

MEDICAL MINUTE

EXERCISE

To me, exercise is not just a four-letter word—it's worse. It somehow managed to double itself into an eight-letter word, which feels unnecessarily aggressive. Now there's a new study suggesting that matching your exercise style to your personality can help people stick with fitness routines, improve strength, and reduce stress. Right. Because apparently my personality has been the problem, not my lack of motivation.

Researchers found that extroverts preferred high-intensity workouts. Of course they did. Extroverts are the people who hear “burpees” and think, “Great! A group activity!”

Those more prone to anxiety, or neuroticism, favored short bursts of activity and enjoyed less monitoring. Finally, a fitness category for people who want to exercise briefly, privately, and with no witnesses. They also had the greatest drop in stress levels after an eight-week fitness program, which makes sense—nothing reduces stress like knowing no one is holding a clipboard and judging your lunges.



Conscientious individuals exercised consistently but weren't motivated by enjoyment. Is there such a thing as enjoyment and exercising in the same sentence? These people were motivated more by health outcomes, which sounds very admirable and also suspiciously like something a doctor would say while ruining your afternoon.

Overall, finding enjoyable, personality-aligned activities may be the key to long-term exercise success and better mental health. In other words, if the workout matches who you are, you might keep doing it. If it doesn't, your sneakers may continue their current career as decorative floor art.

I didn't see anything in this study about the benefits of getting out of your recliner, walking into the kitchen, opening the refrigerator, and thoughtfully selecting a snack—which matches my personality perfectly. That routine includes cardio, decision-making, and resistance training if the pickle jar is involved. Go figure.