HEART & SOUL CURRICULUM

SESSION 3:

MOVEMENT WITH PURPOSE

Physical Activity



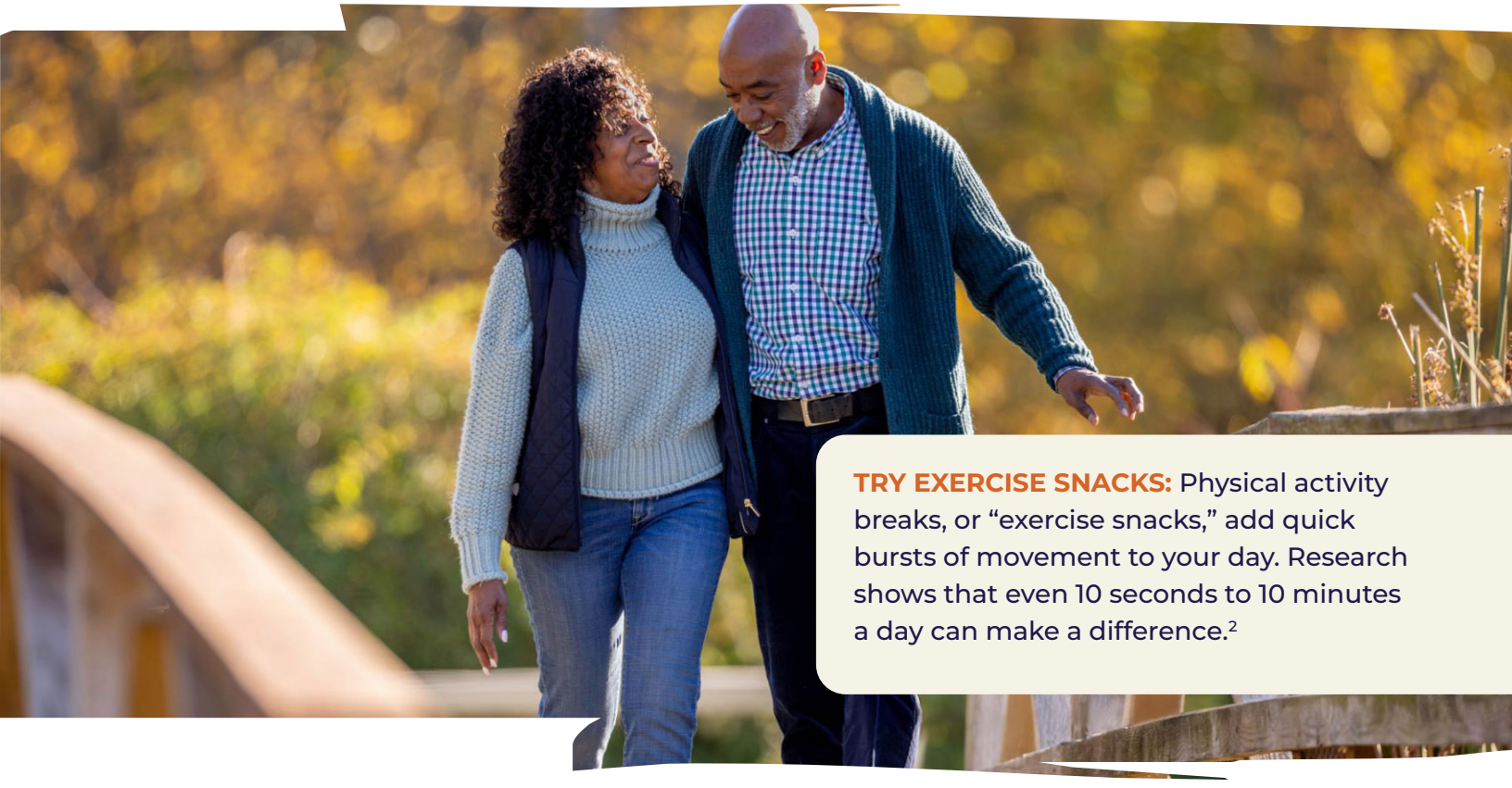
MOVEMENT WITH PURPOSE:
Physical Activity

How movement helps. Movement is important for the body, and it's about more than how we look—it can improve our mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Regular movement allows us to care for our bodies, remain active, and support our total health.

Moving and being active can also help prevent or reduce the risk of chronic illnesses. It can help people manage type 2 diabetes, depression, anxiety, weight, and heart health. Regular physical activity may also support your sleep, digestion, stress relief, and energy levels.

Recommendations. The American Heart Association[1] recommends that adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity each week. For more details and examples of physical activity and other tools, see the Physical Activity information in the Supporting Healthy Weight & Preventing Obesity guide, including the Physical Activity Pyramid.

While these guidelines set a wellness goal, you don't have to start with a specific exercise program. You might walk around your neighborhood, stretch when you wake up or before bed, dance with your loved ones, swim, or find other activities you enjoy. Small movements throughout the day can also keep you active, especially when they become a habit.



TRY EXERCISE SNACKS: Physical activity breaks, or "exercise snacks," add quick bursts of movement to your day. Research shows that even 10 seconds to 10 minutes a day can make a difference.[2]

1. American Heart Association. (2024). *American Heart Association recommendations for physical activity in adults and kids*. https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/exercise-and-physical-activity/fitness-basics/aha-recs-for-physical-activity-in-adults
2. Bangsbo J. (2024). 10-20-30 exercise training improves fitness and health. *European Journal of Sport Science*, 24(8), 1162–1175. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsc.12163

Examples of "exercise snacks" include: Jogging in place for 1 minute, running up a flight of stairs, doing 10 air squats or walking lunges, walking and talking on the phone with a friend for 10 minutes, dancing to your favorite song, or doing calf raises while standing or seated in a chair.[3]

There are countless ways to move more and spend less time sitting still. And depending on your abilities, you can adapt movements and exercises, including doing them while seated. Perhaps add hand weights or resistance bands. The goal is to find activities that work for your body—and can become part of your daily life. Moving with a group lets us fellowship and make physical activity fun while we care for our bodies.

MOVE NATURALLY MENU

Dance to your favorite song	4 minutes
Take the stairs	1 minute
Walk to your local coffee shop	25 minutes
Do 10 walking lunges	30 seconds
Call a friend and walk while you chat	10 minutes
Tend to your indoor or outdoor garden	10 minutes
Take a walk outside	5 minutes
Make sourdough bread	30 minutes

Adapted from resources by BlueZones

Interactive Activity

Throughout the week, complete activities from the **Movement Bingo** card and try to get BINGO with five in a row. The card has different ways to add movement to everyday life that you can explore. Activities might include taking a walk, stretching in the morning, dancing to a favorite song, taking a movement break after sitting for a long time, or trying another activity. Choose activities that fit your body and abilities.

3. McManus, M. R. (2025, March 25). *"Exercise snacks" - even a few minutes a day - can boost your health*. Harvard Street Neighborhood Health Center. https://harvardstreet.org/exercise-snacks-even-a-few-minutes-a-day-can-boost-your-health/

Heart & Soul in Action

There are opportunities to move this learning into collective action.

Actions in your faith community:

- Identify a regular opportunity for members to move together. Examples: Start a walking group, host a movement or fitness class, participate in a local community walk as a congregation, or create a ministry movement challenge.
- Make a commitment with one or more other people to take physical activity breaks, or "exercise snacks," to add quick bursts of movement to your day. Examples include jogging in place for 1 minute, running up the stairs, 10 air squats or walking lunges, walking and talking for 10 minutes, dancing, calf raises while seated or standing.
- Display the Physical Activity Pyramid and reminders about "exercise snacks" in key spots in the assembly or print handouts and put them in a resource area.

Advocacy for community health: Consider a neighborhood health audit or community asset-mapping project to understand how many open green spaces are available in your community for physical activity. These tools are part of the ACE Your Health Literacy Toolkit.



FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Session Overview & Learning Goals

Your main goal for this session is to help participants understand the benefits of movement and identify ways to put movement into their daily lives. Emphasize that movement can take many forms and should be practical and appropriate for each person's body and abilities.

By the end of this session, the goal is that participants will:

- Identify 1–2 movements or "exercise snacks" to make part of their daily routines.
- Identify opportunities to reduce sitting and move more throughout the day.

Facilitator Checklist

Before the session:

- ☐ Review the Movement With Purpose session content and facilitator guide.
- ☐ Print the Movement Bingo activity and Physical Activity Pyramid.
- ☐ Identify a few examples of movements that can be done within your congregation or community.
- ☐ Be mindful of people's different abilities, including use of wheelchairs and walkers.
- ☐ Share the session announcement with your congregation in advance.

Discussion Questions

During the session, you might ask:

- Why is movement important to you?
- How can movement support your spiritual well-being?
- What are some challenges you have when trying to move more in your daily life?
- What kinds of movements feel better for you or work well with your body?
- How can your faith community support you in moving with purpose?

Interactive Activity

Ask participants to complete a **Movement Bingo** card throughout the upcoming week and explore different ways to add movement to their everyday lives. Invite participants to choose activities that fit their bodies and abilities.

Participants who complete a BINGO by the following week can receive a small prize or be recognized in a special way, such as an announcement or bulletin board post.

Heart & Soul in Action

Let participants know that there are opportunities for this group and faith community to move into deeper learning, personal growth, and collective action on these health topics.

Point out the recommended **action steps** to take in the faith community and the tool for further learning and **community advocacy** to review and consider.

- Identify a regular opportunity for members to move together.
- Encourage participants to try and commit to "exercise snacks" daily.
- Display "exercise snack" reminders and the Physical Activity Pyramid.
- Consider a neighborhood health audit or community asset-mapping project from the ACE Your Health Literacy Toolkit.

Communication Templates

For a Bulletin/Flyer

Movement With Purpose: Physical Activity
Movement is about more than exercise. Join us for our next Heart & Soul session as we show how movement supports our physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being and identify simple ways to add more movement to our daily lives.

[add date, time, location]

For a Weekly Email

This week, Heart & Soul is exploring **Movement With Purpose**. Together, we'll discuss why movement is good for your health, everyday opportunities to be active, and ways to reduce time spent sitting still.

Whether it's walking, stretching, dancing, swimming, or finding an activity that works for your body and that you enjoy, this session will help you add more movement to your daily habits.

[add date, time, location]

MOVEMENT WITH PURPOSE: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

MOVEMENT BINGO

Complete an activity and mark the square. Get five in a row, column, or diagonal to get BINGO. Choose a movement that works well for your body.

B	I	N	G	O
WALKING	YOGA	MOVE FOR 10 MINUTES	GARDENING	DANCING
STRENGTH TRAINING	MOVEMENT WITH A FRIEND	CHAIR EXERCISES	SWIMMING	STRETCHING
PRAISE DANCE OR MIMING	CYCLING	FREE SPACE	MOVE FOR 15 MINUTES	WALK THE DOG
PILATES	CLEAN THE HOUSE	RUNNING	RESISTANCE BANDS	PLAY WITH CHILDREN OR GRANDCHILDREN
MOVE FOR 30 MINUTES	YARD WORK	LIGHT HAND WEIGHTS	TRY A NEW MOVEMENT	RECREATIONAL SPORT

GET BINGO BY NEXT WEEK!

Bring your completed card back for a small prize and community celebration.