

Motivating Yourself to Change

Objective

To identify ways to motivate yourself to change.

What to Know

Some of the most challenging aspects of dealing with a difficult situation are feelings of low energy, pessimism, and a belief that things will never improve. When it comes to tackling the tasks in this workbook, it is important to recognize that making changes can be hard! However, insights from motivational psychology indicate that various strategies can aid in overcoming such hurdles.

What to Do

Review the following ten motivational tips and then assess their potential effectiveness in helping you make progress. Rate each technique on a scale of one to seven, where 1 = you do not believe it would be useful, and 7 = you believe it would be extremely helpful. Select at least three motivational techniques that resonate with you to guide your efforts in facing and addressing the challenges ahead. Remind yourself of these techniques daily to maintain your focus and drive.

_____ **1. Schedule tasks.** Pick a time each day to work on a task. Write it down, just like you would any important appointment and do your best to do it at the appointed time.

_____ **2. Reward yourself.** You are more likely to do something when you experience a reward immediately after doing something new or difficult. Think of some ways you can reward yourself after completing a task or project.

_____ **3. Sign a contract and commit to it.** Contracts are surprisingly helpful when it comes to making changes in your life.

_____ **4. Share what you are doing with people you know.** One of the most effective motivators for change is to tell a select group of friends and family about what you are trying to do. You do not have to confide everything about your problem, but just let these people know you are working on a specific aspect of your life and ask for their support. It goes without saying that you should only ask for support from people who can give it to you.

_____ **5. Set a goal.** You might also wish to identify the sub-goals or steps you need to take to achieve your main goal.

_____ **6. Track your progress.** Recording your progress every day is essential to keeping you motivated, even when change seems difficult to achieve.

_____ **7. Set intentions.** Many coaches and therapists encourage people to “set their intention” at the beginning of each day, preferably before meditating. Deepak Chopra, best-selling spiritual writer, notes, “The sages of India observed thousands of years ago that our

destiny is ultimately shaped by our deepest intentions and desires. An intention is a directed impulse of consciousness that contains the seed form of that which you aim to create.”

_____ **8. Adopt a compassionate attitude toward your efforts.** Being self-critical and perfectionistic will likely get in the way of your efforts. You will have setbacks and even reversals. Imagine you are a good “parent” to yourself, guiding, encouraging, and always believing the goal can be achieved. Remember to offer yourself compassion and love.

_____ **9. Act like your heroes.** Inspiration is an important aspect of motivation. Think about someone who inspires you because they overcame an almost insurmountable problem. Take a moment during the day to imagine what that person would say to you to encourage your efforts.

_____ **10. Look for progress each day.** Focus on the small positive changes you make in your life each day, rather than on the things that cause you problems. Even when times are difficult, you can do things each day that will help you lead a happier and fulfilling life.

Reflections on This Exercise

How helpful was this exercise? _____

(1 = not very helpful, 5 = moderately helpful, 10 = extremely helpful)

What did you learn from this exercise?
