

Self Motivation: How to Motivate Yourself

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People who are unable to motivate themselves must be content with mediocrity, no matter how impressive their other talents.

Andrew Carnegie

If you want to excel in life, self motivation is essential. You must know how to motivate yourself. You must be able to keep your spirit high no matter how discouraging a situation is. That's the only way to get the power you need to overcome difficulties. Those who are discouraged in difficult times are certain to lose even before the battle is over.

The question is: how do you motivate yourself? Here are several tips I've found to be effective to build self motivation:

1. Have a cause

I can't think of a more powerful source of motivation than a cause you care about. Such cause can inspire you to give your best even in the face of difficulties. It can make you do the seemingly impossible things.

While other causes could inspire you temporarily, a cause that matters to you can inspire you indefinitely. It's a spring of motivation that will never dry. Whenever you think that you run out of motivation, you can always come to your cause to get a fresh dose of motivation.

2. Have a dream. A big dream.

Only as high as I reach can I grow, only as far as I seek can I go, only as deep as I look can I see, only as much as I dream can I be.

Karen Ravn

Your cause is a powerful source of motivation but it's still abstract in nature. You need to make it concrete in the form of a dream. Imagine how the world will be in the future. Imagine how people will live and work.

Having a dream is important because it's difficult to be motivated if you don't have anything to shoot for. Just think about people who play basketball. Will they be motivated to play if there is no basket to aim at? I don't think so. They need a goal. You need a goal. That's what your dream is for.

But just having a dream is insufficient. Your dream must be big enough to inspire you. It must be realistic but challenging. It must stretch your ability beyond your comfort zone.

3. Be hungry

Wanting something is not enough. You must hunger for it. Your motivation must be absolutely compelling in order to overcome the obstacles that will invariably come your way.

Les Brown

To be truly motivated, you need to have hunger and not just desire. Having mere desire won't take you through difficult times since you don't want things badly enough. In many cases, hunger makes the difference between the best performers and the mediocre ones.

How can you have hunger? Your cause and your dream play a big role here. If you have a cause you care about and a big dream related to it, you should have the hunger inside of you. If you think that you are losing hunger, all you need to do is to connect again to your cause and dream. Let them inspire you and bring the hunger back.

4. Run your own race

I do not try to dance better than anyone else. I only try to dance better than myself.

Mikhail Baryshnikov

Comparing yourself with others is an effective way to demotivate yourself. Even if you start with enthusiasm, you will soon lose your energy when you compare yourself with others.

Don't let that happen to you. You have your own race so how other people perform is irrelevant. Comparing yourself with others is like comparing the performance of a swimmer with a runner using the same time standard. They are different so how can you compare one with the other?

The only competitor you have is yourself. The only one you need to beat is you. Have you become the best you can be?

5. Take one more step

Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.
Winston Churchill

When you meet obstacles along the way, there could be the tendency to quit. You may think that it's too difficult to move on. You may think that your dream is impossible to achieve. But this is where you can see the difference between winners and losers. Though both of them face the same difficulties, there is one thing that makes the winners different: the courage to continue.

In difficult situations, just focus on taking one more step forward. Don't think about how to complete the race. Don't think about how many more obstacles are waiting for you. Just focus on taking the next step.

6. Let go of the past

Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could.
Ralph Waldo Emerson

Believe it or not, one of the best demotivators is your past. Your past can drag you down before you realize it. Your past can give you a heavy burden on your shoulders.

The good news is it's a burden you don't have to carry. Take it off your shoulder and leave it. You might make mistakes in the past. You might disappoint others with what you did. But it's over. It's already in the past and there's nothing you can do about it.

Today is a new day and you have the chance to start again. No matter how bad your past might be, you still have a bright future ahead waiting for you. Just don't let the burden of the past stop you.

Apply these tips and motivate yourself. Don't settle for mediocrity. Let your self motivation take you to excellence.