



Mind, Body, Me

It's easy to think of yourself as having two separate “selves”: the physical (body) and the mental (mind). And yes, those two aspects of self *are* different, but they're not separate. Far from it! Your body and mind are a package deal, and whatever you do with one affects the other. In this badge, you'll learn how to use this connection to boost your overall wellness, which is the state of being in good physical, mental, and emotional health. Mind, body, ME—wellness is a two-way street, and you're the driver.

Steps

1. Explore the body-mind connection
2. Make time for you
3. Move it outdoors
4. Be mindful
5. Focus on your mental health

Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I'll understand how my body and mind work together to support my well-being.



Step 1: Explore the body-mind connection

Positive thoughts, emotions, and attitudes affect your body. They make you feel physically better. And the reverse is also true—when your body feels good, your mind will follow. Try a little self-care, body *or* mind, and see what it does for your overall well-being.

Sample activities:

Activate your body’s natural mood boosters. When you move vigorously, your body releases feel-good chemicals and mood-linked chemical messengers in the brain. Get the good feelings flowing by moving BIG in any way you like (within your comfort level) for 20 to 30 minutes. Maybe you’ll play a sport, dance around your room, or ride a bike. Doing less is okay, too—you might not get the same chemical boost, but it’ll still make you feel great. Journal about your mood before and after activity. Find what works best for you, then keep it up! (But don’t overdo it. Your body needs rest, too!)



Host a self-care day. Gather a group of friends or family and have a self-care day where everyone enjoys a little pampering or relaxation. You could have spa-type offerings such as nail painting, hairstyling, or shoulder rubs. You could also include stress-relieving options such as meditation, coloring, or breathing exercises. If you can, play relaxing music and sit on comfy seats—really make it cozy! Whether you pamper your body, your mind, or both, your WHOLE self will reap the benefits.

Making Contact

Some types of self-care (think massage or pedicure) require close physical contact. Lots of people LOVE these hands-on pampering experiences. Others find them a little too, well, hands-on—and that’s okay! It’s up to every person to define their personal comfort levels. Whether it’s at the spa or in everyday life, speak up for yourself to put your mind and body at ease.

Step 2: Make time for you

Life gets so busy. Between school, homework, activities, maybe a job, and all the other things that demand your time, it’s easy to go, go, go all day long without stopping. But you need to make time for YOU, too. Find out how to build wellness into your daily life. It’s totally doable—and you’re totally worth it!



Sample activities:

Take a wellness break. Choose several wellness boosters you can do in five minutes or less (stretching, hydrating, deep breathing, going outside, or anything else you enjoy). Then commit to taking a short break several times a day to do one or more of these activities. You could set reminders on a device, if you have one. Stick to the program for at least a week and see how it makes you feel.

Shake up your schedule and routines. You can always sneak “me time” into your everyday activities. For instance, you could do a craft while watching a show or stretch during an online class. Think about doing things at different times of day, too, like in the early morning or at lunchtime. Break out of your routine and break into wellness!

Five-Minute Wellness Boosters



- Stretch
- Practice deep breathing
- Go outside for some fresh air
- Write down three things you’re grateful for
- Play a favorite song (and sing or dance along)
- Do a few quick exercises
- Enjoy an energy-boosting snack
- Hydrate with a drink of water

Step 3: Move it outdoors

Getting outdoors has huge benefits for your mind and body. It doesn’t matter whether you go way out into nature or venture down a city street. *Anything* that gets you outside can give you a lift! Let’s move out of the box (school, home, whatever) and into wellness.

Sample activities:

Try outdoor meditation. Meditation is a wellness practice that involves focusing and clearing your mind. In outdoor meditation, your focus is nature—the feel of a breeze or the sun’s warmth, the sounds of birds or wind rustling through leaves, the smell of grass and flowers. Get outside anywhere and anytime for a little meditation. Lose yourself in nature—and find yourself in the process.

► **For more fun:** If you go camping, try starting or ending each day with a quick outdoor meditation session. Connect with nature and feed your soul!

Work up a sweat while helping out. Choose an active, outdoor service project, such as community gardening or a park cleanup. Donate your hard work to make a difference. Remember that your body doesn’t just help you—it can be the tool that helps others, too. And that feels GREAT!

Let’s Stay In

Can’t get outdoors? That’s okay! Try these indoor modifications, or come up with your own:

For meditation: Listen to recorded nature sounds; sit in a toasty sunbeam; open a window to enjoy a breeze; light a pine-scented candle

For service projects: Choose something that has an indoor part now (like stuffing bags) and an outdoor part later (like working an event). If winter weather is the issue, you could research and plan a future outdoor service project for a warmer month.

Science Shows...

Check out these scientifically proven outdoor wellness boosters:

- Natural light increases levels of vitamin D, which strengthens the bones and immune system.
- Outdoor time lowers cortisol (a stress hormone) and increases serotonin (a mood booster).
- Outdoor physical activities improve heart health, circulation, lung function, and strength.
- Green spaces improve brain function, creativity, and attention span.

So, what are you waiting for?
Get outdoors and feel your best!





The Best Habit

Being mindful is a habit. Once you start practicing it, you'll find it becomes automatic.

And this change isn't just a mindset—it's physical! Your brain grows new nerve pathways as you develop new skills. This means that by practicing mindfulness—whether that's through meditation or just being present in the now—you're helping yourself for today, tomorrow, and all the tomorrows beyond that. You're building positive mental “muscles” that can last a lifetime.

Know Yourself

Mindfulness is a tool for feeling good, but it can also help you recognize when you don't. Pay attention to cues from your body and mind. If it seems like something is a little off—anything from experiencing computer eye strain to feeling emotionally unstable—let a trusted adult know right away. They can help you get what you need to feel better.



Step 4: Be mindful

Mindfulness means focusing on what your mind and body are doing and feeling, *right now*. Which means you can make any positive changes you need, *right now*. Mindfulness puts you in charge of the moment, and that's pretty cool! Learn how to embrace the NOW and support your wellness—today.

Sample activities:

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Try yoga, tai chi, or qigong. Yoga, tai chi, and qigong are mindfulness practices that originated in East and South Asia. They all use slow, controlled movements, breathing techniques, and meditative elements to promote overall well-being. Try a class and see what it can do for you! As an alternative, take a mindful walk or ride, whatever you find most comfortable. Focus on the sensory input you receive from your surroundings and your body. Slow down and nurture the mind-body connection for whole-self wellness.
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Try body scan meditation. Body scanning is a mindful meditation practice where you focus on each body part in turn, looking for areas of pain or tension, and release that energy as much as possible. Learn about it, then give it a try! When it comes to relaxation, sometimes it really is mind over matter.
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► **For more fun:** Expand the experience by adding mind scanning to the activity! Before or after the physical scan, check in on your current thoughts, emotions, memories, dreams, or anything else you'd like to include. Focus on soothing any mental trouble spots you find.

Step 5: Focus on mental health

When you're in a great mental place, your body feels the benefits. When you're not—well, your body feels that, too. Take care of your mental health to feel your physical best. Your body *and* your mind will thank you.

Sample activities:

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Try some creative art therapy. In creative art therapy, you make any kind of art—from interpretive dance to sketching, sculpting to music—to process feelings and enhance your mental well-being. Learn about this practice, then choose a medium and create your own masterpiece! Focus on the process, not the end result, to give yourself room for self-reflection, expression, and emotional release. Putting your body to work is a proven way to put your mind at ease.
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Learn about how stress affects your body. Stress doesn't just affect your mental health; it affects your body, too. Look into this important topic to learn about stress's physical impacts and how you can reduce them. Consider inviting an expert to speak to you and your friends about practical stress-busters for everyday life. Make a list of at least five methods and give them a try.



Sleep Hygiene

Sleep is crucial to your mental and physical health. Most teenagers need eight to ten hours of quality Z's, but lots of things can get in the way of that. Make sleep a priority! Power down with these practices that support consistent, restful sleep:

- Follow a regular sleep schedule (yes, even on weekends).
- Keep your sleeping space cool, dark, and quiet.
- Avoid screen time for an hour before bedtime.
- Establish and stick to a relaxing bedtime routine.
- Limit evening drinks (to avoid midnight bathroom trips).

What else would you add to the list?
Find a routine that works for you and snooze your way to wellness!



Appreciate your whole self.

Check out the Girl Scouts Mental Wellness patch program and learn to take care of your mind as well as your body.

Volunteer’s Guide

Tips and ideas to help guide your troop through the Mind, Body, Me badge

This badge line addresses body issues and related topics. Some Girl Scouts may find these topics sensitive. As the facilitator, your delivery is critical in providing a positive experience. Visit the Volunteer Toolkit on mygs.girlscouts.org for information and resources that will help you to make the most of this experience, along with detailed activity instructions and meeting aids.

Step 1: Explore the body-mind connection

Time: 30–40 minutes

Ask: How do you think your body and mind are connected? What role does their connection play in overall well-being?

Share: Positive thoughts, emotions, and attitudes make you feel physically better. The reverse is also true—when your body feels good, your mind will follow! Try a little self-care, mental and physical, and see what it does for your overall well-being.

Sample activities:

Activate your body’s natural mood boosters. Have Seniors choose a vigorous activity (within everyone’s comfort zone and abilities) to try during the meeting. It could be dancing, aerobics, or anything else the group likes. To introduce the activity, explain that when people move vigorously, their bodies release chemicals that make them feel better and improve their mood. Explain that 20 to 30 minutes per session is ideal for maximum mood-boosting benefits, but anything they can do is great. Have Seniors journal about their mood, do the chosen activity together, then journal again. Do they notice any changes in how they feel? What other activities, if any, might they like to try on their own?

Materials: *none*

Host a self-care day. Have Seniors plan and run a self-care day, either within or outside of your meeting, where everyone enjoys a little pampering or relaxation. The event could include spa-type offerings, such as nail painting or shoulder rubs, and stress-relieving options, such as meditation or coloring. Play relaxing music, provide comfy cushions for seating, and let the wellness unfold! Afterward, have Seniors reflect on how they felt at the end of their self-care day and what techniques they could use in their everyday lives.

Materials: *supplies will vary depending on the activities*

Step 2: Make time for you

Time: 30–40 minutes

Ask: Do you ever feel like you’re too swamped to take care of your mental and physical well-being?

Share: Life gets so busy. Between school, sports, jobs, and other activities, it’s easy to go, go, go all day long without stopping. But you need to make time for YOU, too. Find out how to include wellness in your busy schedule.

Sample activities:

Take a wellness break. Have Seniors brainstorm wellness boosters they can do in five minutes or less (stretching, drinking water, deep breathing, etc.). Have them commit to taking a short break several times a day to do one or more of these activities. Suggest that they set reminders on a device, if they have one. Ask them to stick to the program for at least a week and see how they feel. At the next meeting, have Seniors share their experiences with the group.

Materials: *paper; pens and pencils*

Shake up your schedule and routines. Have Seniors brainstorm a list of ways to include wellness activities in their everyday routines. Examples might be doing a craft while watching a show or stretching during an online class. Encourage Seniors to think about doing wellness activities at different times of day, too, like in the early morning or at lunchtime. Ask them to experiment for a week, then report back to the group about their experiences.

Materials: *paper; pens and pencils*

Step 3: Move it outdoors

Time: 20–30 minutes

Ask: What are your favorite outdoor activities? How do they make you feel?

Share: Getting outdoors is great for your mind and body. You can go way out into nature or venture down a city

street. Anything that gets you outside can give you a lift! Today we’ll find out how to move out of the box (school, home, whatever) and into wellness.

Sample activities:

Try outdoor meditation. Explain that meditation is a practice that involves focusing and clearing the mind. In outdoor meditation, the focus is the sounds, smells, and sensations of nature. Have Seniors learn about basic meditation techniques online or watch demonstration videos, then go outdoors as a group and try it out. If going outdoors isn’t possible or practical, meditate indoors while playing recorded nature sounds, opening a window to catch a breeze, sitting in a warm sunbeam, or adding other “nature” touches.

Materials: *computers, smartphones, or tablets; yoga mat or towel for each Senior*

Work up a sweat while helping out. Help Seniors identify an active, outdoor service project to help with. Examples might include community gardening or a park cleanup. Make any necessary arrangements, then participate as a group. Afterward, guide Seniors to consider how the work made them feel, both physically and mentally, and how they used their body as a tool to help others. If going outdoors isn’t possible or practical due to weather or time of year, have Seniors plan a future service project for a time when conditions will be better.

Materials: *computers, smartphones, or tablets*

Step 4: Be mindful

Time: 20–30 minutes

Ask: How does your body feel right now? How about your mind and emotions?

Share: Mindfulness means focusing on what your mind and body are doing and feeling, right now, so you can make positive changes as needed. Find out how to embrace the “now” and take charge of your well-being.

Sample activities:

Try yoga, tai chi, or qigong. Have Seniors go online and read about yoga, tai chi, and qigong, three mindfulness practices that originated in East and South Asia. Choose one of these practices, then find a class (in person or online) and attend as a group. If this isn’t possible for your group, consider taking a mindful walk or ride where Seniors focus on the sensory input they receive from their surroundings and their body.

Materials: *computers, smartphones, or tablets; yoga mat or towel for each Senior (if needed for a class)*

Try body scan meditation. Have Seniors learn about body scan meditation and its well-being benefits. They could look it up online or take a class, or you could bring in an expert to demonstrate. Have Seniors make a list of body parts to focus on in a body scan session, starting at the head and ending at the toes. Add mind scanning if you like, focusing on aspects like emotions, thoughts, dreams, and memories. Then have one Senior volunteer to lead the session while others participate. If all Seniors want to participate, you can lead the session yourself. Afterward, have Seniors talk about their experiences and whether they feel any different.

Materials: *computers, smartphones, or tablets; paper; pencils and pens; yoga mat or towel for each Senior*

Step 5: Focus on your mental health

Time: 20–30 minutes

Ask: What do you do regularly to take care of your mental health? Are there other things you’d like to try?

Share: When you’re in a great mental place, your body feels the benefits. When you’re not—well, your body feels that, too. Today, you’ll find out how to take care of your mental health so you can feel your physical best.

Sample activities:

Try some creative art therapy. Explain to Seniors that in creative art therapy, you make any kind of art—from interpretive dance to sketching, sculpting to music—to process feelings and enhance your mental well-being. Have Seniors learn about this practice online or from an expert in person, then choose a medium and create their own masterpiece. Encourage them to focus on the process, rather than the end result, to give themselves room for self-reflection, expression, and emotional release. When they’re done, give them time to share their experience with the group, if they choose.

Materials: *supplies will vary, depending on the projects; consider asking Seniors to provide their own supplies*

Learn about how stress affects your body. Have Seniors learn about stress and its physical impacts from a mental health professional, guidance counselor, or other expert in person, or online if preferred. After learning about stress, have the group brainstorm stress reduction techniques. Ask each Senior to choose at least five techniques to try over the next week. Suggest that they journal about their experiences and think about which techniques work best. Have them choose at least one technique to use on an ongoing basis.

Materials: *computers, smartphones, or tablets; paper; pencils and pens*



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