

REDISCOVER YOUR MOTIVATION

At this time of the year it is not unusual to find that your motivation to exercise and live healthily has ebbed away, with the winter months draining your energy, determination and focus.

You've probably found yourself getting run down both physically and mentally, and getting sick in the colder months. It's been harder to get out of bed in the morning, harder to commit to your exercise regime, and harder to be as diligent as usual with your eating habits. From time to time we all suffer from a loss of motivation, but it doesn't mean it's the end of the line for your healthier lifestyle. The following points will help get you out of the rut and back on track for spring.

Take time out to ask questions

The first step to breaking the cycle is sometimes as easy as locking yourself away from the world for an afternoon and asking yourself 'why am I feeling like this?' In our busy lives we tend to ignore what's really going on to make us feel as we do and tell ourselves 'I'll be 'right'. Ignoring a problem and hoping it will go away just doesn't cut it. Thankfully our bodies are clever machines and if you don't make time for yourself, it will make time for you. Something will happen to make you slow down and look after yourself. You'll get sick, you'll be tired, you'll get an injury or you'll feel mentally exhausted. Rather than getting to that stage, make time for yourself and don't let yourself feel guilty about it! You'll be much more efficient when you've addressed your issues and got back on track, and your loved ones will appreciate the re-motivated and happy you. Ask yourself these questions;

- Are you tired?
- Has something triggered you to be upset?
- Are you overworking?
- Are you stressed about something?
- Is your diet on track (if you're not eating right you'll feel lethargic and tired)?
- Are you drinking enough water?
- Are you overtraining?
- Is your family life in balance?

Do something!

If you've asked yourself the questions above but still feel unmotivated, what do you do? The answer is; stop thinking and do something! It doesn't matter what it is, or how small it is. Don't plan it, don't over-analyse it, just do it.

- Do 20 squats right now (even if you're in the office!)

- Go for a 10-minute walk!
- Google a healthy soup recipe – and make it!
- Call a friend and commit to going to the gym or a group exercise class together
- Plan your meals again (rather than getting home late and eating anything and everything in sight)
- Get your partner involved in the process and ask them to cook you a healthy dinner
- Share with people what you need help with, so that you're accountable
- Increase your water intake (it increases your concentration which in turn helps with motivation and energy levels). Go grab a glass now!
- Attend a networking /presentation breakfast to break your routine and meet some new people
- Clean your workspace. Your workspace or living area can reflect your mental space
- Book in for a coaching session to get excited by your goals again.

It's all about the snowball effect. Once you get started, you'll feel better, get a spark of motivation and momentum will take over. Tell yourself you're only going to go for a 5-minute walk and there's a good chance that you'll stay out for ten. It really doesn't have to be complicated. If you've eaten badly today it doesn't mean that you can throw in the towel and start again tomorrow – snack on an apple this evening rather than lollies. It won't reverse the 'damage' but it will help your mindset (rather than wallowing in your own guilt!).

This doesn't mean that you have to apply an 'all or nothing' mentality to finding your motivation. It's nearly impossible to be motivated and positive all the time. There will be times when you feel unmotivated and unfocused, and that's alright. Check in with yourself and ask whether you are being lazy or whether you really need the break? This is why it's so important to take time out and ask yourself what's going on with you. ▣

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