA into their daily lives.

Here are some suggestions for questions that may help to generate group discussion:

- Group exercises
  - "What are some household chores that require you to be physically active?"
  - "What can you do in your home and garden to be physically active?"
- Learning material - review the following handout:
  - "*Building Physical Activity into Your Day at Home or Work*"

- Compare the handout to ideas the participants offered. See how many things were on the list and how many extra things they discussed.
- Ask participants which of the things on the list they would be willing to do at home to increase PA.

### 🌀 Building PA into Your Day at Work 🌀

(Note: If none of your participants work outside their homes, this section can be skipped.)

Plan to spend 10-15 minutes on this section. Most of us have sedentary jobs, and work takes up a significant part of our day. Work is a big part of your daily routine. By including PA in your workday, it can become a part of your routine almost without you realizing it. Sometimes, all we need is a little help to point us in the direction of a more active lifestyle.

This section should emphasize building PA into one's workday. You will encourage participants to figure out things they can do to be more active.

Here are some suggestions for questions that may help to generate group discussion:

- Group exercises
  - "Why is it important to include physical activity as a part of your workday?"
  - "What are some things that you could do to be more physically active at work?"
- Learning material - review the following handout:
  - "*Building Physical Activity into Your Day at Home or Work*"
    - Compare the handout to ideas the participants offered. See how many things were on the list and how many extra things they discussed.
    - Ask participants which of the things on the list they would be willing to do at work to increase PA.

## ☞ Creating a Healthy Environment ☞

Plan to spend 10-15 minutes on this section. The environment in which we live and work influences our efforts to be active and eat well. Very often, the environment encourages us to make unhealthy choices - to watch TV rather than walk or to eat high-fat snacks instead of fruit. By making small adjustments, we can make our environments friendlier to support our new behaviors.

Here are some suggestions for questions that may help to generate group discussion:

- Group exercises
  - "Can you think of a way that your environment makes it hard for you to be physically active?" Ask about home, the workplace, church, and volunteer activities. (e.g., have to sit all day)
  - "Is there anything in your environment that makes it hard to eat healthy?" Ask about home, the workplace, church, and volunteer activities. (e.g., only high-fat foods are served)
- Learning material
  - The handouts "*Creating a Friendly Physical Activity Environment*" and "*Creating a Friendly Healthy Eating Environment*" are provided.
    - Review the tips on each of the sheets, and see if they are helpful for any of the problems listed in the group discussion.
    - Ask participants which of the tips they would be interested in trying this week.

## ☞ Homework ☞

- Encourage participants to write this week's PA and healthy eating goals about creating a friendlier environment and how to incorporate PA into their home and work life.
- Encourage participants to continue to monitor their PA and healthy eating with their logs.

## ☞ Physical Activity Component ☞

End the session with 20 minutes of PA.



## Building Physical Activity into Your Day at Home or Work

Participant Handout

### What are the advantages of being active at home?

- You're already there! You don't have to spend any time traveling to your place of exercise.
- You can fit it in when it's convenient.
- There are no fashion mishaps at home- you don't have to worry about matching your clothes or doing your hair.
- You can be super-productive and be active while doing work at home.

### Try some of these ideas to increase your activity at home

#### Whistle while you work!

Aerobic activity doesn't always have to be walking, running or biking, you can:

- Mow the lawn (no riding mowers!)
- Vacuum
- Rake leaves
- Sweep the patio
- Paint a room
- Wash your car



#### Try other activities to strengthen your body:

- Carry your groceries
- Lift your basket of laundry
- Carry a child
- Take out your garbage

Increase your flexibility by doing everyday activities:

Reach & hold while you pull on your socks or try to grab that item on the top shelf!

### You may already have an exercise machine - with hair!

Instead of letting Rover run in the yard by himself, take him for a walk around the block. Once you get into a regular routine, he will be sure to remind you when it's time to go!



### Sit and get fit

When watching television or talking on the phone you can be more active by:

- Squeeze a tennis ball to strengthen your grip
- Do push-ups, sit-ups, squats, lunges or some stretches
- Change the channel the old-fashioned way -- without the remote!
- Do arm curls with a weight or can of food for resistance

**Let your feet be your wheels**

- Leave your car at home when running errands at the corner store, bank or post office.
- Park further away at the mall, and walk the extra distance to the entrance.
- When sitting in traffic, do arm stretches or curls with some resistance (try your purse or an umbrella).

**Why be active at work?**

- Work is a part of your daily routine, and by incorporating physical activity into work, you make it a part of your everyday routine.
- Physical activity helps you to increase your energy and makes you more productive.

**Try some of these ideas to increase your activity at work**

**Getting there is half the battle**

- Instead of driving to work, walk or bike.
- If you take the bus, get off one stop earlier, and walk the extra distance.
- Park at the far end of the parking lot

**There's no such thing as a free lunch!**

Most of us get 30 minutes for lunch, but we don't take that long to eat. Try to fit in a 10-20 minute walk before heading back to work.

Don't just eat lunch at your desk. A change in scenery is good for the body and soul. Go outside, and enjoy the great outdoors. Throw a Frisbee with co-workers at lunchtime. Make it a team effort. Form walking clubs to give support and motivation to each other.

**It all adds up! All you need to do is 10 minutes of activities before work, on your break, and at lunchtime, and you've got your physical activity goal for the day.**

**Physical Activity & Healthy Eating Log and Goals**

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Minutes of PA	10 20 30						
# of fruits & veggies	1 2 3 4 5 6+						

Weekly physical activity goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Weekly healthy eating goal: \_\_\_\_\_



## Creating a Friendly Physical Activity Environment

Participant Handout

Very often, our environment encourages us to make unhealthy choices - to watch television rather than take a walk. Here are some suggestions for how you make your environment more "friendly" to your physical activity.

### **Make time for you**

- Having "no time" is the most common reason for not being physically active. Learn to manage your time so that you can find 30 minutes a day to be active. Remember that it doesn't have to be all at once! Schedule your weekly physical activity sessions in a daily planner or calendar. Consider these to be appointments with yourself.

### **Leave reminders for yourself**

- Leave out your exercise clothes, keep a pair of walking shoes at work, tape a note to your bathroom mirror, or do something else to remind yourself to be active.

### **Strength in numbers**

- Let others know that you may need encouragement from time to time. Having an exercise partner is a great way to keep active.

### **Get off the beaten path**

- Try a new physical activity, learn a new skill or sport, or just make changes to your routine; reverse your walking route, or be active at a different time of day.

### **Be kind to yourself**

- Sometimes things come up and you may not be able to stick to your schedule. However, don't get discouraged and abandon your commitment. Just do it the next day or the next time you have in your schedule. Consistency is most important and if you're consistent, it'll pay off.

### **Choose activities you ENJOY**

- If you really enjoy doing something, you're more likely to stick with it. Make sure you have a couple of different types of activities-both outdoor and indoor-for variety and as back up in case of bad weather.

"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him."

*Hebrews 11:6*



## Creating a Friendly Healthy Eating Environment

### Participant Handout

Very often, our environment encourages us to make unhealthy choices -to eat a candy bar instead of fruit or to grab a burger rather than prepare a low-fat meal. Here are some suggestions for how you make your environment more "friendly" to your healthy diet.

#### **Eat in one place**

- Try not to eat at the fridge, the counter, in front of the television or driving in the car. Since certain places are associated with eating, it is important to limit the places that you eat.

#### **Avoid temptations**

- Try not to go down the candy and junk food aisle at the grocery store, and read the headlines of the magazines while at the checkout instead of gazing at all the candy.

#### **Make convenience foods healthier**

- After buying fruits and veggies, immediately turn them into snack-size portions that are easy to eat on the go. Wash fruits. Cut veggies into bite-sized pieces and store them in cold water in the front of your fridge so you always see them. Put pretzels or air-popped popcorn into single serving bags to take on the road.

#### **There is no prize for finishing first**

- When eating a meal, slow down and take the time to taste and chew your food. Put down your fork between bites, and be sure to take some pauses. You don't have to clear your plate. (We won't tell mom!)

#### **Simple substitutions can help a lot**

- Making slightly different choices for your everyday foods can lead to a healthy way of life; try whole grain bread instead of white bread; replace coffee, soda, fruit punch or other sweetened beverages with water or low-fat milk; use low-fat or non-fat milk instead of higher-fat milk.

#### **Are your eyes bigger than your belly?**

- To keep your portion sizes from growing too large try these tips: use smaller plates, share restaurant "super-sized" dishes with a friend, and consider ordering a lunch portion, even at dinner. Ask the server to put half of your meal in a to-go box before your meal is served.

#### **Keep your eyes on the prize**

- Try to keep healthier food choices at eye level in the fridge or cabinet, and if you do have junk food, put it well out of reach so it's more of an effort to get to it