

# Active April: What does being “Active” mean to you?

by Amanda O’Regan-Marchand, Executive Staff Officer, Professional Learning

April “showers” are well underway here in Nova Scotia, and it can be tough to find motivation on these gloomy days. Taking inspiration from this month’s [Action for Happiness](#) calendar theme *Active April*, let’s explore some creative ways to bring more activity into our lives.

When I hear the word active, my mind immediately goes to exercise—but I know it means much more than that. I think about being active in our Union, giving back, and sharing time with colleagues. I think about having an active imagination, how energizing it can be to spark a new idea for a strategy, a workshop, or a conference activity. And I think about the small, intentional ways I can stay active throughout each day.

With that in mind, I’m sharing a glimpse into my daily routine in the hope it might inspire you. I know my context may look different from yours, but if anything resonates, feel free to adapt it to fit your own needs and routines.

I start my day on my indoor walking pad, facing the windows in my apartment that overlook the Bedford Basin. Water has a calming effect for me. I usually have one earbud in, listening to a walking playlist that gradually builds in tempo as I increase my pace, followed by a “transition” song to cool down and shift into the next part of my morning.

Throughout my day, my mind is “active”ly thinking about ways I can move my body as much as possible. As I get ready for work, I try to keep moving—taking extra steps between rooms and preparing my mindset for the day. I’ve also set a goal to take the stairs whenever possible at home.

At work, the stairs are a bit more of a challenge. Anyone familiar with NSTU’s Central Office on Joseph Howe Drive, might understand that climb between the second and third floors. Still, I look for opportunities to move. I park as far from the entrance as I can, and now that the snow has melted, I’m happy to have that option back. It really is the little things.

Even in my fifth year, walking into work still feels exciting. Those extra steps, even with the April showers help me shift my mindset and focus on what I get to do each day. Mindset plays such an important role in how we show up for ourselves and others.

My workspace is on the opposite side of the building from the entrance, staffroom, and washrooms. While that can be inconvenient, it also gives me more chances to move, by taking more steps. After settling in, I often head back to the staffroom for my “fuel” and take a moment to read the daily *Action for Happiness* message on the bulletin board. Often, it connects in meaningful ways to something already on my mind, and this makes me feel more aligned.

In my office, I like to begin the day standing. I’m fortunate to have a sit-stand desk, and since much of my work involves reviewing documents, preparing workshops, writing articles, and responding to members, it helps me stay engaged. Standing also allows me to shift my weight and keep my energy, and ideas, flowing. This helps my ADHD. What opportunities do you have to Stand in your workspace?

Throughout the day, I make an effort to get up, move around, and connect with people in person. Before I leave, I take a few minutes to fill out my planner (yes, I still use one!) with three goals for the next day. That long walk back to my car becomes a time, where I mentally pack up my workday and transition to “Amanda” time. Sometimes, during that drive home, I’ll use CarPlay to send myself quick reminders about anything still on my mind. Other days, I’ll listen to a lighthearted audiobook or a wellness-focused podcast—something that helps me shift my energy and fully step into “Amanda time.”

In the evenings and on weekends, I try to make everyday tasks more engaging by “gamifying” them—seeing if I can finish one chore before the dishwasher or robot vacuum does. I also make a point of getting outside before reaching for my phone. Whether it’s choosing the stairs, parking a little farther away, or simply being more mindful, I’m always looking for small ways to stay active, both physically and mentally.

Of course, it’s not always easy. Building a routine takes effort, and getting back into one after life’s interruptions can be even harder.

So, here’s my commitment to myself: to keep showing up in small, intentional ways.

What might that look like for you this month?

What will you get to do each day to show up for yourself?

**Active April 2026**

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1 Commit to being more active this month, starting today	2 Spend as much time as possible outdoors today	3 Listen to your body and be grateful for what it can do	4 Eat healthy and natural food today and drink lots of water	5 Turn a regular activity into a playful game today	6 Do a body-son meditation and really notice how your body feels	7 Get natural light early in the day. Dim the lights in the evening
8 Give your body a boost by laughing or making someone laugh	9 Turn your body work or chores into a fun form of exercise	10 Have a day with less screen time and more movement	11 Set yourself an exercise goal or sign up to an activity challenge	12 Move as much as possible, even if you're stuck inside	13 Make sleep a priority and go to bed in good time	14 Relax your body & mind with yoga, tai chi or meditation
15 Get active by singing today (even if you think you can't sing!)	16 Go exploring around your local area and notice new things	17 Be active outside. Plant some seeds and encourage growth	18 Try out a new exercise, activity or dance class	19 Spend less time sitting today. Get up and move more often	20 Focus on 'eating a rainbow' of multi-coloured vegetables today	21 Regularly pause to stretch and breathe during the day
22 Enjoy moving to your favourite music. Really go for it	23 Go out and do an errand for a loved one or neighbour	24 Get active in nature. Feed the birds or go wildlife-spotting	25 Have a 'no screens' night and take time to recharge yourself	26 Take an extra break in your day and walk outside for 15 minutes	27 Find a fun exercise to do while waiting for the kettle to boil	28 Meet a friend outside for a walk and a chat
29 Become an activist for a cause you really believe in	30 Make time to run, swim, dance, cycle or stretch today					

**ACTION FOR HAPPINESS** Happier · Kinder · Together