



## A positive mood changer...

### How to do it...

- **Choose a route** that is preferably in parkland or open space where your attention does not need to be diverted to crossing roads or traffic.
- **Spend just a few minutes gathering yourself and preparing.** Standing tall with your feet shoulder width apart, take a few deep breaths.
- **Inhale through your nose** to the count of 4, and then exhale through your mouth to 6 or more counts, as you slowly exhale, consciously allow your shoulders to relax. Inhale again and be aware of your belly extending, as you exhale, feel your arms and hands drop by your side. Take a few more breaths and each time, consciously allow your body to soften, allowing yourself to be completely in the moment.
- **As you begin walking**, allow your arms to swing freely by your side
- **Find a comfortable pace** that you can maintain, and keep it constant, and as you walk begin to listen to the rhythm in your step. This is a measured walk, so be aware of walking too fast.
- **Now connect the rhythm of your feet with your breathing.** Depending on your pace, you may be able to take 2 or 3 steps for every inhale and a few more on the exhale, it doesn't matter, what is important is that it is constant.
- **As you walk and breathe**, be aware and alert to your surroundings, notice the landscape, the colours, the smells, the detail in the moment and the sensation of walking itself.
- **Finally**, when you are comfortable with the rhythm, you have set bringing your walking and breathing together, create a positive affirmation or mantra that goes in step to the rhythm. Create phrases such as "Every day I feel fitter and healthier" or "My life gets better and better" something that supports you at this time. You then repeat these over and over again as you walk. You can also use visualization by focusing on something that you want to happen in your life, you imagine it fully as though it is happening now, picture the detail, how you feel and most importantly picture a successful outcome.
- **More is better in this case**, so walk as often as you can for a minimum of 15 minutes.

It can take a little practise, so if you find it challenging, persevere and try using left and right as your mantra, repeat in step with walking and go from there.

Evidence has shown that just any walking for 10 minutes a day can change your mood. A study at California State University has shown that walking actually changes your brain chemistry by boosting endorphins releasing natural painkilling chemicals. So, you can actually walk yourself into a good mood, and the more you walk, the more you will feel energised and positive.