

## **FITNESS FOCUS: 10 Ways to Stay Motivated**

- 1. Schedule your workouts in advance. Make appointments with yourself (or with a friend) for a specific time. Treat the appointments as you would any promise. If you make time in advance and plan on keeping your word, you're more likely to keep that appointment. It helps when you share the commitment and speak it 'out loud' to someone else.**
- 2. Whenever possible, schedule morning workouts. You get it out of the way, and you start the day feeling that you already accomplished something positive for yourself. Plus, a morning workout can have an energizing effect that lasts for hours.**
- 3. Take it down a notch. Many beginners, in a combination of enthusiasm and impatience, wind up overtraining — doing too much, too soon, too frequently. That results in sluggishness, soreness, exhaustion and a general meltdown — in other words, lack of motivation.**
- 4. Concentrate on finding personal measures of improvement. Are you feeling better? Are you breaking through barriers? Are you learning something about yourself and your ability to keep your word to yourself? Is your endurance improving? Chart these benefits, no matter how small they may seem, and a pattern will soon emerge that can get you through the tough times. Which leads to number 5...**
- 5. Keep a journal. It's the one thing nearly every weight-loss expert agrees on. At the very least, a journal can help you see patterns between food, mood and energy levels. Used thoughtfully, it can teach you important things about yourself and your relationship with food, comfort, and body image.**
- 6. Understand that the voice in your head that constantly criticizes is only one of many possible voices. You can't quite it, but you can balance it with one that cheers you on and raves about good points. Try giving your 'cheerleaders' a voice and you'll understand. If you don't have a cheerleader, create one.**
- 7. When you feel like doing nothing, do a little. Many programs are abandoned because the hour workout seems like too much and you bag it altogether. On days like this, change your goal to 15 min, or even 10 minutes. Consistency breeds success. Doing even 10 minutes consistently is ultimately far more important than doing an hour once in awhile.**
- 8. When you're getting stale, change your workout. If you normally run, try the rowing machine. Add some weights or change the weight exercises you normally do to spice things up a bit.**
- 9. Get an exercise partner or schedule a session or two with a personal trainer. The input of another person can inject a tired routine with new juice, and you may learn some really cool stuff in the process. Never underestimate the power of a new voice.**
- 10. Make it fun. Many people feel a drop in motivation when their workout becomes yet another obligation. Ask yourself what kind of activity that requires moving around might also be fun.**