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## What Motivates YOU?

By guest author, Russ Yeager CFT, CPA  
Owner of Fitness Together Alpharetta, Dunwoody, and Norcross

Motivation is the reason we get out of bed in the morning instead of sleeping all day. It is what drives us to get to work or the gym and work harder, smarter, and more efficient than the day before. Motivation is the reason that great ideas are turned into great accomplishments. Motivation is what drives us to get things done!

Have you ever found it puzzling and sometimes frustrating that at certain times you are extremely motivated and feel like nothing can stop you as you work towards achieving your life long goals, while at other times your motivation seems to be almost nonexistent? Why is that? Are your goals really less important to you during those “unmotivated” times? Surely that is not the answer. There are normal cycles of emotions and levels of motivation that we go through. It is easy to do the right thing when times are easy. The key to success is getting yourself to do the things you know you need to do even when you don’t “feel” like doing them. That is what will set you apart from the masses and get you on your way to the magnificent life you desire and deserve.

Let’s first examine why our motivation to stay on track sometimes waivers, and then address how we can break this cycle and produce motivation at will. One of the main factors that causes us to lose our motivation and become less productive is being reactive to our environment. Did you notice how I wrote that last sentence saying that our environment “causes us to lose our motivation?” That is a very reactive statement. In order to live our lives on purpose we need to accept responsibility for where we are in life and become proactive by controlling our thoughts, habits, and actions. Instead of waiting for outside influences to provide motivation, decide right NOW that you are a motivated individual who takes productive positive action in order to get what you want.

For example, motivation to go to the gym everyday and stay on a healthy eating program often decreases during the holidays, but this is normally due to outside influences and not the fact that we are not as committed to accomplishing our fitness goals. It is during these times that we need to remind ourselves what our long-term goals are and exactly WHY we do what we do everyday to get closer to those goals. *This will not necessarily increase your motivation instantaneously, but it will keep you on track until your level of motivation increases again, and trust me, it will.*

Motivation can be found in many different forms and can come from external sources or can be self-generated. It is OK to utilize motivation coming from external sources. Just make sure that you do not rely on those sources for motivation. Rely on yourself and your own dreams and plans for your life. Think about what motivates you to get to work in the morning. For many of us the motivation is that we need to work to make money so that we can take care of our families and have nice things we desire. Some of us are motivated to get to work because we truly love our jobs and can't wait to improve our business or make a difference in the lives of others. For others, the motivation is to make enough money to survive and not get fired. Whether you are controlling your life or letting someone or something else control it, there is always a reason why we do what we do. Regardless of the reason, the end result is getting to work. However, the quality of the work performed as well as the enjoyment and satisfaction involved is much greater when our motivation comes from within ourselves and our desire to improve, as opposed to being motivated to keep something bad from happening, such as being fired or getting reprimanded by an employer or business partner.

So, how can you use motivation to help you reach your goals and live a happier more fulfilled life? I say any way you can and as much as you can! When things are going great and your motivation is high then it is important to take advantage and get as much done as humanly possible to move you towards your goals. During these "easy" times you may not need any outside sources of motivation. However, life is full of ups and downs and there will inevitably be times when things get tougher and motivation is not as high. These are the times that you need to be especially proactive and seek out sources of motivation.

One effective strategy is to look to others who are already successful at what you are doing. Seeing others succeed (via a DVD, video, book, or live in person) can be extremely motivating. *This also helps you keep your end goal in mind instead of focusing on how you may feel at the moment.* Associate yourself with positive people who have similar goals and interests as your own. Having a close network of people like this can be a huge source of motivation. Read motivational books and articles often.

The more positive reinforcement you provide to your mind the easier it becomes to take positive productive steps towards getting what you want. The subject you read does not even have to be specifically related to what you are working towards. It is easy to become inspired by others who have passionately and persistently achieved greatness no matter what form of greatness that may be.

Anger and criticism by others can even be a good sources of motivation. Unfortunately there are people in this world that like to put others down and tell you that you cannot succeed. Instead of arguing with these bitter people who will not change their minds, use their negative attitudes to

fuel your motivation so you can “prove them wrong.” While other peoples’ thoughts and attitudes should never determine how you live your life, learning to utilize everything that happens around you, including criticism and negative comments, will allow you to rise to an even higher level of accomplishment and self-actualization

One of the best things you can do is to surround yourself with motivated positive people. It is said they you become the sum of the 5 people you spend the most time with. *Are you spending time in the right environment and with the right people to have the life you really want?* We can each only answer this for ourselves.

If you ever find yourself envying those who seem to have it “easier” than you, then just take a close look at someone who would love to have the opportunities and abilities you do. One memory that really stands out and hit home for me happened a few years ago. One of my friends used to work in a spinal cord injury hospital. One day I went to pick her up from work. It was a Tuesday and Wednesday was my leg workout day at the gym, which is my most challenging workout of the week. On the way to the hospital I was thinking about the next day’s leg workout. I noticed that my motivation was kind of low and found myself thinking about how hard the workout was going to be and how sore my legs would be.

My attitude quickly changed when I got to the hospital and saw adults, teenagers, and children, many who have been involved with athletics all their lives, who would never be able to use their legs again! It made me realize that I was the LUCKIEST MAN IN THE WORLD to be able to perform a grueling leg workout! I have learned to focus on utilizing what I *do* have so that I can get more out of life instead of wasting time and energy focusing on what I don’t have.

So, what motivates YOU? No matter what it is use the power of motivation to help you reach all of your goals and dreams and make THIS YEAR your best year yet!

*Russ Yeager is owner of Fitness Together Norcross, Alpharetta, and Dunwoody, and is an internationally recognized health and fitness expert. Russ and his team of qualified friendly Fitness Coaches have helped hundreds of clients in the Atlanta area realize their health and fitness goals. To learn more about Fitness Together’s unique “One Client, One Trainer, One Goal” approach to fitness, visit [www.AtlantaFitness.net](http://www.AtlantaFitness.net).*