



Let us improve fitness for a balanced life



The lessons we studied up to now have shown the things which are important to achieve good health. A person with good health is capable to do his day-to-day activities efficiently and successfully. In other words healthy person has a good physical, mental and social fitness.



This lesson will educate you on testing for physical fitness, the use of rhythmic activities to enhance physical fitness, importance of balancing emotions to ensure mental fitness and methods that can be used to do so.



Fitness

The teacher of Health walked in to the class happily.

Teacher : Good morning children!

Students : Good morning Teacher!

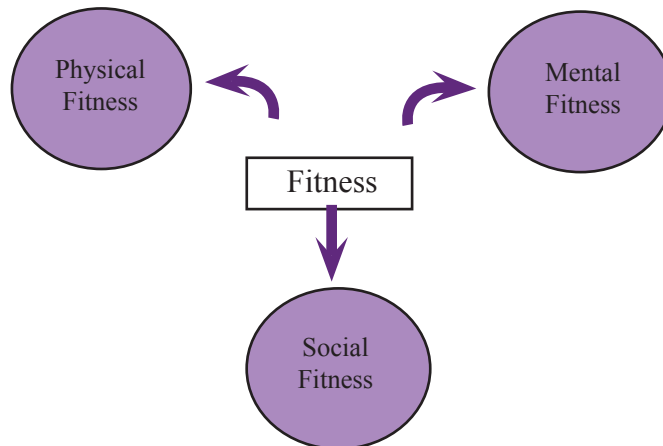
Teacher : Please be seated now. Yesterday I asked you to find out what fitness means. Who was able to find anything about fitness?

Lahiru : Teacher, my elder brother told me that fitness is the ability to do a task in the correct manner.

Teacher : Thank you Lahiru, what your brother has told you is correct. I am pleased that you took time to do what I asked you. Let me explain it to you further...

Fitness is the ability we have, to complete our activities successfully.

We can identify three main aspects of fitness.



Physical fitness is the ability of a person to do a physical activity in the proper manner with maximum efficiency.

Nimal : Teacher, then what are the factors that affect physical fitness?

Teacher : Factors such as sports and exercises, rest, sleep, healthy food have an effect on physical fitness.

Nimal : What about correct posture?

Teacher : Indeed! That is a very good question. Correct posture does have an impact on physical fitness.

Ranga : Then, what is meant by mental fitness, teacher?

Teacher : **Mental fitness is the ability to live a productive and happy life after recognising your strengths and facing the daily challenges of life.** It gives us the ability to handle stressful situations successfully.

Raghu : How can we identify a person who has mental fitness?

Teacher : People with mental fitness spend happy lives. They take correct decisions in life and have self respect. They are able to accept both victory and defeat with the same spirit and they handle stressful situations well.

Ranga : Teacher, wouldn't it be wonderful if we too can live like that?

Teacher : Yes of course! That is the kind of students, we want you to be. Engaging in aesthetic activities, yoga exercises, meditation, board games such as chess will help to improve our mental fitness.

Let me tell you about social fitness next. **Social fitness is the ability to build up healthy social relations that enable us to perform our day-to-day activities in the most productive manner.** People with social fitness are very amicable when dealing with others in society. They respect others and help others. They are obedient to the laws and are flexible.

Let us put it into practice

Read the first lesson again and prepare a table of good habits that can be cultivated to improve physical, mental and social fitness.

Physical fitness	Mental fitness	Social fitness



Importance of Maintaining Fitness

There are many advantages of maintaining physical, mental and social fitness :

- Ability to spend a healthy life
- Improved efficiency
- Improved social adaptation
- Greater mental satisfaction
- Improved personality
- Improved sporting skills.



Figure 9.1

If we are physically, mentally and socially fit, we can spend a healthy life. Physical illnesses are a challenge that we all have to face on a daily basis. Therefore, let us try to understand this by thinking of such a situation.

- We are not able to carry out our daily routine efficiently when we are ill.
- We are not able to maintain satisfactory relations with our friends and family in a light and happy mood when we are ill.
- We are not able to engage in sports too.
- When we are ill, our physical, mental, social and spiritual fitness is poor. Therefore, we are not able to act in the way we usually do.
- This causes a negative change in our personality.
- Since we are not able to perform the usual activities, we are not very happy or satisfied.

The above example shows us that we are not able to perform well in society when our physical, mental, social and spiritual fitness is poor.

A person with good fitness will be able to gain the following advantages:

- Ability to have a healthy and strong body
- Ability to reduce obesity
- Prevention of non communicable diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure and heart attacks
- Increased activeness and efficiency
- Ability to achieve victory in sporting events
- Ability to live happily and free of tension
- Increased strength to face challenges
- Ability to provide optimum service to the country, the family and the place of work with the good relations fostered
- Ability to be a good friend
- Suitability for leadership.



A regular repeated pattern of movement or sound is called a rhythm.

Listen to the sounds in the environment. Listen to the sound of the wind, movement of trees, singing of birds and sounds made by other animals. You will be able to recognise that all these sounds have a rhythm of their own. Listen to the sound of your breathing, heartbeat and feel the rhythm of these movements.

Your physical fitness can be improved through engaging in rhythmic activities.



Figure 9.2

Rhythmic activities that you could follow

1. Physical fitness exercises
2. Skipping rope exercises
3. Ballet exercises
4. Exercising to the rhythm of music
5. Aerobics
6. Rhythmic jumping
7. Rhythmic turning.

Doing things with a rhythm has many advantages

1. It reduces fatigue.
2. It helps us engage in sports with enjoyment.
3. It helps us stay active for a longer period of time.
4. It makes our movements attractive.
5. It improves the activeness of the nerves and muscles.



Characteristics of physical fitness

Certain characteristics of our body are useful for our day-to-day activities and these characteristics can be improved through specific activities. These are known as characteristics of physical fitness.

1. Strength
2. Speed
3. Endurance
4. Flexibility
5. Coordination

1. Strength

Strength is the ability to do something against resistance, e.g. lifting an object.



2. Speed

Speed gives the ability to do something within a lesser duration of time,
e.g. running hundred meters within a shorter period of time.

3. Endurance

Endurance is the ability to engage in a task for a longer period of time without feeling any discomfort,
e.g. ability to run a longer distance.

4. Flexibility

Flexibility gives you the ability to bend and work your joints within a wider range,
e.g. gymnastic exercises.

5. Coordination

Coordination allows your nerves and muscles to have a better communication that results in smoother and more accurate movements,
e.g. throwing a ball and catching it.



Figure 9.3

These characteristics can be developed further through training. They can also be tested using various methods to determine the degree of physical fitness. These tests will help to maintain fitness at an appropriate level.

Let us put it into practice

Carry out the following fitness tests under your teacher's guidance and record the results you obtain.

- Assessing the ability to throw
- Testing the ability to bend forward
- 50m dash run test
- Long jump test
- 600 m/800 m run test
- Activity coordination test



Improving fitness

Fitness can be improved by engaging in various activities, exercises and sports. If you are engaging in such activity or sport, it is best if you can spend an hour or more on it every day. If you are suffering from an illness or a physical weakness, it is important to follow medical advice when engaging in fitness improvement programmes. The following activities are a few that you can carry out in order to improve your physical fitness.

1. Rapid walking
2. Jogging
3. Cycling
4. Various jumping activities
5. Swimming
6. Running on sand or on the beach
7. Engaging in a simple game such as "meeyo meemo"
8. Skipping rope exercise
9. Engaging in a sport (volleyball, netball, football, badminton or any other similar game)



Figure 9.4



Let us balance our emotions for our mental fitness

We develop feelings such as sadness, happiness and anger on many occasions in our lifetime. When our feelings are very strong, we call them emotions. Emotions result in physical changes as well as behavioural changes in us. Our ability to have balanced emotions, i.e., our ability to behave in a balanced manner at a time we are emotional, is a characteristic of mental well being.

Some of the emotions we feel are very pleasant and they bring positive outcomes. Happiness, excitement, enjoyment, gratitude, sympathy and generosity are some pleasant emotions. Anger, fear, disgust, sadness and jealousy are unpleasant emotions.

It is important to identify these pleasant and unpleasant emotions that are felt by you or by others at different times. The ability to identify emotions, understanding the importance of expressing emotions and identification of methods that help to balance emotions, will be useful to maintain favourable mental health.

- While you are at the marketplace, your mother refuses to buy the toy you asked for.
- Your grandmother gifts you a new outfit on your birthday.
- Your principal announces at the assembly that a student from your class has won the first place in an inter-provincial athletics competition.

Note down the emotions that you and others connected to the incident, would have felt at each of the situations given in the table 9.1.

Table 9.1

Situation	My feelings	Feelings of the others
Your mother refuses to buy the toy you asked for	Anger
Grandmother gifts you with a new outfit on your birthday	Happiness Love
Finding out that a student from your class has won first place in an inter-provincial athletics competition	Happiness

There may be other similar incidents that you have faced. Write down the emotions that you and others might have felt at such times. Recognising and understanding emotions will help you maintain good relations with other people.

Discuss pleasant emotions and unpleasant emotions with other students in your class

Let us put it into practice

Collect images that show different emotions through facial expressions from newspapers, magazines and books and make a booklet. Write down the occasions that would cause those emotions.



Factors that influence emotional balance

1. Situation
2. How we interpreted the situation
3. Our personality
4. Behaviour of the others

Emotions we feel can differ according to the situation. We feel happy when we win or when someone praises us. Losing something, not being able to achieve what we want would make us feel sad. The way we interpret an incident will influence the emotions we feel. For example, if you are able to understand that your mother refused to buy the toy you wanted because she wanted to spend that money on something more useful than a toy, you will be able to control your emotions. Then, you will be able to face the incident without feeling upset.

You may have noticed that some people have a quick temper while some people are very patient. Quick temper, kindness, patience and offering to handle responsibility are personality traits. Emotions that are felt and the ability to control those emotions depend on the personality of each person. Furthermore, feelings and behaviour of other people have an influence over our emotions. For example, if we go to watch a game, the music, dancing and cheering by others to express their joy will make us feel happy too.

Balancing our emotions will enable us to maintain a good mental health. Maintaining our mental health has many advantages and it gives us the opportunity to be a virtuous person in society.



Importance of emotional balance

- Ability to control feelings
- Ability to maintain well being
- Happiness
- Recognition in society
- Having less problems in society
- Ability to be positive
- Ability to be calm and not aggressive
- Having less conflicts



Figure 9.5



How to maintain emotional balance?

It is important that we try to control our responses to emotions such as anger and sadness.

In order to control our responses, first we must identify what these emotions are.

Instead of reacting to emotions such as sadness, anger and fear immediately, we can discuss these situations and identify reasons that caused these emotions with a friend or member of the family. It will help us to control our emotions and react better.

Maintaining good relationships with others will reduce the unwholesome emotions we feel and increase positive emotions such as happiness. In addition to that, balanced emotions will help us reduce stress and be more relaxed.

Methods of maintaining emotional balance?

- Identify the feelings you get
- Discuss with others, the emotions you have and the way you must respond
- Maintain good interpersonal relationships
- Take steps to reduce stress
- Control your emotions
- Be realistic
- Engage in sports activities

Can you remember that you learnt, what you can do when you have unpleasant emotions, in the first lesson on page 22?



Figure 9.6

Let us put it into practice

There are some small activities that can help us control unwholesome emotions as soon as they are felt by us. Read the relevant section in the first lesson and find a few such activities.

Let us see the world through others' eyes

The cloud game can be played with two or three friends or members of the family

- Go out into the open from where you can see the sky (in the morning or evening) when there are clouds.
- Look at one or few clouds.
- Imagine a figure after looking at the shape of the cloud.
- Explain to the others about the figure while drawing it in space with your finger
(Explain it quickly before the shape of the cloud changes)
- Exchange your ideas about the figures in the clouds seen by each individual.

Enjoy the benefits that you gain from this game

- Seeing the same thing in different ways
- The ability to explain to the others what one sees
- The ability to listen to others
- The ability to respect views of others



Figure 9.7

Now we know....

Fitness is the ability to engage in day-to-day activities successfully. Maintaining physical, mental and social fitness will enable us to live a healthy life. Characteristics of fitness are important when improving fitness. Fitness testing is used to measure these characteristics. Fitness characteristics can be improved through training. Rhythm is important to carry out our day-to-day activities in an efficient manner.

Pleasant and unpleasant emotions can be created in us as responses to various situations. These emotions are influenced by the situation, our interpretation of the situation, our personality and the behaviour of others. A person with balanced emotions will have a sound mental health and good interpersonal relations. Identifying the emotions we feel, discussing our emotions with others, maintaining good interpersonal relations and reducing stress are important to maintain emotional balance.

Let us test our knowledge

1. Give three advantages of maintaining fitness.
2. Write down three advantages of using rhythm in your day-to-day activities.
3. Write five characteristics of fitness.
4. Write five activities that can be carried out to improve fitness.
5. Give four factors that influence emotional balance.
6. Write three methods that can be used to maintain emotional balance.