Personal discussion: Physical health

**Important tip #1:** Have fun! **Important tip #2:** Listen respectfully. **Tip #3:** It’s ok if you don’t have time to do ALL the questions.

# Discussion questions

1. Katharina Star shows how doing exercise and mental health are closely connected. Do you notice a difference in your mental well-being after you exercise? Give an example, if possible, of how exercise helps your mental health.
2. Have you ever regularly done more ‘exotic’ types of exercise such as yoga or Tai Chi? If so, explain whether you had a positive or negative experience with it.
3. Do you have trouble staying motivated to do regular exercise? Explain.
4. Matt D’Avella expounds on the natural human resistance to following rules. What is your typical reaction to having rules imposed on you? Explain and give examples.
5. What is your reaction to Matt’s ‘2-day rule’ of never allowing himself to go two consecutive days without exercise? Would it work for you? Will you adopt this rule?
6. Matt Walker explains how sleep is important both before and after learning something new. During deep sleep, for example, short-term memory is transferred to long-term memory. Do you remember an experience when you learned something, got a good night’s sleep, and then found you knew it better after you woke up? Explain.
7. In the days following the move to daylight savings time in the spring, when we lose an hour of sleep, there is a marked increase in heart attacks, suicides, and car crashes. So, should we abolish the change to daylight savings time? Why or why not?
8. ‘The shorter your sleep, the shorter your life,’ says Walker, because of the dramatic link between sleep and the activity of killer cells that attack bad cells in the body. Do you notice that you get sick more easily when you’re overtired? Explain.
9. Walker’s two big tips for better sleep are ‘regularity is king’ and ‘keep it cool.’ Do you already employ one or both of these tips? Explain.
10. Walker summed up his overall thesis as ‘Sleep, unfortunately, is not an optional lifestyle luxury. Sleep is a nonnegotiable, biological necessity.’ First, why did he say ‘unfortunately’? Also, did this video change your mind about the importance of sleep for the brain and the body? Explain.
11. Thomas Frank recommends scheduling specific times into your weekly schedule for exercise, such as the 7-minute workout in the morning. Do you have a weekly schedule with exercise in it? Explain.
12. One impediment to exercising is the ‘ignition costs.’ For example, the task of just getting ready to go to the gym can be a barrier to doing exercise. Have ignition costs ever caused you to exercise less? Explain.
13. Thomas suggests finding fun ways to exercise instead of doing things you dread such as running on the treadmill. What kinds of exercise do you find fun? How often do you do these fun things?