



Topics

1. Different types of motivation
2. Strategies to help with motivation
3. When to use these motivation strategies
4. Working out your motivators

“We are still masters of our fate. We are still captains of our souls”

~ Winston Churchill

This module outlines the importance of your motivation to help you to lose weight, make long-term changes and live a healthier lifestyle. The key is for you to establish what motivates you, and what will continue to motivate you over time.

There are several strategies to help maintain your motivation. The aim is for you to maintain your motivation for healthy, mindful eating and increased physical activity, in order to achieve a healthier you.

Key Points

- Intrinsic motivation is more effective for maintaining healthy lifestyle changes than extrinsic motivation.
- There are motivational strategies that can help you deal with setbacks.



1. Different types of motivation

Motivation is the desire to achieve a goal, combined with the energy and drive to continually take action towards achieving that goal. People who are highly motivated to make changes to their lifestyle (like improving their diet and increasing their exercise) are much more likely to succeed. Being motivated keeps you in a more positive state of mind, making it easier to avoid distractions and to stay focused on achieving your goals.

To get a better understanding of the things that motivate us, it's important to know there are two different types of motivation. These are extrinsic (external) motivation and intrinsic (internal) motivation.

Extrinsic motivation

Extrinsic factors are things that motivate you for external reasons. These can be strong motivators when you are starting out at changing habits, but they lose their impact over time. Some examples of extrinsic motivators include:

- To get back into an item of clothing that no longer fits.
- To look good for a special occasion, such as a wedding.
- To please your partner, friends or family,

Intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation comes from within, such as improving diet and exercise for the self-satisfaction it gives or the sheer enjoyment of it. This gives you a long-lasting, lifetime approach to health instead of looking for a quick fix. People who are intrinsically motivated are much more likely to stick with a healthy lifestyle. By working on some simple motivation strategies, and being patient, your sources of motivation can evolve from external to internal.

Some examples of intrinsic motivators include:

- I want to feel healthier.
- I look forward to gaining more energy and enthusiasm for life.
- I have set some goals and I want to prove to myself that I can achieve them.



2. Strategies to help with motivation

This module outlines six strategies to help you maintain motivation. These are practical, popular, and successful motivation strategies:

Flip your mindset

"I'm not feeling very motivated". Have you ever said that to yourself? You are not alone! A simple hack is to flip the script of that mindset. Often, we will wait for motivation to kick in first to then feel inspired to take the action. BUT what if we flip that? Instead, act first to then feel motivated and inspired to keep going. What is an action that you can take today?

Set yourself a challenge

A great way to maintain your enthusiasm for healthy changes is to re-examine your goals and stretch out beyond your comfort zone. You could plan to take part in a physical challenge such as a fun run, a hike or a cycling trip, and train for it. Another challenge could be to make one healthy lifestyle choice every day for a month, for example walk to work or have a "dry July" and avoid alcohol that month.

Use the buddy system

By involving your partner, family, friends, neighbours, and co-workers in your healthy lifestyle, you can find a new level of motivation, support, and encouragement. For example, make a commitment to exercise, with someone keeping you accountable, and you'll be more likely to stay on track. You'll also have someone to chat with and share the journey, which can help make exercise much more enjoyable.

Include variety in your routine

A great way to keep your exercise routine fresh is to modify your favourite activity, and regularly add different and new activities. If you have a favourite activity that is the foundation of your exercise program, such as walking, add variety by changing the scenery, the time of day, the duration, intensity, and frequency of your walks, or even carry a heavy backpack to burn extra kilojoules. You can also add different and new activities at least once or twice a week, such as golf, strength training, swimming, gardening, or yoga.

Use technology

Using devices can make exercise more enjoyable. Listening to music is proven to help you exercise for longer before feeling exhausted. You may even enjoy listening to a podcast, audiobook or talk back radio.

Choose whatever you enjoy listening to. You could also plan to have a chat with friends or family on your mobile phone whilst walking.

Pedometers and other activity trackers such as a Fitbit, Apple Watch even your smart phone, are great because they not only measure your planned walks, but they also track your incidental activity - the little random bits of extra movement you can include in your day to boost weight loss, such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator.

Reward yourself

Reward yourself along the way by celebrating your achievements, and acknowledging your successes. This helps to reinforce your healthy behaviour and gives you something tangible to aim for. Make sure you use non-food related rewards that don't undo all your hard work, such as a massage, a new book, or an item of clothing. You can even choose rewards that bring you closer to your goal, such as a new pair of walking shoes, or a personal training session.



3. When to use these motivation strategies

While the motivation strategies mentioned will be always helpful, there are some circumstances when they can be particularly beneficial. This includes when you have suffered a setback on your health journey, or if you are not seeing the results you hoped for.

Dealing with setbacks

It's more likely than not that you will face a few setbacks along your journey towards better health. This could include holiday weight gain, pressure from work or family, injury, or unsupportive friends. These are the sorts of things that make you feel exhausted, uninspired, and unmotivated.

It's how you respond to these setbacks that is important. Try to stay focused on your goals and use motivation strategies to get back on track as soon as possible rather than berating yourself which only adds to stress and negativity. Accept that you will never be perfect, but if your health goals are still prioritised, refining your response to these challenges through extra planning and strategies can help keep you on track.

Weight loss plateaus

A plateau is a period of stabilisation in weight loss when your results level out as your body adapts to a healthier lifestyle. Whilst plateaus are a normal part of any weight loss program, it can be a frustrating and de-motivating time when you don't seem to be making progress. This is a good time to use some motivation strategies to keep you moving forward instead of reverting back to old habits. Remember, that with healthy changes in place you are still making great gains in other areas of health such as reducing risk factors and improving energy levels.

4. Working out your motivators

Motivators are very personal. Every individual is motivated by something unique to them. The key to staying motivated is to focus on your deep WHY (intrinsic motivators) and trying a variety of strategies to see what works for you.

Don't be afraid to try new approaches. Get curious and mix things up. Perhaps if going to the gym after work isn't working into your schedule, instead change it to your lunch break or before work to see if that fits into your day better.

Always keep at the front of your mind the major reasons why you wanted to get healthier in the first place.



List your extrinsic motivators.

(e.g. to fit into a particular outfit for an upcoming special occasion)

List your intrinsic motivators. Remember, these are the motivators to focus on and the more specific these motivators, the more powerful they will be.

(e.g. to lower your blood pressure to avoid medication)

Which of the six motivation strategies can you focus on?
What will you do?

* You can also add your motivators to your online member hub.