

Move more

Explanation: Two important things happen when we move our bodies that can help us feel happier in our minds as well as healthier in our bodies. Firstly, the body releases chemicals that literally lift our mood. Evidence shows that even in people who have a diagnosis of mild to moderate depression just 150 minutes of movement a week is as effective at lifting their mood as taking medication. The other thing movement does is to burn off the stress hormone cortisol. This is released when we feel stressed or anxious and it tends to hang around in the body. By moving our bodies we burn this off which lifts those feelings of stress.

How to do it: The most important thing is to find something that works for you – you don't have to go running or visit the gym (though you can if you like). Walking, stretching, dancing to music at home, jumping up and down, swimming, rollerblading, playing Twister, doing star jumps, there are so many things you could try! Whatever works for you! And just five minutes will make a difference.

When it's useful: Good as part of your daily routine, but particularly good if you have a wave of strong emotions, such as anger, anxiety, unhappiness, panic, frustration etc. When using it to calm really strong emotions try something more intense, like jumping up and down or running on the spot really hard for five minutes. Over time, the more we move the better we generally feel.

