



Hidden Motivators for Exercise

You know you should exercise, but keeping your body physically fit may not be motivating you to participate in regular exercise. Acquiring more positive beliefs about exercise will give you more reasons to do it, and you may feel new motivation. See exercise as a form of recreation, a way to apply work-life balance, and a means of achieving mental relaxation. Exercise produces a tranquilizing effect that you will feel hours later, and it can give you the feeling that you have accomplished something. These effects can be especially beneficial if you've had a hard day. Exercise can be the one bright spot during those times where you feel a sense of helplessness about specific worries and concerns. Don't think of exercise as just something you "have to do." Instead, think of its many other benefits.

Helping Your Child "Think College"

If you value a college education for your child, the secret to implanting the idea is "expectation" and "anticipation". Start imparting messages in middle school, rather than high school. Treat college attendance as a natural and assumed event in your child's life. Help your child envision the experience by visiting different campuses and talking about the benefits and drawbacks of each. Don't push too hard for early decisions on a major. Instead, talk about different career options and how they fit in with your child's strengths and interests. Discuss how making good grades and securing scholarships today gives your child more options down the road.

If you're a graduate, share some of your own college experiences with a sense of excitement and explain how they helped shape your life.

Taking Breaks Maximizes Productivity

Treat your work like a marathon rather than a sprint and you'll get more done in less time. Start by warming up with a few easy tasks, and slowly increase your pace until you hit a comfortable rhythm. Take frequent, short breaks. If you don't, you will experience fatigue followed by vulnerability to distractions. This is your body's way of saying "Enough!" These distractions can morph into procrastination, which will usually keep you away from work longer than planned breaks would.

Stepping out of Your Comfort Zone

Success almost always requires stepping out of your comfort zone. The next time your anxieties start clawing at your willingness to explore a new workplace opportunity, remember that it's natural to feel unfit for a task at first. Expect to fumble until you get your footing. Living up to your potential includes no set instructions or a paint-by-numbers approach. False starts and dead ends happen. Don't be discouraged. Follow this rule: You know more than you think you do. The key is applying old experiences to new situations, getting feedback, and making adjustments until you excel. Then move on to the next challenge.

Secrets of Small Talk

Do you hate small talk or dread business social events? There are many reasons for you to make the effort to overcome these feelings. Great connections and increased productivity may result from your willingness to engage. The secret is improved "engagement skills." If deep down you'd rather be social, decide to feel "adventurous." This powers up sociability and boosts your enthusiasm, which can overcome the "I hate these events" feeling. To prepare, discard the dread and focus on having a few conversational topics at the ready before your arrival. Focus on three categories: 1) your location and immediate environment, 2) the purpose of the event, and 3) the event's anticipated

outcome or result. Apply who, what, where, when, how, and why questions to these topics. Numerous icebreakers can be formulated using these topics and question-word starters. (The world's best conversationalists are newspaper reporters. Now you know why: This is how they think!) Key point: Break the ice with questions. After a conversation starts, give your name. Offer your firm handshake first, and look the person in the eye. When introduced to others, repeat their names as you shake hands. Verbally affirm ("Uh-huh") or nod your head to show interest, and look for opportunities to volley the conversation. Don't monopolize. When you employ these skills, new acquaintances will remember you as someone who's personable. Being a good conversationalist isn't something you can easily put on a résumé, but it is one skill that will boost your career dramatically.

Work With Your Moods

You can get in sync with your body and be more productive during the week by learning how natural sleep-wake cycles affect your energy level and emotions. Here's how: Jot down how you're feeling every hour during the day. Use a five-point scale where "1" equals low energy and "5" equals feeling peppy. Keep score for a week, and when done, analyze your findings. Did you discover your "up" times and your "not so up" times? You have a natural biological clock inside you that regulates everything from hormonal levels to appetite. These circadian rhythms are found in almost every living thing. Once you're familiar with your unique pattern, predicting the best time to work, study, and learn is easier. You'll know when you're likely to be energetic, positive, and upbeat so you can do more, think more clearly, and process information better. Use this knowledge when planning important tasks and watch your productivity skyrocket!

Kick Cravings to Keep to Your Diet

Don't beat yourself up for failing to slay the craving goblins in the psychological war against hunger. Ironically, the solution may be your need to eat more frequently. If you reduce caloric intake too quickly, a starvation/binge cycle can begin. Set realistic goals for dieting, and ease into it. Do you need more sleep? Exhaustion can make you want high-calorie foods. Also, eat breakfast. If you don't, you risk overeating at lunch or later in the day. If you aren't hungry first thing in the morning, head out the door with something nutritious in hand that you can

eat on the way to or at work. Stress can be a trigger for binges, so manage it with help from your EAP. If possible, try short exercise breaks. One study showed that a brisk walk could overcome chocolate cravings! It could help reduce other food cravings as well.

Remember: employees and eligible dependents can request CONCERN counseling and work/life services by phoning our 800 number, answered live 24/7. You can request CONCERN: EAP services on-line at: <https://www.concern-eap.com/Employees/bRequestforServicesb/tabid/87/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

Here are some recent quotes from employees who used CONCERN: EAP explaining what they liked best about the services:

"The best things about CONCERN are the quick response, choice of therapists, and convenient location of my therapist to work. I think this is a valuable resource for employees and I am very grateful and appreciative for these services."

"I was able to make an appointment right away, and our counselor is really good. We relate to her very well."

"I appreciate the friendliness of the staff. During phone calls a potentially awkward process was made comfortable."

**CONCERN: EAP
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