

## Severe & Persistent Mental Illness Worksheet: A Guide To Moving More

Based on 'Exercise-Based Interventions for Mental Illness', I've created a worksheet for people with mental illness to work through individually or with a healthcare professional to improve their physical activity level

### Part 1 – What DO you do? What CAN you do?

To start, let's establish how much movement you currently do:

These questions will determine the time you spend being active in the **last 7 days**. Please think about the activities you do at work, as part of house/yard work, to travel, and in your spare time, exercise, or sport.

#### IPAQ-SF Section 1 – Vigorous Activity

Think about all the **vigorous** activities that you did in the **last 7 days**. **Vigorous physical activities refer to activities that take hard physical effort and make you breathe much harder than normal.** Think *only* about those activities that you performed for at least 10 minutes at a time

1. During the **last 7 days**, how many days did you do **vigorous** physical activities like heavy lifting, digging, aerobics, or fast bicycling?  
\_\_\_\_\_ **days per week**      No vigorous physical activities **Skip to question 3**
2. How much time did you spend doing those vigorous physical activities on one of those days?  
\_\_\_\_\_ **hours per day** \_\_\_\_\_ **minutes per day**      Don't know/Not sure

#### IPAQ-SF Section 2 – Moderate Activity

Think about all the **moderate** activities that you did in the **last 7 days**. **Moderate activities refer to activities that take moderate physical effort and make you breathe somewhat harder than normal.** Think *only* about those physical activities that you did for at least 10 minutes at a time.

3. During the **last 7 days**, on how many days did you do **moderate** physical activities like carrying light loads, bicycling at a regular pace, or doubles tennis? (Do not include walking)  
\_\_\_\_\_ **days per week**      No moderate physical activities **Skip to question 5**

4. How much time did you spend doing those moderate physical activities on one of those days?  
\_\_\_\_\_ **hours per day** \_\_\_\_\_ **minutes per day**      Don't know/Not sure

#### IPAQ-SF Section 3 – Walking

Think about the time you spent **walking** in the **last 7 days**. This includes at work and at home, walking to travel from place to place, and any other walking that you have done solely for recreation, sport, exercise, or leisure.

5. In the **last 7 days**, how many days did you **walk** for at least 10 minutes at a time?  
\_\_\_\_\_ **days per week**      No walking **Skip to question 7**
6. How much time did you usually spend **walking** on one of those days?  
\_\_\_\_\_ **hours per day** \_\_\_\_\_ **minutes per day**      Don't know/Not sure

#### IPAQ-SF Section 4 – Sitting Time

The last question is about the time you spent **sitting** on weekdays during the **last 7 days**. Include time spent at work, at home, while doing course work and during leisure time. This may include time spent sitting at a desk, visiting friends, reading, or sitting or lying down to watch television.

7. During the **last 7 days**, how much time did you spend **sitting** on a **weekday**?  
\_\_\_\_\_ **hours per day**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **minutes per day**      Don't know/Not sure

**Note: We're aiming for >150minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week (or >75 minutes of vigorous-intensity)**

#### Establishing Exercise Capacity

We're trying to establish the **maximum amount of physical exertion** that you can sustain. This will depend on health conditions and physical fitness and may be best assessed with a healthcare professional such as an Accredited Exercise Physiologist, Physiotherapist or GP. Simple questions to start understanding your exercise capacity are "What's the most energetic activity you've undertaken in the last week?" "How far can you walk before you need to stop?"

**Understanding the amount of physical activity you currently do and your exercise capacity will help to guide the choice and amount of activity you look to engage in.**

## Part 2 – Aiming to move more

It's also important to understand the **behavioural components** that can improve our adherence.

### Starting Off (Initiation Stage)

It's ideal to discuss your current activity, goals, and previous experience with an exercise professional before implementing any changes. This can include education on the positives and negatives associated with exercise.

To start, list 2 goals, specific to you, that you would like to work towards by increasing your level of physical activity:

- 1.
- 2.

| List 3 positive outcomes you associate with exercise: | List 3 obstacles which prevent you exercising: |
|---|--|
| 1.  | 1.   |
| 2.  | 2.   |
| 3.  | 3.   |

Highlight the biggest obstacle and write 1 way to overcome it  
e.g. "If [obstacle], then I will [solution]"

If.....

### Building Up (Development Stage)

Stay positive in your first sessions and 'roam free'. Build a positive relationship with movement to establish it as a positive behaviour.

You choose the physical activity intensity – this will reduce stress around being active and build that positive relationship. List activities you would consider and how you might adjust their intensity.

Example: *Yoga class* – choose the modification to each position or duration

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### Sticking to it (Adherence Stage)

Identify markers of improvement within the activity

*Examples: Distance walked/run, technique, duration of activity*

With the activities listed previously, choose 2 markers of improvement.

| Activity | Areas of improvement |    |
|----------|----------------------|----|
| 1.       | a.                   | b. |
| 2.       | a.                   | b. |
| 3.       | a.                   | b. |

Appreciate the relevance of each activity to your health. With one of your activities write a statement on how it will improve your health/life.

*Example: Improving my leg press strength will reduce leg pain on bike rides*

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Invest in prompts i.e. a diary, text messages, mobile phone reminders [ ]

Log your attendance and improvement to provide an easy visual tool

Note: people with severe mental illness can experience some difficulties to self-measure progress. You can do this with an exercise professional. [ ]

Write a behavioural contract and have it witnessed by someone close and/or an exercise professional (see appendix for *example*) [ ]

**Keep At It! (Maintenance Stage)**

This is the most important and often most challenging stage. During this stage, which we aim to continue indefinitely, it's crucial to re-assess objectives as you progress towards achieving them.

Look to adopt a more active lifestyle. List 3 ways you can adopt a more active lifestyle:

*Example: Take the stairs wherever possible*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

It's important to appreciate this is a trial-and-error process. When there are barriers or times you've been unable to keep active, think about how you might overcome them in the future.

Develop self-monitoring strategies (e.g. pedometer, phone applications, notebooks) and use these to set milestones that you can reward yourself for reaching.

What will you treat yourself with when you've managed 10,000 steps every day for a week? Or a month?

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**Example Behavioural Contract**

I (insert full name) ..... agree to undertake .... (1-5) sessions a week of physical activity at a moderate intensity of at least 30 minutes each.

I will ensure to track these sessions and report them to my friend/family/supporter (insert name) .....

I will review this contract every 4 to 6 weeks and plan to rediscuss this with (exercise/healthcare professional) (insert name/contact)..... on ..../..../..... (insert review date)

Signed ..... Witness signature .....

Print name ..... Print name .....