

Sure Tips For Staying Motivated

Frances Coombes

When you find simple strategies for doing things that work well, do you collect them and incorporate them into your everyday life? Or once satisfied that you've worked out how it was done, do you simply file the strategy away with the rest of your collection, never to be used again? I was a filer until I discovered I had hundreds of strategies for doing simple things well and had to make the tough decision to use them or lose them. There is a way of doing most things and once you know the syntax and can do things in a very specific order, you can begin to create almost magical results. Compare my simple strategies for staying motivated when the going gets tough with your own.

Belief in yourself, belief in your purpose is the mantra of the self-employed. But often it's hard to stay motivated when things are not going to plan. At times like this we need to plumb our inner resources and here are some tips of my own and some I acquired as a journalist interviewing high achievers whilst writing my book 'Be Your Best ...Motivator'.

THINGS I DO TO KEEP ME CONNECTED

1. **Have a mentor, and be a mentor to at least one other person.** Mentoring gives me a very powerful feeling of connection to others – also at a skills level, explaining things to people builds your own capabilities. A survey of top UK bosses revealed that 70% of UK males heading UK companies have had at least 12 mentors.
2. **The way you think determines what you feel** and working alone, especially if it's on a long project undertaken to tight deadlines, can mean that you lose contact with friends for long periods of time. Project over, time to look around and smell the flowers, and you may notice that you have lost contact with friends. My solution is to tell people in advance that I will be busy for a while, I will stay in touch with the odd phone call and I am really looking forward to having a celebratory meal with them at the end of the project. Planning the event in advance and imagining meeting up again with friends is a way of feeling connected. Knowing that you have already put the wheels in action by stating what you will do to make it happen is also reassuring.
3. **Stay in touch with yourself.** Our beliefs are constantly changing in relation to the sights we see and thoughts and feelings we experience. But sometimes we can get so caught up in busyness that we are not aware of the changes going on within us until something happens that startles us, and we are forced to take time out to re-evaluate our beliefs. For instance, I might believe I have a good relationship with my life partner or a client until they tell me they are moving on. It's at times like this that we start to question the situation and in retrospect, pick up the clues that tell us the writing was already on the wall.

To stay in touch with yourself practice early morning writing. Ask yourself a question about whatever is foremost in your mind, then allow yourself ten minutes really fast writing, allowing whatever is in your mind to tumble out. Let the pen fly down the page followed hastily by your hand. There is a line in EM Forster's book that sums it up: "Think before you speak is criticism's motto, speak before you think is creation's motto". Early morning writing lets you stay in touch with yourself, your goals, your needs, your desires. It also shows you how creative you can be when you are free-thinking, and that you can produce the most amazing nuggets of insight.

4. **Be fully present with people.** You're busy, so you may not be able to spend a long lunch hour with someone, but you can spend 10 minutes. Pick one or two people a day and decide to make the time spent with them special. Show the person that you are listening to them and that what they have to say is special to you. Most people don't experience being wholly listened to by another person, so this is one of the most powerful things that you can do with someone to build up a shared relationship with deep rapport.
5. **Congratulate yourself!** Thinking an occasional thought about how well you've done lately will not do as much good as if you put it in a framework and make it substantial and real. Write a list of all the things that you have achieved and made happen in the last few months, then read them aloud with gusto and as you do so, feel really proud. To embed your success further, print the ones you are really proud of in large letters on an A4 page and stick them inside wardrobes and cupboard doors so you can see them several times a day. Get that feeling of vitality and powerfulness that comes with knowing that you are a person that constantly makes things happen.

THINGS I DO THAT KEEP ME GROUNDED

- **AFFIRMATIONS** Affirmations are a lovely way of focusing on what you have in life, and the things that you want to bring more of into your daily being. There are thousands to choose from and if you read a book of them you can choose the one that resonates with you each day. I change my affirmations all the time, depending on how I feel and what I would like to draw into my life at present. My favourite affirmation at present is: 'I have abundance, joy, love and fulfilment in my life'. If you want to build your motivation, a really powerful affirmation is "Be bold - and mighty forces will come to your aid!"
- **FIND PEOPLE ON SAME JOURNEY AS YOU.** There is nothing so exciting as meeting someone you click with and finding out that they are interested in the same things as you, and are on the same journey. Treasure these people. If you are networking, find two people in room and discover what is special about them and what is important to them, this is one of the surest ways to find life's travelling buddies.
- **GRATITUDE** – Before getting out of bed each day, ask yourself what was good about yesterday. You'll find something worthwhile about even the worst of days. Then list all the things that you are grateful for having and carry the feeling this gives you throughout the day. A quote from Lydia Child says it all: "Gratitude is the memory of the heart; therefore remember to say often, I have all I ever enjoyed."

- **FINALLY** A Chinese proverb says that 'happiness is something to do, something to love, and something to look forward to'. Make sure you are working on at least one each of these aspects of yourself that leads to self fulfilment – and that you have many more planned for the future.

Frances Coombes is an NLP Master Practitioner and Performance Enhancement Coach. She is also a journalist in the fields of employment, motivational training, sales and education and has freelanced for the Evening Standard, 'Just the Job' section.

Her book Be Your BestMotivator is one of 8 titles by Hodder & Stoughton (£4.99) in their new Q Learning range. Handbag sized Motivator is a popular self development and performance coaching guide aimed at people who don't have the time to attend training courses, and are not managed or mentored by a motivational coach.

Motivator is available from Waterstones and Borders or if you have difficulty obtaining it you can contact the author at francescoombes@yahoo.com. For details of her Motivator workshops see Google website: francescoombes.com. For further details or workshop bookings telephone 0207 609 1617.