



## Finding and Maintaining Motivation

Have you been struggling with staying motivated throughout COVID-19 new normal? You're not alone. Working from home, trying to balance childcare responsibilities, caring for a loved one – no matter the situation, our emotional and cognitive resources are going to be depleted right now. "We are all, to some degree, working with at least one hand tied behind our backs," writes Monica Torres for MSN.com.

Do you know what motivates you? Psychotherapist Emma Cullinan writes that motivation comes from both inside and outside of us. **Extrinsic, or external, motivation is when we are compelled to do something for a reward** – such as for praise, money or social recognition – or for fear of punishment. **Intrinsic, or internal, motivation is when we are compelled by things that are personally gratifying** – such as learning, satisfying a curiosity, taking an interest, problem-solving or success.

Some common feelings you may be experiencing:

- Apathy
- Restlessness
- Uselessness
- Overwhelmed

There's hope...

### What can you do to stay motivated?

**Be kind to yourself.** If you're not used to working from home, especially with others (such as children or a partner) – you need time to adjust. Try not to get down on yourself.

**Put a limit to news consumption.** Set a limit for yourself. For example, *I'll only read the news in the evening for 30 minutes.*

**Establish a routine.** Give yourself some time to clear your head before you begin and then make a hot drink and turn on your computer to indicate that it is time to start. Start your day with a mindfulness break. Karlyn Borysenko, founder of Zen Workplace, outlines a quick five-step meditation you can do anywhere to help you remain calm and focused:

1. Sit in a chair with a straight back, your feet planted firmly on the floor, and your arms uncrossed and relaxed.
2. Inhale slowly through your nose. Follow the breath all the way down your throat, through your chest, and into your belly.
3. When it hits your belly, hold it for a few moments.
4. Release the breath slowly through your mouth.
5. Repeat as many times as you need to until you feel calmer.

**The Village EAP is taking COVID-19 very seriously and we are working to provide the best continued services to you. If you feel like you or an employee could benefit from talking to a counselor and have our EAP contract, please contact The Village EAP at 1-800-627-8220 to access your free and confidential sessions. We are here so you don't have to go it alone.**

**Give yourself breaks.** Here are some apps to help:

- [Stand Up! The Work Break Timer](#) – For iPhone and iPad, this app allows you to customize your preferred break time to your specific work schedule. You can set reminder intervals in increments ranging from 5 minutes to 2 hours. And, it even provides a seven-day history so you can see how well you're doing at taking your regular breaks.
- [Randomly RemindMe](#) – An Android app that you can use to remind you not only to take breaks, but to engage in other healthy habits like drinking water or exercising. Fully customizable for daily, weekly and monthly reminders.

**Figure out what motivates you personally and professionally.** Ask yourself the following questions:

- What drives me?
- What could I talk about for hours?
- What do I feel passionate about?
- What do I do where I feel less tired afterward than I did before I started?
- What do I get so excited about that I want to tell everyone I know?
- How do I recharge?

Once you have determined what motivates you, find a way to infuse that into your life more often.

**Stay connected with your team.** One of the motivators we can lose working from home is the feeling of being part of a team.

- Use Microsoft Teams or Zoom for daily huddles
- Send pictures and videos
- Connect throughout the day

Remember that this is temporary. We will soon be transitioning back into the office. Until that time, give yourself a break and know you don't have to do it alone. The Village Business Institute is here for you.

## References

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