



FEELING ALIVE

Moving With Freedom

RESOURCE FOR
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PARTICIPANTS



When Movement Helps You Feel More Like Yourself

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN SO INVOLVED IN AN ACTIVITY THAT YOU STOPPED THINKING ABOUT YOURSELF?

Maybe it happened while:

- walking in nature
- playing a game
- dancing to music
- stretching
- swimming
- gardening
- rolling through a park
- participating in a class
- playing with friends

For a moment, you were not worrying about how you looked, whether you were keeping up, or whether you were doing things perfectly. You were simply moving.

Many people think of movement as something they should do because it is good for their health. While movement certainly supports our health, some of the most meaningful movement experiences happen when we begin to enjoy the experience. These are often the moments when we feel most alive.

When movement feels alive:

- we become less aware of time
- we stop worrying about being judged
- we focus less on performance
- we become more engaged in what we are doing
- movement begins to feel natural, enjoyable, and freeing

Feeling alive does not require extraordinary athletic ability.

Sometimes feeling alive comes from:

- a walk with a friend
- moving to a favourite song
- learning a new skill
- sharing a laugh
- being fully present
- discovering something you enjoy



When Movement Helps You Feel More Like Yourself

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN SO INVOLVED IN AN ACTIVITY THAT YOU STOPPED THINKING ABOUT YOURSELF?

The goal is not to move perfectly. The goal is to move in a way that helps you feel:

- present
- engaged
- energized
- joyful
- connected
- free

As one participant in our InterActive for Life research shared:

I live for these classes. My husband had been sick for years. So, for many years I didn't really do anything other than a little bit of walking while taking care of him. I'm getting younger and stronger. I feel like I've gotten a new life since coming here.

For this participant, feeling alive came from rediscovering movement after years of caring for someone else.

Let's imagine another context like a physical education class or a recreational environment where a participant describes the experience of joining a team:

At the beginning of the season, I was nervous about joining the team because I didn't think I was very good. I spent so much time worrying about what other people thought. But after a while, I stopped thinking about whether I was making mistakes and started focusing on playing. Sometimes I'd look up and realize practice was almost over. I wasn't thinking about being judged anymore—I was just having fun.

For this participant, feeling alive happened when attention shifted from:

"What do people think about me?"

to

"I am enjoying what I am doing."



InterActive For Life

REFLECTION

Feeling alive is not connected to age.

It can emerge whenever:

- movement becomes more important than worry
- participation becomes more important than performance
- enjoyment becomes more important than perfection

Challenge

The next time you move, ask yourself:

"When do I feel most alive?"

What activities, people, places, or experiences help create that feeling?

Participant Activities

TO INSPIRE FEELING ALIVE

1

Follow The Fun

Choose a movement activity that you enjoy.

As you participate, notice:

- When do you smile?
- When do you lose track of time?
- When do you feel most engaged?
- When do you want to keep going?

Reflection

The activity was:

I noticed myself smiling when:

I felt most engaged when:

One thing that made the activity enjoyable was:

Feeling Alive Goal

Next time, I want to do more of:

Participant Activities

TO INSPIRE FEELING ALIVE

2 The Energy Check

Choose a movement activity that you enjoy.
As you participate, notice:

- When do you smile?
- When do you lose track of time?
- When do you feel most engaged?
- When do you want to keep going?

Reflection

After moving, I felt:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ More energized | ☐ More focused |
| ☐ Calmer | ☐ More connected |
| ☐ More refreshed | ☐ About the same |

What contributed to that feeling?

My Discovery

For me, feeling alive today felt like:

Participant Activities

TO INSPIRE FEELING ALIVE

3

What Helps You Forget Yourself?

During an activity, notice:

- Are you focused on the experience?
- Are you focused on being watched?
- Are you worrying about mistakes?
- Are you paying attention to how movement feels?

Reflection

The moment I became most absorbed in the activity was:

I spent less time worrying about:

I spent more time noticing:

My Discovery

I feel most alive when:

Participant Activities

TO INSPIRE FEELING ALIVE

4

Building Your “Feeling Alive” List

Think about activities that help you feel:

- ☒ Free
- ☒ Present
- ☒ Joyful
- ☒ Strong
- ☒ Connected
- ☒ Energized

My Feeling Alive List

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

Challenge

A new activity I would like to try is:

Why?

Participant Activities

TO INSPIRE FEELING ALIVE

5

The Presence Challenge

Choose one activity today.

During the activity, pay attention to:

- your breath
- sounds around you
- music
- movement rhythms
- sensations in your body

When your thoughts wander, gently bring your attention back to the experience.

Reflection

The easiest thing for me to notice was:

The hardest thing for me to notice was:

When I became fully present, I felt:

Presence Goal

The next time I move, I will pay attention to:

Participant Activities

TO INSPIRE FEELING ALIVE

6

Use The Movement Mood Barometer

Before you begin moving, use the [Movement Mood Barometer](#) and ask yourself: **How am I feeling right now?**

Then ask:

How would I like to feel after moving? Examples:

- ☐ Energized
- ☐ Calm
- ☐ Joyful
- ☐ Confident
- ☐ Connected
- ☐ Refreshed

My Feeling Alive Discovery

Before moving, I felt:

After moving, I felt:

What happened during the activity that influenced my mood?

Reflection

Did I feel the way I hoped to feel?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Not yet

One moment that helped me feel most alive was:

Participant Activities

TO INSPIRE FEELING ALIVE

6 Use The Movement Mood Barometer

E-Motional Goal

The next time I move, I would like to feel:

One thing I can do to support that feeling is:

Resource: Movement Mood Barometer

<https://function2flow.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Movement-Mood-Barometer.pdf>

CLASS COLOUR CODE	ICON	E-MOTIONS
Red Aggressive		Quick/Aggressive/Competitive Activities that offer an outlet to release stress, feelings of aggression or frustration. <i>Examples: cardio boxing, pickleball, HITT training, cardio drumming</i>
Yellow Uplifting		Uplifting, Joyous, Ecstatic, Energizing, Invigorating Activities that offer opportunities to move joyfully to music with or without partner that promotes fun and laughter with options for freestyle flow or moving in unison. Class promotes feelings of success (graduated progressions). <i>Examples: freestyle dance, synchronized movement (i.e., clapping, tapping, cardio drumming/ body percussion, belly dancing)</i>
Light Green Grounded		Predictable/Grounded Activities that follow consistent format designed to promote a mindful, rooted flow with repeated sequences. Attention is directed to breath, feeling body movement and feeling very present. <i>Examples: Mindful walking, Tai Chi, Yoga, range-of-motion exercises, meditation classes, mindfulness training</i>
Orange Cognitive Challenge		Cognitive Challenge-Dual Tasking Classes that complexify the experience that combine physical activity with cognitive challenges, i.e., counting, naming, problem-solving while engaged in movement. <i>Examples: "Simon(e) Says" games, Cross-Crawl</i>
Blue Restful		Slow/Peaceful/Relaxing Activities/ Classes that offer progressive relaxation, stretching/range of motion movements, mindful breathing. <i>Examples: Tai Chi, Yoga, Range-of-motion exercises, meditation classes, Mindfulness training</i>
Purple Spontaneous		Spontaneous/Creative Activities or games that offer variations in intensity, speed (quick bursts and holds), equipment/props (i.e., scarfs, beach balls, rubber chickens). <i>Examples: cooperative/modified games, i.e., chair volleyball, pool noodle games; partner dance; ping pong, scarf juggling</i>

This keeps the focus on:

Mood → Movement Experience → Feeling Alive → Next Goal

without making participants fill in a table that may feel like extra work.



Participant Tips

FOR FEELING ALIVE

Tip #1: Follow Enjoyment

Movement is more sustainable when you enjoy it.

Tip #2: Focus on Experience

Try focusing less on performance and more on how it feels to participate.

Tip #3: Be Present

Some of the most meaningful movement experiences happen when we stop evaluating ourselves and simply join in.

Tip #4: Notice What Gives You Energy

Different activities support different people. Learn what helps you feel most alive.

Tip #5: Track What Helps

Keep a list of activities, environments, people, music, and experiences that help you feel energized, joyful, connected, or present.



Curious for more?

- [Quick tips for physical activity facilitators](#)
- [Complete the InterActive for Life Inventory](#)



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