

# Rethinking the clock through physical literacy



Movement can be anything, including playing with a bunch of table tennis balls as columnist Thorsten Gohl demonstrates. Photo courtesy of Thorsten Gohl

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Time isn't always what holds us back. Sometimes it's how we see it.

In our last column, *The Measure of a Moment*, we explored how physical literacy is woven into the everyday, how movement doesn't always show up as training sessions or gym classes, but in snowball fights, hallway badminton games, or a walk home that turns into a race with a friend.

This week, we're staying with that everyday rhythm and taking a look at one of the most common barriers to physical activity: time.

**The Myth of "No Time"**

"I'd love to be more active, but I just don't have time."

We've all heard it and most of us have said it. It's understandable. Between work, school, caregiving, and the endless to-do lists, our days feel full. Not even talking about social media. We don't want to go into that rabbit hole. But maybe the problem isn't time, maybe it's what we think movement needs to be.

Movement doesn't need the perfect environment. It doesn't require a gym or a clear

hour on the calendar. What it does need is a starting point.

Some examples could include:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator;
- Walk to work instead of driving;
- Have a random dance party while making lunch;
- Stretch while watching TV;
- Balance on one foot while brushing your teeth.

These aren't "workouts," they're moments, part of life. And they count. Every time.

**Small Movements, Big Shifts**

Let's say you move for five minutes, twice a day. That's 10 minutes of activity you didn't do before. Stack that up across a week and you're creating something meaningful.

Because here's the truth:

- Consistency is more powerful than intensity;
- Movement can be playful, unstructured and joyful;

- Physical literacy is not a stopwatch. It's a lifelong journey rooted in your confidence, competence, and motivation to move

The more you find small ways to move, the more confident and capable you feel. That's what physical literacy is about. Not performance, not perfection, but possibility built through tiny moments that add up.

**Time as a gift, not a constraint**

We often treat time like a barrier, something in the way. A limitation. A stressor. But what if we flipped the narrative? What if time wasn't something we run out of but something we get to choose how to use? We are in control.

Movement isn't something you have to earn, it's something you deserve. And when we give ourselves permission to move, without pressure, we start to notice some other things:

- Our mood lifts;
- Our energy shifts;

- We feel just a bit more like ourselves

You don't have to run a marathon. But you can reclaim one, five, or 10 minutes and feel better because of it. Because in that space, you're not just moving your body, you're reminding yourself I matter enough to move.

Try this today:

- Take a one-minute move break. Right now, as you're finishing this column. Stand, stretch, breathe. It all counts.
- Invite someone to move, exercise, or play a sport with you. No plan needed, just an open moment.
- Notice the ways you already move... and celebrate them, like those epic Christmas holiday dance-off competitions or snow-clearing sprints that double as a workout

In the rhythm of everyday life, movement doesn't need a perfect schedule. It just needs a heartbeat, a starting point, and a little room to breathe. And maybe, just maybe, a different way of looking at time. Not as something we run out of, but as something we can choose to give to ourselves, to our health, and to the moments that move us.

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**GUEST COMMENT**

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