

Get Motivated & STAY Motivated!

How to avoid the start-stop cycle and stay on track *for good*!

with Meagan Walker

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Get Motivated & STAY Motivated



Hi, I'm Meagan!

I'm a wellness coach who uses integrated mind & body training both in the gym and out in nature!

I used to be a professional procrastinator and quitter of things. I tried cleanses, gimmicky workouts, and endless time-management "hacks" before I figured out I didn't need *another* band-aid solution - I needed to get to the source of my motivation first. **That's what finally worked for me, and it's what I'll share with you here!**

How to use this workbook.

Even though it would be sooooo nice, deep down you and I both know that there isn't a quick-fix cure for getting motivated and staying motivated, or everyone would be doing it already.

So forget that idea - instead, we'll use this workbook to get at the real reasons for wanting to take action, and put in place some strategies to keep you moving forward **long-term**!

You'll learn that motivation is NOT what you need to begin with, how starting small is often better than going all-or-nothing, and how to deal with bumps and interruptions along the way.

You can print the workbook and write directly in it, or write on a pad of paper or your favourite journal. I encourage you to use a real pen and paper if you can - it helps us remember!

Lastly, let go of that perfectionist mindset. This is NOT the final draft of a literary masterwork! I's a starting point, so embrace all the spelling errors and messy writing and keep going.

You've got this! **Let's get started.**

-Meagan

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Step 1: Get honest to get motivated.

Let's bust a very unhelpful myth: **Motivation is NOT the thing that gets you to your goals.**

Wait... what? ***You mean motivation and willpower aren't the most important things?***

Contrary to popular belief, motivation is actually the RESULT of having real and powerful reasons for doing the things you want to do. This "WHY" represents all the ways your goals are important to you, your "close-to-the-heart" reasons!

You'll know you've got your WHY refined when it sounds specific and probably feels pretty vulnerable. It's the difference between:

"I want to work out so I can do more things." (Too vague.)
and:
"I want to work out because I'm afraid of regretting all the activities I'm missing out on while I am too uncomfortable to try something new with my friends." (Specific!)

Honesty is incredibly important here, and the process can be challenging as you have to come face-to-face with your vulnerabilities. Be compassionate with yourself, but don't let yourself off the hook with a vague answer. (A coach or therapist can be a valuable resource here!)

What are my close-to-the-heart reasons?

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Step 2: Get specific with your goals.

Imagine if you went to an airport and said "give me a ticket to the coast," then got upset when you found yourself in Alaska instead of on a beach in Tahiti... after a flight with 8 stopovers.

This happens all the time with goals! People expect to end up all sorts of places without ever specifying where exactly they want to be or how to get there, or what a backup plan might be if things change, then proclaim "*I tried everything, it's hopeless!*" (Spoiler: it's not hopeless.)

This first step is about the long term - what's the ideal destination? The more detailed you can be, the more likely you'll arrive at the place you want. (This is not set in stone and can evolve as you do.) What clothes will you wear, what activities will you do, how will you feel? Don't be limited by being super reasonable here, write from the heart!

What are my specific, long-term goals?

Next, you'll figure out the first two or three steps you need to take. For instance, if you want to fly to somewhere, first you have to find out how to buy a ticket or how to get to the airport. This is where "being reasonable" comes in.

What are the first two or three goals I need to start with?

Check In : Is this a should-do or want-to?

Are your goals things you ***want to*** *do... or things you feel like you "should" do? We are constantly bombarded by society's expectations for how we "should" behave, look, and feel. Take a moment to really cut through the noise and focus your energy on the "want to" goals!*

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Step 3: Take sustainable action, and build on it.

We all have plenty of evidence that we cannot do something - most of us have failed more than once on the way to our goals. If we know the "all-or-nothing" approach doesn't work, it's time to do it differently by taking small, imperfect steps!

Just think about how you wish you had done this earlier - in 5 more years, if you don't take action today, you'll still feel the same way. But if you do act, your future self will be grateful!

Our purpose for this is to build evidence that we can do something long-term.

I mean picking a task that is so small you almost don't want to tell anyone! For hydration, it could be drinking half a mug of water every morning before you pour coffee into it.

By doing that for at least two weeks, even if you forget a day or three, you prove to yourself that you can stick to something even when there are bumps along the way.

This is how you avoid quitting because of overwhelm and perfectionism!

Let's start that long journey the only way you can - step by step.

What is my first teeeeeeeny-tiny, ultra-achievable goal?

How will I do this?

When will I do this?

What are possible obstacles, and their solutions?

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Step 4: Foster a growth mindset.

A growth mindset is one of the most powerful tools you can use to achieve your goals! Unfortunately, many of us are stuck in a fixed mindset - I know I certainly was for a long time.

It's important to realize that being motivated does NOT mean that it always feels easy to take action. Sometimes you still have to work hard to get going!

Having a growth mindset helps place feelings of frustration or avoidance as part of the process, not as evidence that you're "not cut out for it."

Take a look at this chart and decide where you tend towards for now, and also how to change that!
(For more information, read or listen to "*Mindset*" by Carol Dweck.)



Fixed	Growth
I either have talent, or I don't.	I can learn to do anything.
When frustrated, I give up.	When frustrated, I persevere.
I fear challenge and avoid it.	I like challenge and seek it.
Failure means I'm no good.	I learn from failure & improve.
Your success threatens me.	Your success inspires me.
My abilities and intelligence determine most things.	My effort and attitude determine most things.
Tell me I'm smart.	Tell me I work hard.

What are some things I say from a fixed mindset position?

(Eg. "Working out isn't easy for me, I guess I'm just not a fitness person.")

How can I rewrite them to reflect a growth mindset?

(Eg. "I know things are always harder when you're learning them, but I'll get the hang of it.")

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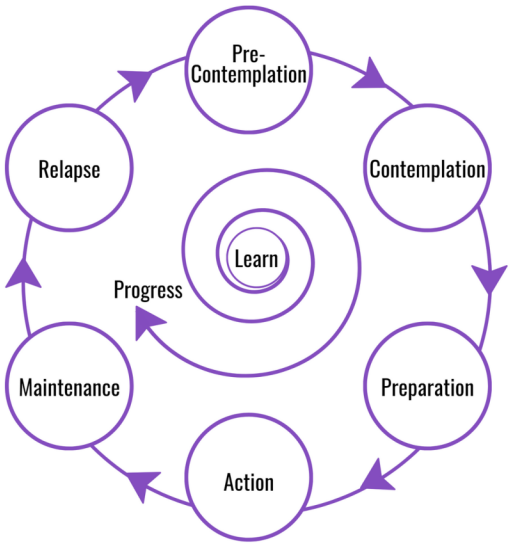
Step 5: Embrace relapse as a part of progress.

While we like to imagine that our progress will look like a nice straight line, the reality is that the vast majority of us are going to mess up our plans a bunch of times on the way to our goals. (Or life will mess things up for us.) This is part of the reason that perfection is so deadly for progress - the two can't really exist together!

I love the cycle from Prochaska & DiClemente (1983), as it shows a **realistic upward spiral** of progress. Check out the example:



Pre-Contemplation: before you think you feel unfit.
Contemplation: realizing you want to get fitter.
Preparation: researching gym memberships.
Action: actually going to the gym.
Maintenance: keeping up with it.
Relapse: stop going to the gym.

In this example, the next steps might be:

Pre-Contemplation: not thinking about training.
Contemplation: researching personal trainers... (etc.)

When we think about it this way, relapse is not a failure, **it is an expected part of the process!** I like to think about picking up where I left off, not having to start all over again from scratch.

Now, I would like you to take a moment to contemplate some past relapses and think about what you learned. Then, you'll write about a potential future relapse and how you can come back from it - as though you were saying these things to encourage a friend.

How would you reassure someone that failure is not permanent?

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Step 6: Ground yourself in your values.

Research has shown that our self-regulation is a finite resource, and it can get drained by lots of little "should be, should do" things that nag away in the background. This leaves us with less energy to make decisions with, and can contribute to falling off the wagon.

It appears that an antidote to this is staying in touch with our deeper values! This seems to clean up a lot of the background noise, which frees up our working memory to be used on the self-regulation work we want it to do. (Logel & Cohen, 2012).

First, rate these values from 1 (most important) to 9 (least important.)

___ Creativity	___ Religion	___ Independence
___ Friends	___ Politics	___ Sports Ability
___ Family	___ Humour	___ Sense of Community

Next, pick your top value and write about times it is important.

(Don't worry about spelling etc., focus on the thoughts and feelings about this value.)

Summarize: what are the top two reasons this value is important?

1.

2.

This value has influenced my life. *(circle one)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

This value is an important part of who I am. *(circle one)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

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Step 7: Put it into practice.

If you've gotten this far, chances are you are pretty good at doing intellectual tasks and understanding what it is you need to do. The tough part often comes with actually DOING the things! So review your first teeeeeeny-tiny, ultra-achievable goal from earlier - we're starting!

At the end of this package, you'll see I've put a page of tables to start tracking your progress. In the first shaded cell, you are going to write the day of the week it is right now, and then fill in the rest accordingly. **Even if it's a Wednesday in the middle of the month!** Imperfect action means starting now, not when it's the "perfect time" (which you and I both know means *never*.)

Then, each day you do a thing, you are going to put a tally mark in the appropriate square. As you move along, you might find that some days will start to accumulate more tally marks than others because you've missed a few. **THAT'S FINE.** I cannot stress how normal that is, and it's why this is not a calendar where you will put one check mark in each day. That works great for some people, but if you're here with me chances are you're not one of them. **That is also fine** - I'm not one either. I prefer to just pick up where I left off, without the pressure to be perfect.

If you find that you are not doing the teeeeeny-tiny goal, ***make it even tinier.*** The point is not to bully yourself into doing something, it's to find out where you need to start and then starting there. Gradually, you will start to accumulate evidence that you can do the thing!

If you want to keep tracking after the first two weeks, go ahead! If you're feeling good with that, do another little goal. And then another. **Progress, not perfection.**

Task: Stretch my legs while I wait for coffee to brew

Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues
𝍸	𝍸	𝍸	𝍸	𝍸	𝍸 𝍸	𝍸

Task: Walk on the treadmill in my pajamas for 5 minutes with coffee

Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs
𝍸	𝍸	𝍸	𝍸	𝍸	𝍸	𝍸

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You CAN do this thing!



I sincerely hope that you've found these 7 steps as useful as I have. Whether you're just starting out, or starting over for the hundredth time, staying in touch with your WHY and being patient with yourself will go a long way towards your long-term success!

Finding a supportive community is also incredibly important, and I'm committed to connecting folks who can be there for each other as we work through our shared and unique challenges.

Staying Motivated Together

There are a number of ways that you can stay in the loop! I send between 1 to 4 emails each month, and post semi-regularly on social media. Between those options, you'll know what I'm up to and can stay connected with other folks in the community!

Follow me on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/resilienceinmotion

Follow me on Instagram:

@resilienceinmotion

My blog and all the info about working with me is on my website:

www.resilienceinmotion.ca

(*Make sure you check your spam and junk folders for my emails, the filters are ruthless with hiding content you want to see! Bonus points if you add me to your safe senders list.)*

And lastly, if there's anything I can do to help you on your journey, or if you want to share a win, please don't hesitate to reach out! It sounds cheesy but I'm gonna say it anyway: you really can achieve your goals, and I'm here to cheer you on along the way!

Yours in wellness,
Meagan

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Daily Imperfect Action

Task: _____

Task: _____

Task: _____

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