



ROOTS TO RISE LIFE COLLECTIVE

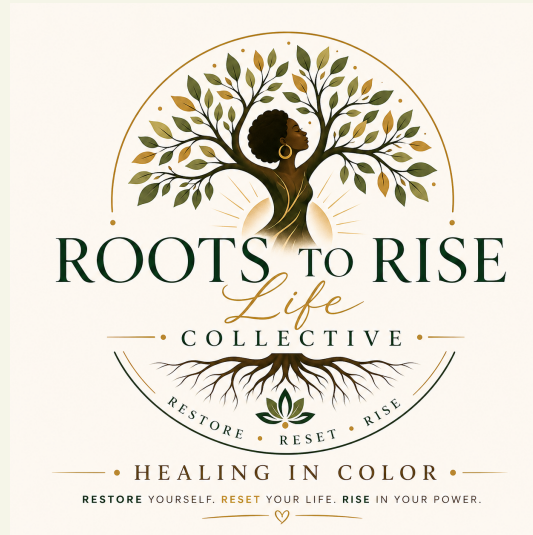
WALKING IS ENOUGH TO BEGIN

Building Movement Without Punishing Your Body

A gentle, judgment-free guide to building
a movement practice you can actually keep.

RESTORE • RESET • RISE





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Sis, let's start here: movement is not a punishment for what you ate, what you weigh, or what your body used to look like. It is not a boot camp. It is not a before-and-after photo waiting to happen. Movement is something your body was made for — and it counts in more ways than the fitness industry ever told you.

Walking counts. Stretching counts. Dancing in your kitchen while dinner simmers counts. Carrying groceries up the stairs, working in the garden, and doing a few strength moves at home — all of it counts. The best movement plan isn't the hardest one. It's the one you'll actually return to, without dread sitting in your stomach the night before.

What the Guidelines Actually Say

The current Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, recommend that adults work toward 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week, plus muscle-strengthening activity on at least two days. And this isn't just an American number — the World Health Organization's global guidelines land in the exact same place: 150 to 300 minutes of moderate activity, strength work twice a week, for people all over the world.

Broken into daily terms, that's roughly 20 to 45 minutes a day of moderate movement — or the version many of us grew up hearing, 30 minutes a day, five days a week. You don't have to do it all at once, either. It can be split into two or three smaller walks across your day and it still counts toward the same total.

But hear me clearly: that's a destination, not an entrance exam. Nobody is asking you to arrive there today. If you are currently doing very little, five or ten minutes is a real, legitimate beginning. You do not have to earn the right to start small.

Use the Talk Test

You don't need a fitness watch to tell you how hard you're working — your own breath already knows. Moderate activity generally means your breathing picks up, but you can still speak in full sentences. A brisk walk might be moderate for one woman and vigorous for another, and that's not a failure on anybody's part. Your pace should be set by your body, your health conditions, your medications, and your environment — never by somebody else's watch, and never by comparison.

Try the 10-Minute Method

Walk for ten minutes after breakfast, lunch, or dinner. If ten feels like too much today, start with five. Once that starts to feel normal, add a few more minutes, or add a second short walk to your day. Small blocks of movement still add up toward your weekly total, and honestly, they're a lot easier to fit into a real life full of work, children, and responsibilities than one long workout ever was.

How Many Steps Should You Aim For?

You've probably heard that 10,000 steps a day is the magic number. Here's the truth, Sis — that number was never based on research to begin with; it came from a 1960s Japanese pedometer marketing campaign. What the research actually shows is more forgiving. A large analysis published in *The Lancet Public Health*, following cohorts around the world, found that the risk of early death drops steadily as steps increase, then levels off around 6,000 to 8,000 steps a day for adults over 60, and around 8,000 to 10,000 for adults under 60. Other research puts meaningful benefit as low as 7,000 steps a day.

So if 10,000 feels like a mountain right now, 7,000 is a real, evidence-backed goal on its own. And if you're nowhere near that yet, every extra thousand steps still moves the needle. This is a range to grow into, not a bar you fail to clear.

Do Not Skip Strength

Muscle-strengthening work becomes more important as we age, not less — especially for us. You do not need a gym membership or a rack of dumbbells. Sit-to-stands from a sturdy chair, wall push-ups, a resistance band, a light set of dumbbells, or carrying appropriately weighted household items are all real starting points. Good form matters far more than heavy weight. Slow and steady builds strength that lasts.

Make the Environment Work for You

Choose shoes that support you. Walk somewhere you feel safe. Carry water when the day calls for it. Adjust for heat, cold, poor air quality, or uneven ground — that's wisdom, not weakness. If outdoor walking isn't practical some days, a mall, a community center, a hallway, or an indoor walking video works just as well. Movement doesn't require perfect conditions. It just requires you.

Don't Forget to Hydrate

Movement asks more of your body, so give it more water back. A simple target is about half your body weight in ounces daily, and a little more on days you're active or sweating. If plain water feels boring, add a squeeze of lemon and a pinch of sea salt for natural electrolyte balance. Keep a bottle with you on your walk — hydration isn't separate from movement, it's part of it.

Let Pleasure Be Part of the Plan

Choose music that moves your spirit. Walk with a friend who makes you laugh. Take the route with the trees. Dance to three whole songs like nobody's watching, because nobody is. Pair your movement with something that feels good instead of using shame as your fuel. A sustainable wellness practice should help you build trust with your body — not deepen a war you never asked to be in.

“You don’t have to run to get where you’re going. You just have to keep walking toward it.”

— My Nana

When to Get Guidance First

If you have chest pain, unexplained shortness of breath, dizziness, fainting, a recent injury, or a medical condition that affects exercise safety, please get individualized guidance before pushing your intensity. There is wisdom in starting gently, and there is no shame in it either.

Start Simple, Sis

Your first goal can be beautifully simple: move a little more, sit a little less. Build from there. Consistency doesn’t come from a punishing plan — it grows from a plan that respects your actual life, your actual body, and your actual season.

Your healing starts at the root. ✦

Sources: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, current guidance; World Health Organization, WHO Guidelines on Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour (2020); Paluch et al., “Daily steps and all-cause mortality: a meta-analysis of 15 international cohorts,” The Lancet Public Health (2022). This article is educational and does not replace individualized medical advice.