

13 Taking up physical exercise



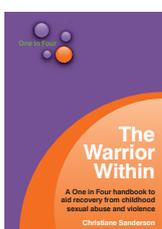
If you are working through *The Warrior Within*, this exercise and further useful information to help you in your recovery can be found on pages 56-58. This exercise assumes you have completed exercise sheet 1 **Starting an activity journal**.

In your journal list any physical exercise that appeals to you. A selection of options could include walking, jogging, step classes, bicycling, weights, sit ups, push ups, ball games, pilates, yoga, treadmill, swimming, tennis, golf, self defence, boxing, kick boxing, martial arts, tai chi, riding, gardening or dancing. Highlight those that appeal to you and that you would like to experiment with. Make a commitment to try one at a time and be mindful of which is best for you. It is worth trying out some slow, gentle exercise as well as some fast, high paced exercise to see how you feel both during and afterwards.

Before you make your decision, check how realistic your chosen physical exercise is.

Strenuous physical exercise might not suit you as increased heart rate, respiration and sweating can mimic the arousal during the sexual abuse. If this happens, you will need to find lower levels of activity that do not increase heart rate or respiration such as slow weight training, muscle tensing, swimming or gardening. Remember to experiment to find what works for you.

Check how much time can you realistically commit in terms of the frequency and duration of the physical exercise. It is also important to consider any financial costs such as class fees, gym membership and ease of access to the location. You also need to consider whether you prefer outdoor or indoor activities, or prefer to exercise at home.



The content of this exercise sheet is based on *The Warrior Within: A One in Four handbook to aid recovery from childhood sexual abuse and violence* by Christiane Sanderson

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One in Four
219 Bromley Rd, Catford SE6 2PG
Telephone 020 8697 2112
Email admin@oneinfour.org.uk
www.oneinfour.org.uk

Registered charity number 1081726