

MAY

Staying Motivated



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A LITTLE
PROGRESS
EACH DAY
ADDS UP
TO BIG RESULTS

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MAY IS MENTAL
HEALTH MONTH

motivation

DURING COVID-19

There's this misconception that in order to be 'successful', one must be giving it 100% of their effort, 100% of the time. However, this is not possible to sustain, and if you tried, you would be mentally and/or physically burnt out in about a week's time. We're human - our lives, bodies, relationships, occupations, schedules, etc. are constantly evolving and changing. It's only natural for us to follow the ebbs and flows of life.

Especially now as we collectively experience this pandemic and physical isolation from each other, it's natural to feel what you're feeling. It's okay if your day isn't as productive or busy as it was before this. It's alright if you don't feel motivated to give it your all right now. I read a quote somewhere, it said **"This is a pandemic. Not a productivity contest."**

It's important to take care of our bodies and minds during this time. However, that also means that we need to be gentle with ourselves. If you feel pressure to make the best of the time you've been given or you're judging yourself because you haven't taken up that new hobby, started major home improvements, cooked a ton of delicious new recipes, or organized the entire house - grant yourself some grace.

Taking care of your family, getting out of bed each day, staying healthy and safe - that is what's most important right now.

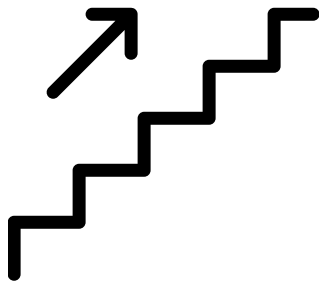
No matter what your day looks like, you are still moving forward. You're still on course.



smart GOAL SETTING

VISUALIZE YOUR GOAL

Visualize your goal down to the most intricate detail. See it, feel it, hear it the sounds that accompany the end result. Spend some time with your eyes closed, visualizing what you'd like to accomplish.

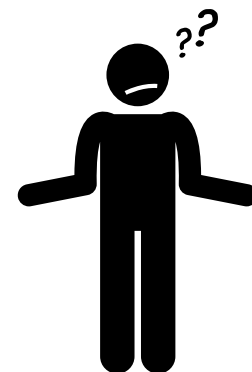


BREAK IT DOWN

Break the goal down into smaller pieces and set intermediary targets and rewards. Chip away at this goal. Break it down into the smallest realistic steps and only do one at a time. It's not about how fast it's accomplished, it's about experiencing and enjoying every step of the way. Tony Robbins has said "A major source of stress in our lives comes from the feeling that we have an impossible number of things to do. If you take on a project and try to do the whole thing at once, you're going to feel overwhelmed."

IDENTIFY YOUR 'WHY'

Make a list of reasons you want to accomplish the goal. In our busy, distracting world, it's easy to get blown off course. Why do you want to set this goal for yourself? Why is this important to you? Start to ground yourself in your goal. Remembering your reason will keep you on course with the steps necessary to achieve your goal.



setting REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

We all know that life can get in the way of plans and things we want to accomplish. It's important to be realistic and anticipate sudden change and/or setbacks. Motivation will never be 100% reliable. The reason or "why" that we talked about in the page before this pulls more weight than relying solely on fleeting motivation.

MAJOR PROGRESS TAKES TIME

Keep in mind that all growth, change and transformation take time. Be patient! Keep continuing with consistent baby steps. Remember, break down your larger goal into smaller more manageable targets.

There will most likely be bumps along the way! It's not possible to anticipate every single problem you could run into, but develop an action plan for when unforeseeable events or circumstances erupt. Also keep in mind that any setbacks are all a part of the process.

ANTICIPATE ROUGH PATCHES

CHECK IN WITH YOUR REASONS TO CARRY ON

Despite his all-too-human flaws, Steve Jobs embodied this brilliantly. He once told an interviewer: "I think most people that are able to make a sustained contribution over time — rather than just a peak — are very internally driven. You have to be. Because, in the ebb and tide of people's opinions and of fads, there are going to be times when you are criticized, and criticism's very difficult. And so when you're criticized, you learn to pull back a little and listen to your own drummer. And to some extent, that isolates you from the praise, if you eventually get it, too. The praise becomes a little less important to you and the criticism becomes a little less important to you, in the same measure. And you become more internally driven."

lean on YOUR SUPPORT SYSTEM



DEVELOP A STRONG SUPPORT SYSTEM

Create a small circle of people that you trust and know you can rely on. Have a conversation with friends and family or people from an organization or group you belong to about the goals you have set for yourself and how you would like them to support you. Anytime you feel like you're not as motivated or you're having a hard time with something, you know that you can go to this small circle of people for guidance and support.



FIND AN ACCOUNTABILITY BUDDY

Maybe there is someone you know who is trying to accomplish a similar goal as you, or maybe their goal is completely different. Either way, the both of you can push and motivate one another to accomplish those smaller targets to ultimately achieve your larger goal!

BRAIN POWER

mental health month

OWNING YOUR FEELINGS



It can be easy to get caught up in your emotions as you're feeling them. Most people don't think about what emotions they are dealing with, but taking the time to really identify what you're feeling can help you to better cope with challenging situations.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS



Allow yourself to feel. Sometimes there are societal pressures that encourage people to shut down their emotions, often expressed through statements like, "Big girls don't cry," or "Man up." These outdated ideas are harmful, not helpful. Everyone has emotions—they are part of the human experience—and you have every right to feel them, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socio-economic status, race, political affiliation or religion.



Don't ignore how you're feeling. Most of us have heard the term "bottling up your feelings" before. When we try to push feelings aside without addressing them, they build strength and make us more likely to "explode" at some point in the future. It may not always be appropriate to process your emotions at the very moment you are feeling them, but try to do so as soon as you can.



Talk it out. Find someone you trust that you can talk to about how you're feeling. You may find that people are eager to share about similar experiences they've had or times that they have felt the way that you are feeling. This can be helpful, but if you're really only interested in having someone listen, it's okay to tell them that.



Build your emotional vocabulary. When asked about our feelings, most people will usually use words like bad, sad, mad, good, or fine. But at the root of "good, bad, sad, mad, or fine" are many words that better describe how we feel. Try building your emotional vocabulary by writing down as many "feeling" words as you can think of and think of a time that you felt that way.



Try journaling. Each night write down at least 3 feelings you had over the course of the day and what caused them. It doesn't need to be a "Dear Diary" kind of thing. Just a few sentences or bullet points to help you practice being comfortable with identifying and expressing your emotions.



Consider the strength of your feelings. By thinking about how intense your emotions are, you may realize that what you thought you were feeling at first could better be described by another word. For instance, sometimes a person might say they are stressed when what they are really experiencing is something less severe like annoyance, alternatively anger might really be a stronger, deeper feeling like betrayal.



See a mental health professional. If you are taking steps to be more in touch with your feelings, but are having trouble dealing with them, mental health providers like counselors and therapists have been trained to help. Some free or low cost options are also available. Your employer might have an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that offers a limited number of free counseling sessions, and your Human Resources department can help you access this resource. If you don't have an EAP through work, the leaders of religious organizations like churches, synagogues and mosques often have experience with counseling.

FAST FACTS



The English language has over 3,000 words for emotions.¹



People who are good at being specific about identifying and labeling their emotions are less likely to binge drink, be physically aggressive, or self-injure when distressed.²



When school-aged kids are taught about emotions for 20-30 minutes per week their social behavior and school performance improves.³

IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU ARE STRUGGLING WITH YOUR MENTAL HEALTH, VISIT [MHASCREENING.ORG](https://mhascreening.org) TO CHECK YOUR SYMPTOMS.



It's free, confidential, and anonymous. Once you have your results, MHA will give you information and resources to help you start to feel better.



NOURISH

STRAWBERRY GOAT CHEESE SALAD WITH CHAMPAGNE VINAIGRETTE

Recipe From: Leanne Ray, MS, RDN



ingredients

- 1/4 cup champagne vinegar
- 1 medium orange, juiced
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 tsp dijon mustard
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- salt & pepper to taste
- 5 oz clamshell of spring mix
- 8 oz strawberries, sliced
- 2 oz goat cheese crumbles
- 1/3 cup sliced almonds, toasted

recipe preparation

- Make your dressing: add vinegar, orange juice, honey and dijon to a jar. Mix with a fork until combined. Add olive oil and shake well. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
- Add spring mix and strawberries to large salad bowl. Toss with dressing per preference (you won't need it all). Top with goat cheese and sliced almonds just before serving.

notes

- You likely won't need all of the dressing so store any extra in the fridge for later use
- Substitutes for champagne vinegar: balsamic or red wine vinegar
- Avoid mixing in the goat cheese because it will likely clump together or coat the greens

tick

PREVENTION

Tick exposure can occur year-round, but ticks are most active during warmer months (April to September).

BEFORE YOU GO OUTSIDE

KNOW WHERE TO EXPECT TICKS: Ticks live in grassy, brushy, or wooded areas, or even on animals. Spending time outside walking your dog, camping, gardening, or hunting could bring you in close contact with ticks. Many people get ticks in their own yard or neighborhood.

TREAT CLOTHING & GEAR: with products containing 0.5% permethrin. Permethrin can be used to treat boots, clothing and camping gear and remain protective through several washings. Alternatively, you can buy permethrin-treated clothing and gear.

USE EPA-REGISTERED INSECT REPELLENTS: external icon containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (OLE), para-menthane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone. EPA's helpful search tool external icon can help you find the product that best suits your needs. Always follow product instructions. Do not use products containing OLE or PMD on children under 3 years old.

AFTER YOU COME INDOORS

Check your clothing for ticks. Ticks may be carried into the house on clothing. Any ticks that are found should be removed. Tumble dry clothes in a dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing after you come indoors. If the clothes are damp, additional time may be needed. If the clothes require washing first, hot water is recommended. Cold and medium temperature water will not kill ticks.

Examine gear and pets. Ticks can ride into the home on clothing and pets, then attach to a person later, so carefully examine pets, coats, and daypacks.

Shower soon after being outdoors. Showering within two hours of coming indoors has been shown to reduce your risk of getting Lyme disease and may be effective in reducing the risk of other tickborne diseases. Showering may help wash off unattached ticks and it is a good opportunity to do a tick check.

Check your body for ticks after being outdoors. Conduct a full body check upon return from potentially tick-infested areas, including your own backyard. Use a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body.

