

Today we're going to talk about *finding our motivation*. Recently, I was speaking to a group of female leaders and philanthropists about my book, *hungry for more*, and was asked how can we find or maintain our motivation to lose weight? As I like to think of it, how do we maintain our motivation for anything hard for that matter? How do we find the motivation to do the hard things and to keep doing them?

We have all had the experience of deciding to turn over a new leaf and feeling really excited or hyped only to find ourselves fizzling out a few weeks later. When this happens, people feel like they don't have the inherent stamina or the deep motivation to do the thing. Or that they just can't do the thing, eating healthy or exercising, or whatever the case may be. But I'm here to tell you that this is really a false assumption. It is based on a flawed expectation that if we're truly motivated, then we will naturally wake up with the same energy level, the same excitement, the same motivation, every single day. We will always inherently be driven towards the work, always excited, hyped, and jazzed about it. Really nothing could be further from the truth.

There are many things that I am personally motivated to maintain. My work as a physician, my connection with all of you out there, in many ways would connect with this podcast, by newsletters, social media, my relationship with my husband, and my three children. I'm truly motivated about my passion for writing and running. But if you think that I wake up every single morning, bright eyed and bushy tailed, brimming with motivation and energy, really, you're wrong. Trust me when I tell you that there are times not only that I don't feel unmotivated, I feel incapable of maintaining these things. It takes work to maintain motivation, and it takes strategy.

I wanted to answer that question that was posed last week with a little more nuance, how do we find the motivation to do the hard thing? Well, first is to *manage your expectations*. I think just knowing that you're going to have off moments is not only comforting, but it is motivating. There is nothing inherently wrong with you. If your motivation is waning, it is natural, it is normal, and human. To have different feelings and moods, and drive, even towards the things that you love most and are most committed to. I want you to think about an example. Think about a relationship in your life. Chances are that at the start of that relationship, you were filled with a certain energy. Once you settled into that relationship, it was a different energy, a different intensity, a different motivation even, to do the same things, to be together all the time. Of course, we even can become complacent. Different seasons have different motivations. Don't judge yourself for this. It is human nature. Accepting that truth and managing your expectations allows you for the natural dips and rises that may occur and also allows you to resume your path with self acceptance, with self compassion, and without judgment.

We can counter this natural waning of motivation by *keeping our "why" front and center*. Often I ask people, why do you want to lose weight? Yes, sometimes there's vanity involved. Vanity is okay as long as you're not coming from a place of shame and self judgment or societal messaging. That's a whole other podcast. Also people share that they're looking to feel more energy, more vitality. People are looking for more mobility, or feeling of ease, and comfort in their body. Keeping that big picture our personal values of what truly matters to us. Keeping that "why" front and center is where we find our motivation. Find your motivation from the innate desire to be well, and do well, mind and body. Be willing to do what is hard at this moment. To forgo what feels good in the short term, in order to achieve greater value over the long run. It is a hard thing to do to abdicate what feels good at this

moment for our future well being. It takes a certain level of faith, and it takes patience. Cultivate that faith by staying clear and committed to your personal “why”.

Next, *motivation can be maintained* and needs to be maintained through reminders. We can all have goals and values, but we all forget sometimes it can benefit from reminders. In fact, I think reminders are needed every single day. There are plenty of spaces these days where you can get that dose of motivation, inspiration, spirituality. I get mine from writing my Instagram messages to you @dradrienneyoudim. I often say by reminding you, I'm reminding myself too. I also spend some time every day either listening or reading something that builds my motivation or inspiration, books or podcasts and the like.

I also spend almost every day writing and cultivating my motivation, which brings me to the fourth, *building awareness and presence*. I've mentioned in prior podcasts how valuable a writing practice can be. Writing can be a great way to build awareness and presence. A way to dig deep, to define your goals, and to maintain your motivation around them. There are a few evidence based practices that can help you do this. The first is a *gratitude practice*. Gratitude is a great way of drumming up motivation. By reflecting on what we're grateful for, we can bolster our natural motivation to do our part. Not only for the greater good, but for ourselves. *Mantras and affirmations* are another way. Little messages to yourself that inspire you, can serve as helpful reminders to do the things that are hard in the moment when you may not feel like it. I recommend people to write their own personal mantras. Write it on a post it and stick it on the refrigerator or on your laptop. Write it on your mirror. Put a little note for yourself next to your bed stand. Little messages that serve as inspiration and as a reminder. Another writing practice is *savoring*. Taking the time to really savor, and to really revel in the good stuff. The feeling that we achieve from doing the hard things will inherently motivate us to continue to do them. Finally *celebrating your wins*. Just like a child that feels validated. When acknowledged, we can validate ourselves and motivate ourselves by celebrating our wins no matter how small. Make it a habit to recognize daily what you were doing and what those small wins are. Acknowledge that you're sticking to your goals, that you're making time for yourself, that you're engaging in healthy practices, or that you're merely just trying. By doing so you naturally build the motivation to continue. If you're interested in a writing practice, I've created an awesome 30 day journaling guide. You can find it on the website and I hope that it will help you in achieving these practices.

The next is *creating a routine*. Routines are a powerful way to stay committed to a goal. Create a standing shopping list. Create a routine around a weekly meal plan, a daily meal prep. Create a routine around your daily movement practice. Creating a routine of a nighttime ritual. Something soothing that you do before sleep. It doesn't have to be long and it doesn't have to be excessive. Five minutes to cultivate that bedtime routine for example. But once you create that routine, don't overthink it, and don't negotiate around it, just do it. Committing to a routine will eventually create a ritual that becomes ingrained in habit. It takes away from what we like to call decision fatigue. The should I should I not, that back and forth that takes from and steals your motivation. Creating a routine is a healthy way to go into autopilot and to cultivate that motivation that is low energy, low ticket, but high yield.

Finally, and I've kind of alluded to this already, the most powerful way of building motivation is by *aligning with that feeling* after the hard thing is done. How do you feel when you commit and

accomplish a goal? How do you feel when you see the results of the hard work? Really experiencing that feeling, bringing to mind that feeling after the deed is done is the most powerful way to redirect yourself in that very moment. When the desire to deviate is so strong, aligned with how you feel in your body and in your mind when you choose a healthy snack, or opt to cook for yourself, or prepare a healthy meal. Knowing that you will feel light energetic can serve as a great motivator for choosing that in that moment. The opposite is imagining how you might feel when you react to desire. Think donuts in the break room. How do you feel in your body after you eat a dense sugary snack? Of course, it's yummy at the moment. But then we're left with this heavy feeling and we feel depleted. That's not to say that we can never indulge or enjoy those things. But many of us are indulging in these things daily or multiple times per day. It just does not feel good in our bodies, nor is it congruent with our long term goals.

To that end, align with how you know you will feel after that walk out in nature, or your workout. Doing this will help you get over the hurdle to exercise. We all have that hurdle even if we're in routine. Knowing that we will feel good afterwards, knowing that your mood will be uplifted. Knowing that your productivity, creativity, focus, and cognition, will be enhanced as a result of that activity. Really dial into that feeling and motivate yourself to start. And finally, tap into that feeling of achievement when you do the hard thing and let that serve as your motivation. The bottom line is *having motivation is really about finding motivation*. We cannot expect ourselves to always be pepped up and ready to go. But we can set up the scaffolds and we can implement the strategies that will help us find our motivation, day in and day out. To stay aligned and motivated to do the hard things.

Thank you so much for tuning in this week.