

Name _____

Exploring the Connection Between Exercise and Mental Health

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. (Personal Experience) I remember a time when I was feeling really stressed about a big test. I went for a long bike ride, and by the time I was done, I felt so much better. The stress had melted away, and I felt more relaxed and clear-headed.
2. Besides exercise, other ways to manage stress include deep breathing exercises, meditation, spending time in nature, talking to a friend, or engaging in creative hobbies like drawing or writing.
3. Parents and schools can encourage children to be more physically active by providing opportunities for organized sports, physical education classes, and after-school programs. They can also be role models by participating in physical activities themselves.
4. To someone looking to start incorporating more exercise for better mental health, I would suggest starting with small, manageable goals like taking a short walk every day. Find an activity you enjoy, whether it's dancing, swimming, or playing a sport, so it doesn't feel like a chore. And remember, consistency is key, so stick with it even on days when you don't feel like exercising.

