



The Everymind at Work Guide to starting your own 4 Week Walking Challenge

Sometimes the simplest of health initiatives are the most impactful on employee wellbeing. In the context of workplace benefits, it's been proven that those who walk at least 20 minutes, 5 days a week, had 43% fewer sick days than those who exercised once a week or less ([Harvard](#)). The **Everymind at Work Walking Challenge Guide** will help you implement a collaborative approach to getting employees moving for both their physical and mental health, without it being too time-intensive!

How it Works

Your company Walking Challenge will operate as an organised internal event that will ask employees to track the distance that they walk each day. Employees can either track their steps individually or as a team - you decide!

The person or team with the most distance covered at the end of the challenge could win a predetermined prize, awarded by the company **OR** you could simply allow it to be a collective achievement that acknowledges all who participated.

In this guide, we will talk about:

- The benefits of a workplace Walking Challenge
- Your Walking challenge timeline
- Setting up and preparing for the challenge
- Launching the Challenge
- Keeping up engagement and motivation
- Concluding the challenge

We will also provide you with all the resources, email templates and comms you need to get started through to completion.

1. The Benefits of a Workplace Walking Challenge

Some of the benefits of hosting a Walking Challenge are pretty obvious - it's free, it fits around busy schedules, there's no 'investment' needed by employees and of course, it can be done almost anywhere! However, in terms of how it can benefit personal and organisational wellbeing, the gains are endless.



Promotes a Culture of Goal Setting

Fitness or health goals (like walking a specific distance per day) are positively related to behavioural outcomes. The more specific the goal, the higher the performance in other areas ([Latham & Locke, 2007](#)). When someone sets a goal for their physical health and then demonstrates to themselves that they can see that goal through to completion, it translates into goal-setting confidence in other areas of their life - including their work!



Impact on Environment

One of the lesser spoken-about benefits of a Walking Challenge is the positive impact that it can have on the environment too. If you are a workplace that is working towards creating a healthier future for the environment as well as for employee wellbeing, this challenge will fit in perfectly. In 2017, 37% of Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions were from transport, 40% of those transport emissions were from cars alone (UK Government GHG Conversion Factors for company reporting, 2019.). The more you can encourage employees to walk their journeys, the less likely they are to choose options that are unfavourable for the environment.



Builds Teamwork

When people feel that they are contributing to a goal/outcome of a collective group, it can help boost feelings of connectedness and like they're part of 'something bigger'. The collaboration towards a shared goal with the Walking Challenge can therefore improve team efficiency, innovation and relationships. Walking challenges can also help cultivate a more inclusive culture, where being there for each other is promoted and celebrated.



Encourages Healthy Habits

When we walk, we experience increased blood flow to the brain and body, which explains why there are such huge benefits to both our physical and mental health. If we start by building an accessible and achievable habit like walking into our lives, the positive benefits achieved will encourage us to make other healthy habits that influence different areas of our wellbeing. Sometimes it only takes something small to act as a catalyst for further growth and improvements.



Increased Productivity

Going for a walk can mean much more than just "taking a break" from responsibilities. In fact, walking has been proven to improve productivity by promoting new connections between brain cells, reducing the ageing of brain tissue and increasing the volume of the hippocampus, a region of the brain that is crucial for memory ([NCBI](#)). Employees are not only more likely to be productive, but creative too - in fact, walking has been found to boost creativity by up to 60% ([ACE, 2015](#)).

2. Your Walking Challenge Timeline



3. Setting Up and Preparing for the Challenge

The Length of Challenge

We have formulated our launch comms based on a **4 Week Challenge** but you might decide that you want this to be a week-long or year-long challenge - the choice is yours! You might also decide to coincide the event with:

- A lead-up to the holiday season
- A kickstart to the new year
- The run up to a particularly busy time for your organisation to encourage self-care
- A specific wellbeing awareness day/month
- A link to something else going on so employees can make a connection to the 'why'. For example, on the back of an engagement/wellbeing survey - keep it really simple with "you said.....we did"

There is no right or wrong length for a challenge such as this, but we encourage you to give some thought to the time at which you want to launch the challenge and for how long you wish to run it.

Individual or Team Effort

A few points to consider when deciding how you'll run the challenge:

- Will you collect your 'distance data' from individuals or from whole teams?
- How would you split the 'Teams' - across divisions? Offices? Geographical locations?
- Who will you need on board to help communicate the challenge? This will vary, depending on the size of your organisation and what teams you have in place. Ensure that you engage with the right people to create alignment on any wellbeing activity and that launch Comms are released in a structured way, complementing other company activity around engagement & wellbeing

The most simple way to implement this challenge is on an individual 'entry' level, but that doesn't mean there is not a benefit to having teams contribute their total distances too.



Set the Specific Goal

There are different ways to set the overriding 'Goal' for the Challenge. Here are some ideas:

- Covering 1000 miles across the company
- Walking the distance from X Office to X Warehouse
- Walking from the UK to New Zealand
- Relating the distance to a well-known company figure (e.g. year of origin, sales target, number of years operating etc.)
- Using a number from a mental health/wellbeing statistic e.g. collectively walking 300,000 miles as 300,000 people lose their jobs each year due to a long-term mental health condition ([Gov.uk](#), 2017)

This is an opportunity to get really creative and make it mean something specific to your organisation - the choice is yours!

Your 'Tracker' Tool

To collect your employees' walking data, you will need to provide them with the means to submit their total distances each day/week. There are plenty of 'paid' options available online but we've focused on the two free options which will be just as simple to implement.

- **Free option 1:** You could set up a FREE Strava Club for your organisation - we have written a guide on how to set up a Strava Club (see pages 10 & 11)
- **Free option 2:** you could ask employees or managers to submit their total distance to a simple form - we have created an example tracker (see page 16) which you can print and share.



4. Launching The Challenge

Now that you have got everything prepared, it is all about communication! To save a little bit of time, we've prepared an email template for you to tweak for your own employee audience. All of the other email templates from Week 1 - Week 4 can be found on pages 14 and 15 of this guide.

Introductory email (to be sent 1 week before the challenge begins)...

WELCOME TO THE 4 WEEK WALKING CHALLENGE!

We understand at [ORGANISATION NAME] that it isn't always easy to find time for self-care, but it is so important that we are able to look after our physical and mental health in ways that are achievable and form healthy habits.

That is why we are inviting you to join us on our **4 Week Walking Challenge** starting on [START DATE].

It's going to be very easy to get involved:

- Join our Strava Club [PERSONAL LINK] and start logging your walks OR download this template for tracking your total daily distance
- Watch out for our weekly emails with reflection prompts!
- That's it!

Our [DIRECTOR/FOUNDER] is also getting involved with the challenge too:
[INSERT QUOTE FROM LEADERSHIP TEAM]

If anyone has any questions about getting involved with the challenge, please do reply to this email and we will support you with getting set up!



5. Keeping Up Engagement and Motivation

Reminders!

We would recommend sending daily or weekly communications and reminders to keep the challenge at the forefront of employees' thoughts!

We have carefully put together some weekly emails (pages 14 and 15) that can help keep employees motivated whilst also encouraging them to use their walks as an opportunity for further reflection, goal setting and gratitude.

Random updates on progress

You don't have to rely on weekly updates to keep people involved. Why not do a quick check-in on the progress being made and highlight this to employees throughout the process! To make this more interesting, you could highlight the distance by comparing it to something that resonates with your organisation. E.g. we have walked from the London office to the Manchester office. Another idea, if your comms will allow it, is using a screensaver to replace the standard one. This would of course require someone to collectively pool the steps and show these in a nice engaging graphic.

Ensure the Management/Leadership team are promoting the challenge too

With the above updates and reminders in mind, it can also be very helpful to have the management and leadership team promoting the challenge to employees throughout. This doesn't have to be over email, but also at the start of meetings and in the 1-1 communications between line managers and their employees.

Select Team Members who will motivate others

If you're aware of a few employees who are especially interested or committed to the challenge, empower them to encourage other colleagues! Maybe they could invite these colleagues on a 'lunch walk' or perhaps host a meeting or two over a walking phone call instead of video-conferencing. The more people talking about the challenge, the better!



6. Concluding the Challenge

It's amazing when a whole organisation comes together to meet a collective goal, so it's worth letting people know just how special it is. In your final email to employees, it's important to:

- Acknowledge those who have contributed
- Encourage these healthy habits to continue
- Encourage employees to share their stories/experiences

You could also include an employee survey to see what they thought of the challenge too! If your company has an employee forum or established champion group, you could obtain direct feedback from the reps to see how it was received. Sometimes teams will experience 'survey fatigue' and just delete the email, so being creative with feedback loops can help mix this up.

Here's an email template you can tweak to give you an idea:

New Message _ ↗ ✕

To Cc Bcc

Subject

YOU DID IT! You have helped [ORGANISATION NAME] complete the 4 Week Walking Challenge!

Between us all, we managed to cover [TOTAL MILES]
This is the equivalent of [X PLACE] to [X PLACE] - incredible!

Some of our top contributors over the organisation have been: NAME, NAME, NAME and we would like to thank these amazing colleagues with [acknowledgement idea].

We'd love to help you keep these healthy habits going, so please do reach out and let us know what seemed to work particularly well for you in getting your walks into your schedule. We also welcome any other stories or experiences from the challenge - we'll be collating stories over the next week or so - please feel free to reach out with yours!

Again, a massive thank you and well done to everyone who participated.
Same again next year?

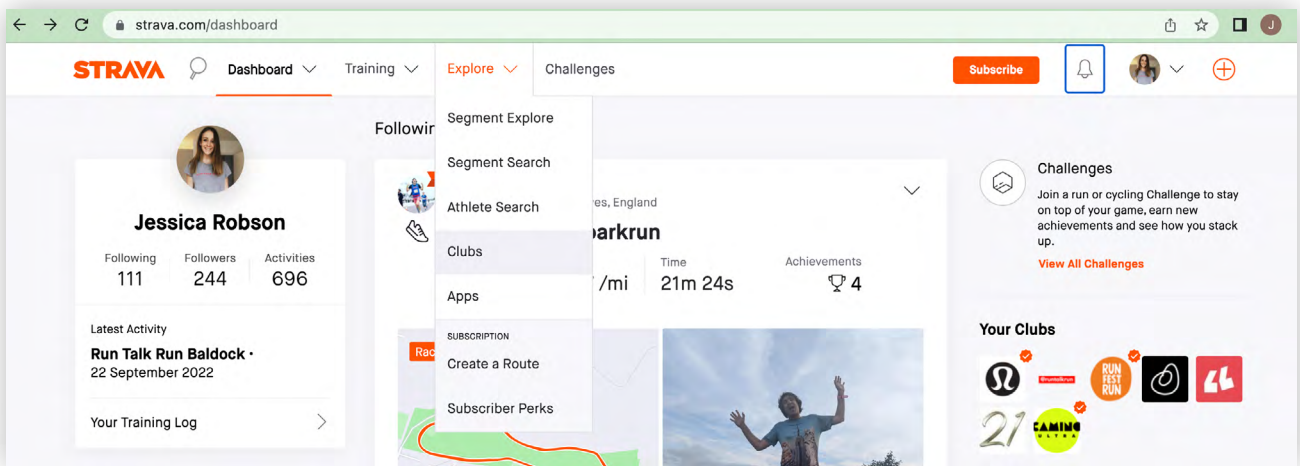
Send ✱ A 📎 🔗 😊 📷 ✍️ ⋮ 🗑️

Supporting Resources

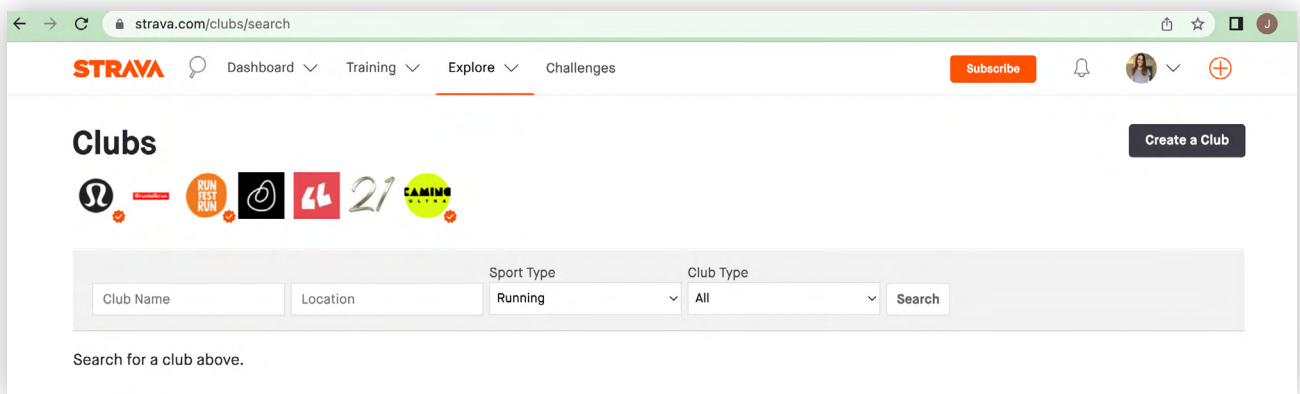
How to create a club on Strava

Please note clubs can only be created via the Strava website, not the mobile apps.

- Visit strava.com
- Create your own Strava account
- Log in to your own Strava account
- Click the Explore button in the menu, and select Clubs from the dropdown



Click the Create a Club button at the top right of the club search page.



Enter the information in the fields provided.

- We recommend that you make your club invite-only - club owners and administrators can invite members or approve requests to join.
- Keep in mind that invite-only clubs are not invisible to non-members; they only require admin permission to join.
- Recent activities, discussions, and private group events will be hidden from non-members

Create Club

Fields marked with * are required

Club Name *

Location *

Website

Sport

Club Type

Description *

Join us for [OUR COMANY NAME] Walking Challenge!


From 1 December - 31 December we will be working together as a team to achieve 1000 miles walked - the distance from [THIS OFFICE] to [THIS LOCATION].

When creating your unique Strava Link keep in mind that this will be copied into the email comms that you send out to launch the event, so keep a note of what you decide!

Vanity Club URL

You can use letters, numbers, and hyphens

<https://www.strava.com/clubs/>

 Make your club invite-only [?](#)

Create Club

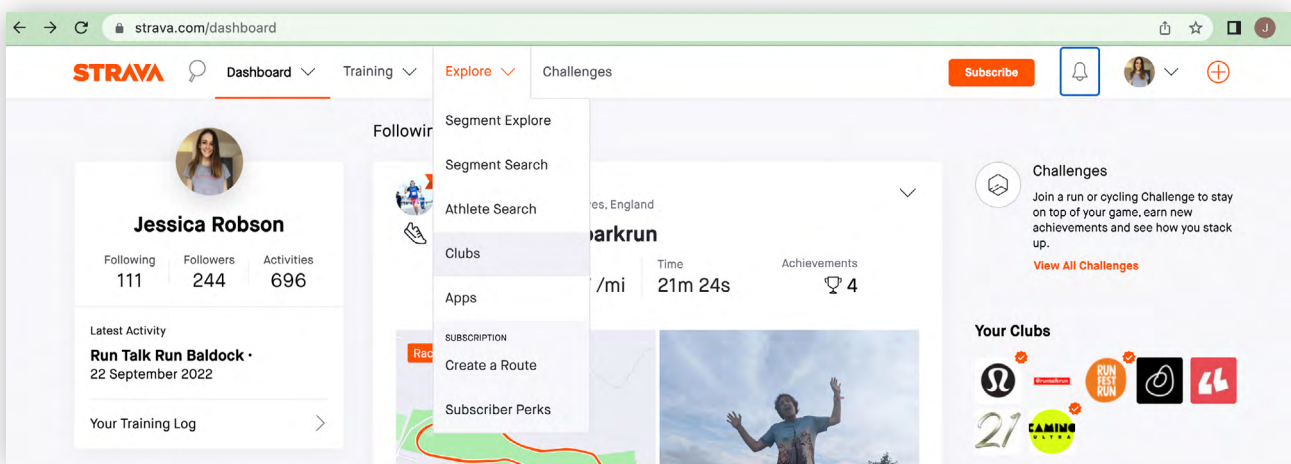
Cancel

Once you have created the club you will have the option to add your company logos which will help employees feel like they have arrived at the right place.

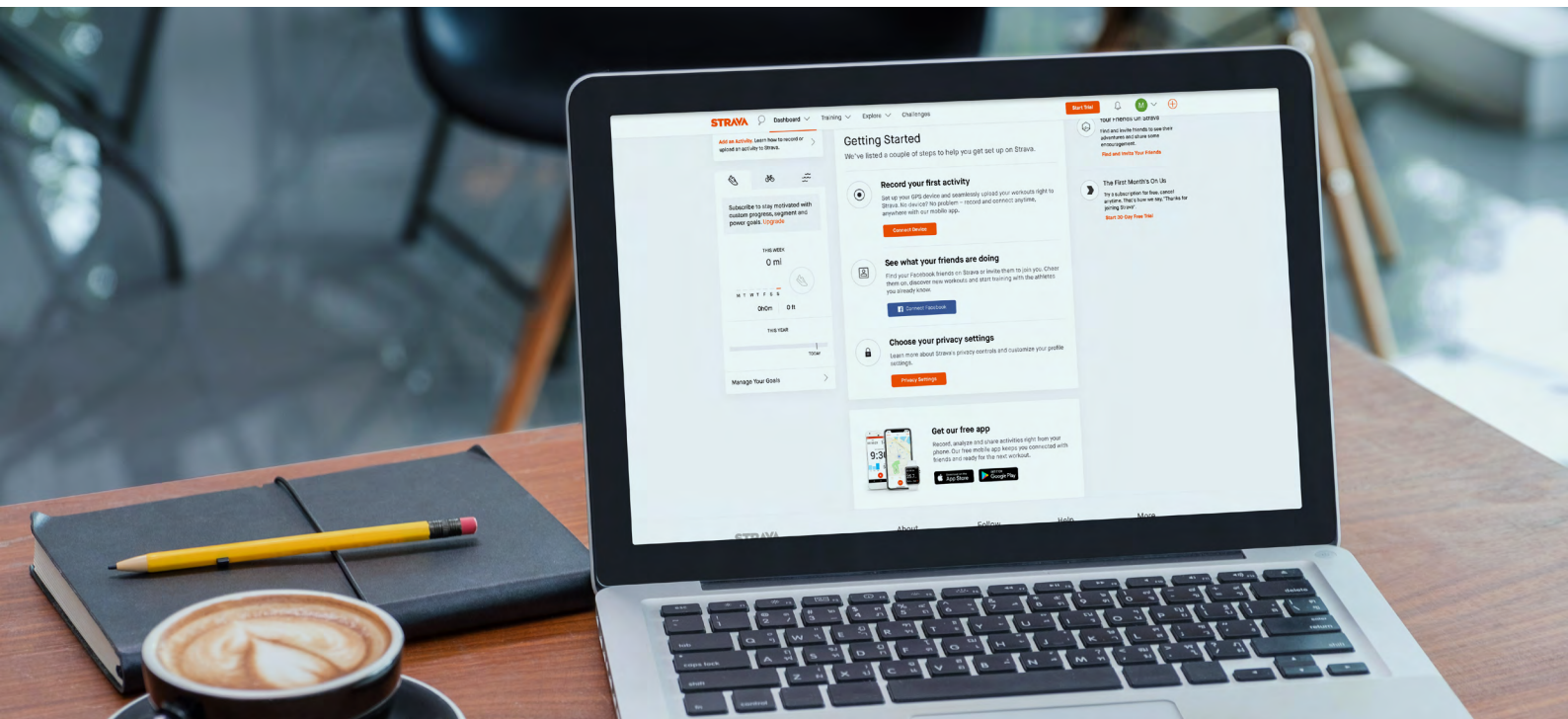
Instructions to join a club on Strava

Please note these instructions have been created with the view of joining the club from the Strava website, not the mobile app.

- Visit strava.com
- Create your own Strava account
- Log in to your own Strava account
- Click the Explore button in the menu, and select Clubs from the dropdown



On the next page, you can search for clubs by name, location, sport, and type of club. When you join the club, all of the walking activities that you log on Strava will be automatically added to the Club total.



Email Templates

New Message — ↗ ✕

To Cc Bcc

Subject **Week 1 Day 1**

Today's the day to step up to the challenge!

As a company, we are collectively coming together to walk our way towards [ENTER ORGANISATION MILESTONE]. So we hope you and your team are ready to put in the extra steps!

If you haven't yet got set up with our [STRAVA CLUB / DISTANCE TRACKER] please find the link here: [ENTER LINK]

Here are a few tips to increase your step count:
Go for a walk while you talk on the phone
Get up from your desk every hour
Walk to your colleague instead of emailing them
Take a walk at lunch
Take the stairs instead the lift
Replace public transport with a walk

Feel free to get in touch if you have any questions or would like to share your success!

Send ✱ A 📎 🔗 😊 🚫 🖼️ ✍️ ⋮ 🗑️

New Message — ↗ ✕

To Cc Bcc

Subject **Week 2 Day 1**

Wow, I can't believe we're 1 week into our Walking Challenge already! How did you get on?!

It has been great hearing from so many of you who are rising to the challenge.

This week we are setting you the extra challenge of using your walks as an opportunity for goal setting. On your next walk, why don't you try thinking about your own answers to these questions:
What goal have I been procrastinating on?
Where would I like to be this time next year?
What work-related goals could I set this week?

Keep up the great work everyone!

Send ✱ A 📎 🔗 😊 🚫 🖼️ ✍️ ⋮ 🗑️

New Message



To

Cc Bcc

Subject **Week 3 Day 1**

Great news - we are **HALFWAY** through the challenge! We are loving seeing all of your submissions coming in.

How are you and your colleagues finding it? Does anyone need a bit of a prompt to keep going with it?

It's sometimes hard to find the time for a walk when things get busy, but we hope you're enjoying those breaks in the day. Feel free to reach out to tell us how it's going.

This week on your walks we encourage you to use it as an opportunity to **practice gratitude**. Try out the following prompts:

- What went well over the weekend?
- What are you grateful for this week?
- What are you most looking forward to this month?

Feel free to share what you're most grateful for and how you're finding the challenge! Keep up the great work!

Send



New Message



To

Cc Bcc

Subject **Week 4 Day 1**

Today marks the start of our last week of the challenge! You're almost there!

We hope you've enjoyed the challenge. Here are a few thought points to help you reflect on the past few weeks to take on your walks this week:

- How do you feel when you finish your walks?
- What has changed over the course of the last few weeks?
- What lessons will you take away from this challenge?

From **[ORGANISATION NAME]** to you, we want to thank you for being a part of this journey. Here's to the final push - we've got this!

Send



Walking Challenge Distance Log

	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

20 Tips To Move More at Work



Hold a walking meeting



Use a standing desk



Get out of the elevator a couple of floors early



Stand or pace the room when on a call



Use your lunch break to go for a walk



Walk whenever you are waiting for something



Walk and talk to your colleague rather than email or phone



Stand during meetings or presentations



Take the stairs instead of the elevator



Do upper body stretches when reading emails



Go to the bathroom on another floor



Stretch your legs under your desk



Sit on an exercise ball



Eat lunch away from your desk



Set a timer to move every hour



Cycle or walk to work



Park further away from your destination for extra steps



If you work from home, use your 'commute' time to exercise



Arrange your workplace so that you have to move to go to the bin, printer, water cooler etc.



Drink lots of water - boosts hydration and increases bathroom trips!

JOIN OUR 4-WEEK WALKING CHALLENGE!

We understand that it isn't always easy to find time for self-care, but it is so important that we are able to look after our physical and mental health in ways that are achievable and form healthy habits with these tools.

That is why we are inviting you to join us on our **4 Week Walking Challenge**.

When does it start

How to log your walks

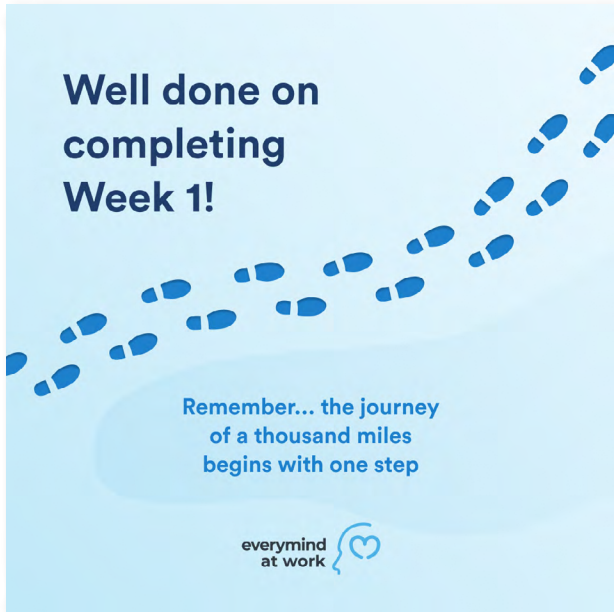
Watch out for our weekly emails with reflection prompts!

Good luck!

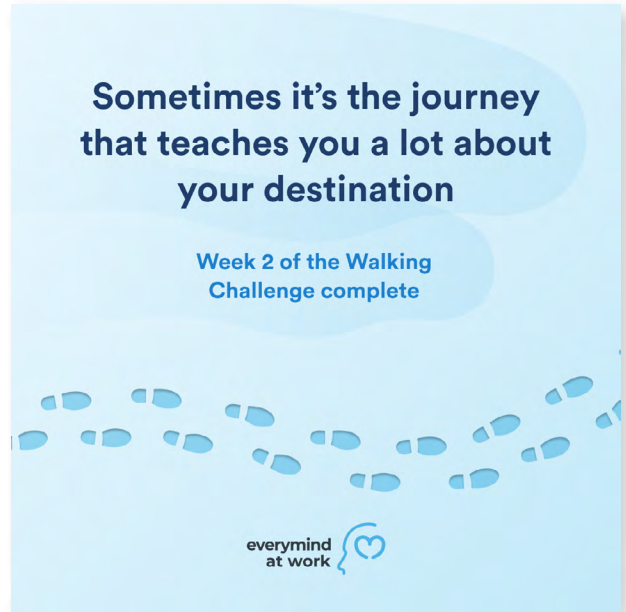
If you have any questions, please contact



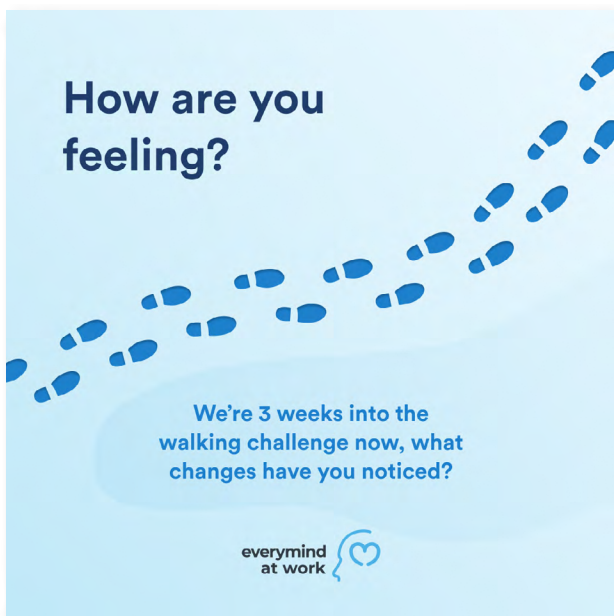
Promotional Graphics



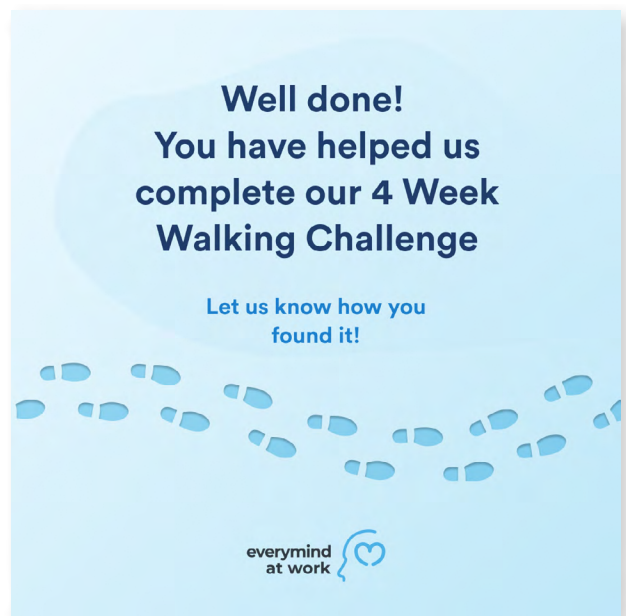
Download [week 1](#)



Download [week 2](#)



Download [week 3](#)



Download [week 4](#)