

Finding and Developing Motivation

The only reason people ever really do anything is due to motivation. It may be our work, our hobbies, our relationships or even our chores, but one way or another, there is motivation that drives us to do the things we do. This article is about finding out where this motivation comes from and how to develop it internally.

Two types of Motivation

There are only two types of motivation. You can label them whatever you like, but one type is positive and one type is negative. I've learned to consider them to be even more basic than that: **pain** and **pleasure**. EVERYTHING we do, think and believe has some kind of foundation in pain and pleasure.

Each person has, of course, a completely different view of what pain and pleasure is. But the same factors exist to steer and motivate us based on what we think we can get out of it. Most of these associations with pain and pleasure are buried in our subconscious minds and, unfortunately, most people never realize this. Instead, they go through life on autopilot.

Despite this, you can easily learn to shift the associated pains and pleasures in your favor and put more attention to the ones you want to change. So, how you do that is important to explore...

All Motivation is Internal

Because of these associated pains and pleasures being unique to each person and based on an individual's perspective, these factors all come from within ourselves. Of course there are outside stimulants and things we each react to, but ultimately, the motivation that drives us to do anything comes from within us.

You always have a choice. A choice in how you react emotionally as well as physically. You can shy away from new things or embrace them and get excited about learning something new. That choice is where most people's motivation stems from. It is not outside factors, prizes, rewards or punishment that gives us motivation. Rather, it's the decision we each make in response to these factors that determines whether or not we are motivated to proceed.

In general, if you believe there to be much more pleasure to be gained than pain in doing something, it is easy to be motivated to do it! Conversely, if there is more pain associated with it than pleasure then you will likely not be motivated to do it and avoid it.

Re-frame Your Associations

To change your motivation and steer it in your favor, you will have to learn to re-frame your associations.

For example: if you currently cannot get motivated to exercise, here are some likely associations you have developed that are holding you back.

- Exercise has never worked for me before.
- Workouts at the gym make me feel worse seeing myself compared to others.
- I don't have enough time to exercise, so it won't make a difference anyway.
- I have more fun relaxing and doing what I like, instead of having to exercise.

Step 1 : Replace the pain with pleasure.

The first three are pain associations and the last one is pleasure, but unfortunately it's associated with NOT exercising. As you can tell, there is FAR MORE pain associated with exercising than pleasure for someone who thinks like this so there is no possible way for them to be motivated. They need to reframe it so they actually value exercise and see more pleasure in it. Here are some samples:

- If exercise works for so many others, it will also work for me.
- Being at the gym, I see others who've succeeded in making exercise a routine, it's inspiring and know I can do it to.
- Every time I exercise I feel better and it helps to keep me healthier, no matter how little it is!
- There are some fun activities and exercises that not only help my health, but also make me feel great too.

Step 2 : Add back in some pain.

Now, you can see that the associated pain points have been turned around to pleasure points. And for some people that might be enough to motivate them but not always. You can improve on that by adding back in some pain but this time, in your favor. Think of all the pain you will experience if you DON'T exercise. Consider some examples like these:

- I'll get fat and I'll hate my body if I don't exercise.
- I won't live as long or be as active in the future if I don't make a habit of exercising now.
- I'll be a poor example and role model if I can't stay fit by exercising.

You can take this as far as you like (or need to) in order to get yourself motivated. The stronger the pain you want to avoid and the pleasure you would love to have is in your mind, the easier it is to be motivated and take action. Remind yourself of these associations constantly and add new ones as you experience more!

Getting Past Our Comfort Zone is Necessary

The most common problem with motivating ourselves to do new things is **the fear of change**. We tend to get comfortable with how things are and stop looking for ways to challenge ourselves. And we become complacent with our lives and the things that seem to impact it.

You really do have a choice to change this and take control of your life. However, this requires **self motivation**. I truly hope that you can use these techniques to shift your life by becoming much more strongly motivated and in control of that motivation.

Take that one step further and use motivation to get past your comfort zones in life. It's necessary to have rich experiences, do great things, and to easily steer your life in any direction that you want!