



As we gear-up for the changing of seasons, here are seven psychological and physical reasons to make exercise your top priority:

1.Exercise relieves stress and reduces anxiety. Physical activity is the best medicine for blowing off steam and taking our minds off our worries and problems. Aerobic exercise is the best remedy for improving our mood and overall well-being.

2.Exercise helps alleviate depression. A regular routine of aerobic or anaerobic exercise effectively works to change brain chemistry. Endorphins are stimulated by exercise and are believed to give relief from pain-a phenomenon which is commonly known as a “natural high.” While exercising won’t solve the family dramas or chase the gray clouds away, it’s the most effective tool for dealing with the negative feelings that creep into our heads to make our days seem gloomier and our problems much larger.

3.Exercise moderates anger. A new study from the American College of Sports Medicine shows that exercise “can have a robust prophylactic effect” against the build-up of anger. Participants of the study had difficulty controlling their emotions when they didn’t exercise. But, after exercising, they were able to handle their moods with “more aplomb.” (Frustration and irritation are in the same family as anger).

4.Exercise boosts your energy and fights fatigue. Do you think you’re “too tired” to exercise? Well, skipping your workout will only contribute to the problem. Physical activity delivers oxygen and nutrients to your tissues and helps your entire cardiovascular system-the circulation of blood through your heart and blood vessels-work more efficiently. Voila! When your heart and lungs work more efficiently, you have MORE energy to engage in the things you enjoy!

5.Exercise enhances your self-esteem. When your body feels strong, it strengthens your self-confidence and improves your body-image. Staying physically fit is “self-care.” When we make time to care for our bodies, we feel better about ourselves, (which leads to number 6).

6.Exercise can improve physical intimacy. When we feel good about taking care of our bodies, we’re more open to enjoying the pleasures of physical intimacy. The more “relaxed” we feel, the more we’re able to enjoy the present moment.

7.Exercise brings us more social interaction in a positive environment. Working out in groups or with a friend is a way to connect with others who share the same interest. Group fitness classes and sessions are a fun way to stay fit while having the chance to be social at the same time. Even if you enjoy exercising solo, it’s always uplifting to exchange a friendly smile or simple hello with others along the way.

There are many numerous benefits of exercising on a daily basis. (Way beyond 7!!) But if we stay focused on exercise to strengthen our bodies and our psyches, we can bounce through the winter months like Tigger, rather than slogging through each cold day like his adorable negative friend, Eeyore. Bouncing sounds best to me!

## Light Up Your Life With Exercise!

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Feeling the affects of winter? Try working out!



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