

# WILD WONDERFUL WALKING

## *Step-by-Step Leader Guide*



## Kick-Off: Week #1

### Welcome to Wild Wonderful Walking!

Do we all know each other?  
Let's each say our name and what motivated us to join.

### The goal of the Walking Group is simple...MOVE MORE for better health!

During the next 6 weeks we will discover:

- 1) walking is fun – as a group and by yourself;
- 2) our bodies feel great when we walk; and
- 3) being active together makes strong relationships and a healthier community.

### You will receive these 3 items:

- 1) Health Form;
- 2) Walking Guide; and
- 3) Motivational handouts.

### It's important to be safe:

- Please fill out the Health Form. (Collect the completed forms.)
- Let's review "Your Check for Safety" on the back of the Health Form. If you answer "yes" to any of the questions, check with your healthcare provider before beginning a walking program.
- We also need to know "How the Body Responds to Physical Activity" on page 7 in your Walking Guide.

### Ready to walk? Pedometers may help us track our daily steps.

#### If you have one, try it on:

- Clip it on your waistband or belt, directly above the knee.
- Be sure it is horizontal to the ground, not angled or dangling from clothing.
- Set it to zero. Walk 50 steps. If it reads 45 – 55 it is working correctly. If it reads more or less, reposition it and check again. You may try other positions – on the side of the hips (for heavy persons) or on underwear (if there is no waist band or belt).

### The challenge is to walk each day for six weeks.

#### You decide when, where, how fast, with whom!

Our group will get together for a fun weekly activity. It will help us stay motivated and get to know each other. It's also a time to bring a friend or family member.

Write our weekly get-togethers in your Walking Guide (page 2).

(Either guide the group in deciding dates/times/locations or share pre-planned dates/times/locations.) Track your daily minutes or steps in your guide.

### Walking benefits the body, mind, and soul.

How many benefits can we name?

What is most important to you?

- Have more energy
- Improve flexibility and stability
- Live longer
- Sleep better
- Lose weight
- Lift your spirits
- Look your best
- More alert and able to concentrate
- Set a good example for family members
- Time with friends and family, chance to meet new friends
- Raise your HDL "Happy" cholesterol level
- Strong muscles, bones, joints, organs (heart/lungs)
- Lower chances of diseases (some cancers, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, Alzheimer's, osteoporosis)
- Helps control certain conditions (blood pressure, diabetes, weight)
- Other Benefits . . .

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## *Step-by-Step Leader Guide*



### Welcome back!

#### How did your first week go?

- Welcome new walkers or guests.
- Record members' total minutes or steps for last week on your Group Total Form.
- Ask members to share their experiences – successes, barriers, and joys.

## Goal Setting: Week #2

### Set a SMART goal to gain even more walking benefits!

**S = Specific.** Don't make the goal too broad. Say specifically what you will do.

**M = Measurable.** Make it something you can count, like counting steps with a pedometer or time. An example would be walking 10 minutes every day.

**A = Attainable.** Is it realistic or would you be easily frustrated and discouraged?

**R = Realistic and relevant.** If it's not realistic, you probably won't do it.

**T = Time bound.** Name a certain length of time.

Review and evaluate your SMART goal each week during the challenge.

There is no magic number of steps — simply aim to move more today than you did yesterday.

### Quick Activity: 1 - 2 - 3 Let's Walk

- All participants get in a circle and walk in place.
- Toss a large ball (such as a beach ball) to someone in the circle. (Everyone keeps walking!)
- The person who catches the ball names one reason people may be reluctant to walk regularly.
- Then, the person tosses the ball to someone else. This person offers a solution to the previous reason for not walking.
- Continue to toss the ball until many reasons and solutions have been shared.
- End with the cheer "1 - 2 - 3 Let's Walk!"

### Walk and Talk:

Ask group members to find a walking partner and talk about these topics as they walk together.

- What are your barriers to walking every day and how can the Walking Group help you overcome those barriers?
- What is your goal for walking?

### Tell Someone

People are more likely to reach their goal if they write it down. Write it on your walking log. And post it in obvious places — TV, alarm clock, steering wheel, bathroom mirror. Don't forget to tell someone your goal. Who knows, they may want to join you or encourage you to get to your goal.

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## Go Outside and Play: Week #3

### Welcome back!

#### How did the second week of the challenge go for you?

- Welcome new walkers or guests.
- Record members' total minutes or steps for last week on your Group Total Form.
- Ask members to share their experiences – successes, barriers, and joys.

### Go Outside and Play:

It's good advice for adults as well as children. A University of Michigan research study found that memory and attention span improved by 20 percent after people spent an hour with nature. What a great reason to go outside and walk! The study also showed that walking around town on streets did not have the same impact as walking in more natural settings. (Read more at: <http://www.ns.umich.edu/htdocs/releases/story.php?id=6892>)

### Give participants a copy of the handout "100 Ways to Cut 100 Calories".

Research shows that just cutting 100 calories a day may help prevent weight gain. Which of these ideas would you like to try?

### Quick Activity: Stretch Your Memory, Naturally!

This activity will remind group participants about what they love about nature.

- Everyone stand in a circle facing each other.
- Name a topic – like "favorite tree."
- One at a time, participants name their favorite tree.
- Then raise their "limbs" high above their head, as if pretending to be a tree.
- The next person in the circle names their favorite tree and stretches their limbs.
- Continue this pattern around the circle.
- Try a new topic – like "favorite flower." This time, stretch hands down toward your toes.
- Keep going with different topics like "favorite bird" or "favorite animal!"
- Try different stretches like putting arms out to the side or waving them in the breeze.

### Walk & Talk:

Ask group members to find a walking partner and talk about this topic as they walk together. Look for and identify birds, flowers, animals, etc.

### NOTES:

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# WILD WONDERFUL WALKING

## *Step-by-Step Leader Guide*



## Extra Steps: Week #4

### Welcome back!

#### How did the third week of the challenge go for you?

- Welcome new walkers or guests.
- Record members' total minutes or steps for last week on your Group Total Form.
- Ask members to share their experiences – successes, barriers, and joys.

#### **Don't Fall Into The "All Or Nothing" Trap: Lapses are Normal. Life Happens!**

The key to recovering from these lapses is to act fast. Get active right away. Look to your walking friends or your family for help. Ask for help. Some of us need someone to be accountable to. Review your walking goal and your walking schedule. Do you need to make changes? Do you need a change of scenery? Make your goal work for you. The important thing is that you decide on a goal of getting back into an active lifestyle.

#### **You've Made it Halfway: Review Your Goal(s)**

Walking Group participants have finished half of the 6-week challenge. It's time participants review the goals they set early in the program. Are they ready to "step up" their goals? Add time or maybe increase the walking pace.

#### **Give participants a copy of the handout "100 Ways to Add 2000 Steps".**

Research shows that adding 2000 steps a day may help maintain a healthy weight. Which of these ideas would you like to try?

#### **Quick Activity: Stand up for Health**

- Ask participants to stand in a circle and think about being in their favorite chair, recliner, or sofa.
- Call out each of these statements in a positive, assertive tone. Participants repeat the statement after you:
  - I'm NOT too busy to exercise!
  - I have more energy when I stay active!
  - I have the willpower!
  - Exercise keeps me young!
  - I'd rather be fit than sit!

#### **Walk & Talk:**

Ask group members to find a walking partner and talk about this topic as they walk together. What are the most important benefits of walking for you?

#### **NOTES:**

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## *Step-by-Step Leader Guide*



### Family & Friends: Week #5

#### Welcome back!

**How did the fourth week of the challenge go for you?  
Is it getting more challenging—or less?**

- Welcome new walkers or guests.
- Record members' total minutes or steps for last week on your Group Total Form.
- Ask members to share their experiences—successes, barriers, and joys.

#### Build Your Support System

Keeping up with exercise each day may take a different type of motivation, compared to when you began walking. How can you build a support system to encourage and motivate yourself?

Walkers in the group support each other. Respect everyone's efforts and interests. Not everyone will be able to walk as fast or as far as others.

Share your SMART goal with others. Talk with them about how you are doing and tell them you need their positive encouragement.

Invite friends and/or family members to walk with you. They may become a walking buddy. Knowing that someone is waiting for you to exercise with them can be great motivation to show up!

Find common interests with others in your group. Do they like to read, garden, paint, travel, etc.?

Bring a friend/or family member to the next walking session.

#### Quick Activity: Group Stretch

- Participants stand in a circle and hold hands.
- Whom would you like to walk with? One person names a person they would like to invite on a walk.
- Then, gently squeeze the hand of the person on their right.
- Continue around the circle so each person names someone they will invite on a walk.
- Raise arms while still holding hands. Stretch tall! Repeat several times for a group stretch.

#### Walk & Talk:

Ask group members to find a walking partner and talk about this topic as they walk together.

What type of support do you need from family and friends to keep motivated to walk regularly?

In what ways do you encourage others?

#### NOTES:

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## **Celebration: Week #6**

### **Welcome!**

**We're on the home stretch of the 6-week challenge!**

**Time flies when you're having fun walking.**

- Welcome new walkers or guests.
- Record members' total minutes or steps for last week on your Group Total Form
- Ask members to share their experiences – successes, barriers, and joys.

### **Celebrate Success!**

The Walking Guide (page 6) has ideas we can use to reward ourselves for our individual walking accomplishments. Have you rewarded yourself?

**We also should celebrate our group success with the 6-week challenge.** How should we celebrate?

Share ACTIVE ideas from the group or discuss these ideas. Decide and make plans for the final group activity.

- Have an old fashioned play time with hula hoops, hop scotch, jump rope, broad jump contest, etc.
- Weed/spruce up a community garden area.
- Invite a dance instructor to teach the group a few new steps.
- Bring buckets and sponges and wash everyone's car.

### **Quick Activity: Give Yourself a Pat on the Back**

- To celebrate your accomplishments, give yourself a pat on the back.
- Members stand in a circle.
- Stretch your right arm and pat the left shoulder/back.  
Then stretch your left arm and pat the right shoulder/back.
- How many "pats on the back" can you give yourself in 30 seconds? Ready-set-go. Time members for 30 seconds as they count the number of times they can alternate right and left pats on the back.
- Can you power it up? In the next 30 seconds, see if you can give yourself more pats on the back.

### **Walk & Talk:**

Ask group members to find a walking partner and talk about this topic as they walk together.

What's the next step? How will you continue to exercise?

**HAVE FUN AT THE GROUP CELEBRATION! Plan regular get-togethers and ways to keep up the "Wild Wonderful and Walking!" Remember to record your group members' weekly minutes or steps.**

### **NOTES:**

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### Wild Wonderful Walking Group Total

Group Leader Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Your Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Check  in the week column by each person's name if they attend the group meeting. As they report their totals for that week, write them on this form.

Name	Number of Weekly Minutes or Steps						Total Steps or Minutes
	Week #1	Week #2	Week #3	Week #4	Week #5	Week #6	
1.							
2.							
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Name	Number of Weekly Minutes or Steps						Total Steps or Minutes
	Week #1	Week #2	Week #3	Week #4	Week #5	Week #6	
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