

Why walking is good for mind and body

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Walking is like meditation. It helps us to focus the mind on a subject. Lot of people go for walks in the park both in the morning and evening either alone or with various friends, family and acquaintances. But I feel long walks alone and without any company are the best to think and contemplate on various issues.

[Walking helps in jiggling your brain neurons](#) and they fire better and faster during a long walk. Walking is natural. One does not think about it. Yet during long walks the exercise of the body helps in release of chemicals which enhance thinking. Hence long walks allow the mind to think and churn the ideas and crystallize them. Human beings evolved to walk; running came only to get away from predators and danger. Thus walking is not only good for the body but also for the brain.

When the mind is thinking very deeply on a subject then the external scenery does not matter. During my younger days [I used to go for 6-8 kms long walk in Lucknow](#) and my path passed through congested thoroughfares like Hazratganj of Lucknow but was never distracted by the noise and the din of the traffic or the crowd. One can easily be lost in one's thoughts during long walks.

Some of my best ideas and thinking have come while walking. Very often I have not taken notes which I have regretted because the power of ideas without jotting them down on paper vanishes like thin smoke.

Throughout the history of mankind major ideas have come to leaders while walking. Great scientists like Einstein, Neils Bohr and others took long walks in the forest and thought up great ideas in physics. Gandhiji honed

his ideas of Salt Satyagraha and independence movement during the [Dandi March](#). Likewise Mao Zedong did it regarding his vision of China, during the [Long March](#). Similarly the great musical compositions of Beethoven and Tchaikovsky also came during their long walks.

Walking anywhere is therapeutic but in the woods it is spiritual. It seems that [trees act as antennas](#) for getting higher spiritual thought and walking among trees helps to increase the power of meditation and hence the production of great thought. Besides park and forest greenery provides balm to eyes and food to soul.

Besides the brain walking is also therapeutic for the body. According to [studies world over](#) walking is good for us because cardio-vascular exercise strengthens the heart and lungs, increasing overall fitness and is good for bones and helps boost blood circulation.

Doctors also claim that walking helps to drain the lower legs of excess fluid and can help prevent varicose veins through the pumping action of the calf muscles. And [recent studies](#) have shown that walking briskly can lower your risk of high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes as much as running.

I feel that the habit of walking should be inculcated in children. Very often concerned parents force their children to play all sorts of sports. But walking is an excellent sport and if they walk either to school or to other places it will be good for their body and brain. Sports is good for body but does not allow reflective thinking since one has to be alert during play.

Nevertheless we should educate the children so that their use of cellphone either for listening to music or conversing during walking is minimum. [Both these are distractions for thinking.](#)

We seem to be losing the art of walking. The modern transport system has made us lazy. Very often I have seen young students either getting on two wheelers or waiting for a bus even for short distance travel when they can easily walk to their destinations. Besides increasing their chances of getting obese they are also losing out on the art of thinking deeply about issues.

Finally I also feel that walking can help in reducing pollution in cities and towns besides keeping us fit. Thus by walking to the public transport station from our homes and places of work we can help in reducing the number of personal mobility vehicles on the roads.

[HOME](#)

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