

STAYING MOTIVATED - WORKSHEET 2

Lesson Objective:

Develop key strategies for staying motivated

DISRUPTIONS IN MOTIVATION

Once you have dedicated yourself to recovery, there may still be desire and cravings to use again. Your motivation levels may come and go. At times you will be extremely motivated to stay on track, and other times you may feel indecisive, uncommitted, and unwilling. Disruptions in your motivation will challenge you. It is important to unravel and uncover the subconscious desires that threaten your success.

WRITING YOUR STORY

Spend some time reflecting and writing about how positive people have helped you keep your motivation for recovery high. Who in your life seems to drag you down and discourage you? What individuals or groups do you have that lift you up, strengthen your resolve, and spur you on toward long-term recovery? What can you do to increase your level of motivation and find positive support in your life?

STRATEGIES FOR STAYING MOTIVATED

Because motivation levels rise and fall, it is especially important to find ways to stay interested in recovery, continue to be inspired, and remain committed. The following strategies will help you sustain enthusiasm during treatment and keep you motivated during potentially difficult times ahead.

1. Write down your reasons for wanting to stay sober.

Keep your list in a prominent place in your home and review it often.

STAYING MOTIVATED - WORKSHEET 2

2. Set goals.

Break your large goals into smaller, short-term goals that are challenging enough to be inspiring, but realistic enough to keep you from getting discouraged. Don't be afraid to dream big with your long-term goals.

3. Keep your enthusiasm high.

It is hard to create enthusiasm, but once established, it can be maintained. Keep a log of your progress, including large and small goals. Plan sober activities you find rewarding and do not revolve around alcohol or drugs. Celebrate monthly and yearly milestones. Recognizing and remembering the good things in your life is motivating and will help strengthen your commitment to leading a sober life.

4. Spend time with encouraging people who believe in you, and limit your contact with those who bring you down.

It can be disheartening to regularly hang out with discouraging people or people who are tempting you to use again. Choose a different and more positive environment for yourself.

5. Find the support you need.

Attend support groups, involve supportive friends and family, or use social networking to build a supportive accountability team.

6. Tell others about your goals.

If your friends know you are trying to stay sober, they are more likely to encourage and support you, not tempt you to relapse or compromise your efforts.

7. Get your eyes off your sober date and on to your health.

The strength of your recovery is much more important than knowing the length of it. Find ways to be more healthy physically, make better social connections, and grow stronger emotionally. If you focus on making healthy lifestyle choices and changes, you will make much more progress. If you are currently in treatment, remember, it's not how fast you can get out of treatment, it's how strong you can get before you leave.

8. Keep learning.

Read everything you can about sobriety, health, codependency, recovery, mental health, and lifestyle changes. The more you read, the more you will understand what is happening in your mind and body. Learn through A.A., support groups, health clubs, community education programs, and by reading on your own.

STAYING MOTIVATED - WORKSHEET 2

9. Identify competing motivations.

The war within you cannot be won if you do not know your enemy. Are your urges and cravings due to exhaustion, lack of sleep, negative thinking, or a deeply rooted belief you don't deserve to be healthy? Figuring out what you are fighting against will help you deal with it correctly.

10. Learn from others who have successfully navigated the road you are walking.

Your support group can give you those connections. Check the internet for blogs by others in recovery. Many have great practical tips for positive change and overcoming obstacles.

11. Try something new.

Every week or so, add a new exercise to your routine, try a new recipe, walk a different route than usual, sign up for a fundraiser race, try a new class, or develop a new hobby or interest.

Which strategies to stay motivated are you willing to try now?
