

Is There A Secret To Ongoing Motivation?

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Some hail the merits of a morning workout, others rely on caffeine and glorious liquidised concoctions. Others feel a bit of recognition or praise spurs them on. Meditation, religious practice or mindfulness are the secret of many. But what really works?



“Unlike a multitude of other species, humans have an exceptionally developed frontal lobe, the area of our brain that helps us to think about consequences”

Is there one specific motivator? Let's look at 'The Why':

The most amazing thing about being a human being is that unlike a multitude of other species, a part of our brain you've perhaps heard of called the frontal lobe, is exceptionally developed. This area is used for expressive language and for managing higher level executive functions. Executive functions refer to a collection of cognitive skills including the capacity to plan, organise, initiate, self-monitor and control responses in order to achieve a goal.

This includes the thought process of “if I do this, this will likely happen”. So at the base of everything we do, there is obviously a reason. We know we work to make money. We know we must eat to

satisfy hunger and nourish our bodies. We workout to stay healthy and so on. But all these statements miss an essential component. **The 'Why?'**

“Productivity without purpose leads to a temporary satisfaction, that ultimately leads to feeling unfulfilled”



Whilst we know our roles and responsibilities in life, we tend to have to follow through with them even when we don't **feel** like it. Again, this is where our frontal lobe tells us, if we don't go to work, we don't get paid, or workload suffers. If we don't feel like working out today, our health might be impacted. We as humans have an incredible capacity to understand the concept of **consequence**. And whilst the consequence of not doing something is important to know, if we function purely on that thought, it cannot singularly be the recipe for a fulfilling life.

But despite the intention of this article - the most useful thing you can do for your motivation isn't to look outward for advice. Instead, look inward and get clear on what exactly you're driving toward. Once you know where you're going, the motivation to get there comes much more easily.

So what drives YOU?

Is it a better life? Is it family? More money? Dreams? What really excites us or makes us feel passionate? From a personal standpoint, there are days where I feel drive only to accomplish the necessary in order to be able to put my feet up at the end of the day with Netflix and snacks. Other days, I feel motivated to conquer a host of working tasks and sometimes don't realise the day is now finished and I need to be thinking about sleep. A huge variable in what drives us can be how we feel any given day. Lack of sleep, bad diet, an argument with a friend or family, sickness etc can all be variables that temporarily impede our motivation and **productivity**.

However, productivity seems to be the choice and preferred buzz word in any workplace, personal development seminar or outcome-based process. Whilst it's important, unfortunately it has become

society's new version of toxic positivity. Why? Because productivity without purpose leads us to a temporary satisfaction, that ultimately leads to feeling unfulfilled.

Although in British culture, we tend to cringe at the concept of 'motivational speakers', inspirational picture quotes and goal boards, there really is an important aim behind doing things of that nature. The premise of these activities serves to bring our goals and aims to the forefront of our conscious. Needless to say, the things that are hiding in plain sight are often the things we don't contemplate. If we're not continually visualising and reminding ourselves of **why** we do what we do, it can get lost in the translation of being productive and achieving what simply 'needs' to be done in day-to-day life. Ask yourself, what makes me **feel** motivated?

Do you function on commendation and praise for what you achieve? Surround yourself with a social circle that encourages you and values supporting your endeavours.

Do you feel satisfied seeing your children happy and content?

Do you want to earn more money and feel secure when you can pay your bills without anxiety about falling short?

The old vision board technique



Many therapists and psychologists lay claim to inventing the concept of a vision board. But the idea of putting the things you like on the wall probably started around the time children and teenagers placed their idols on their bedroom walls. It comes back to the most basic of human instincts – to surround yourself with what motivates you. For a toddler's playroom it might be Bob the Builder or Disney that adorns their décor. For a teenager, it may be their favourite quotes or singers. In our homes as adults, we

decorate to help us feel comfortable, striving to make it aesthetically pleasing and enjoyable. Your brain still needs these visual reinforcements on a daily basis in the remit of motivation and goal setting. A simple whiteboard or chipboard with holidays, ideas, concepts, material things, whatever crosses your mind that you want for you and your family.

Surround yourself with the right people

A huge concern of many parents is the worry of what type of friends their children might make at school, with the overarching concern being that they might be misled, demotivated or bullied in the wrong company. The worry becomes that their children might develop a poor attitude or stray away from the important tasks at school and life in general. Our own lives are not dissimilar in that the company we keep, the language we hear daily and the culture we embed ourselves in workwise or at home, makes a distinct, long lasting impact on our motivation and attitude. There's always one person we know in life that although in possession of good intention, drains us of our will to live after a five minute conversation. Everything is an off-load, complaint or moaning session and afterwards we feel drained. We need to ensure that the people we surround ourselves with merit our company. As important as it is to be a listening ear to others, we must be kind to ourselves and our daily exposure to what keeps us going. Or not.



Summary

It may sound overly simplistic and perhaps even marginally insulting to ask yourself, but sometimes the answer to being motivated is hiding in plain sight.

Ask yourself **why** you do what you do. Look at what makes you **feel** motivated. Remind yourself visually on a daily basis what's driving you and surround yourself with the people who share your attitude.

For me, caffeine isn't a bad shout either. Just saying.