

# INTRINSIC & EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION



## INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

MOTIVATION FROM WITHIN YOURSELF

This type of motivation comes from within yourself and is tied with self-satisfaction and/or enjoyment in the tasks or behaviors. Intrinsic motivation is the most important type of motivation for achieving long-term goals.



## EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION

MOTIVATION FROM OUTSIDE SOURCES

This type of motivation is tied to external benefits or avoidance of negative consequences from an external source (for example, avoiding getting yelled at). Extrinsic motivation tends to be effective in achieving short-term goals.

# MOTIVATION AND NUTRITION

Intrinsic motivation is absolutely necessary for accomplishing your dietary and lifestyle goals in the long-term--and sticking to those beneficial behaviors. If you still struggle with your goals despite having intrinsic motivation, it is possible that adding extrinsic motivation may help. For example, periodic extrinsic motivation (e.g. wanting to fit into your old pair of jeans) can reinforce intrinsic motivation of having a healthy lifestyle.



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## MINDFUL EATING

Mindful eating is useful in nutrition. By taking time to savor your food and by listening to your body's hunger cues, you can eat enough to meet your needs while also not excessively eating to the point where your body feels uncomfortable. Furthermore, by eating a balanced diet, you can experience the intrinsic motivation of being healthier and/or other motivations you may have.



## DINING OUT

You can be proactive about meeting your nutritional needs by planning ahead before you dine out. Check nutritional information from the menu beforehand if possible. Also, drinking water and having a small snack (e.g. fruit) beforehand can help prevent overindulgence. Mindful eating can also decrease the likelihood of overindulgence while dining out. Furthermore, by identifying your intrinsic motivations, you can treat this time as an opportunity to truly enjoy going out to eat while keeping your goals in mind.



## EMOTIONAL EATING

Comfort foods are not always bad. However, before deciding to reach for food, ask yourself what would actually make you feel emotionally, mentally, and physically better (which are intrinsic motivations). Try to eat in an environment that is relaxing and encourages positive feelings. You may have emotional hunger if your cravings are linked to negative emotions. Instead, try to incorporate mindfulness to meet your needs.



## SURVIVOR DIET GUIDELINES

Creating short-term goals can help you work your way up to achieve your long-term goals. Your diet will not always be perfect, and that's okay. If you stress out and feel guilty over "relapsing," important intrinsic motivations (such as happiness, self-esteem, and self-efficacy) may decrease. Be confident and continue to practice healthy habits. Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity per day. Limiting junk food, red meats, processed meats, salty foods, sugary drinks, and alcohol will ultimately lead to a healthier outcome. Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables is also helpful in leading to a healthier you.

# BARRIERS IN MAKING LIFESTYLE CHANGES

Change isn't easy. Even after you identify what intrinsically and extrinsically motivates you, you may still find that you encounter various barriers in reaching your goals. Here are some potential barriers and concerns you may face in making healthy lifestyle changes.

After identifying your areas of concern, take time to problem solve. Remember to be mindful - no judgment! Concentrate on the moment and making small changes.

## FOOD BARRIERS

- Dining out too often and not finding healthful menu choices
- Social situations
- Vacation
- Prices
- Stress
- Depression or other psychological issues
- Unsupportive family and/or friends
- Pressure from family and/or friends to eat (can be an ineffective extrinsic motivation)
- Family food/meal pattern differing from my own
- Finding that eating healthful food is complicated
- Feeling hungry all the time
- Cravings
- Lack of self-control with junk food
- Healthful foods not tasting good
- Making healthy choices is boring



## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BARRIERS

- Lack of motivation
- Lack of time
- Lack of resources
- Lack of energy or being too tired
- Lack self-efficacy
- Pain
- Exercise is boring
- Uninterested
- Family and/or friends do not share interest in physical activity
- Family obligations or other obligations
- Fear of injury
- Lack of goal-setting
- Trying to take on too much at once
- Lack of self-management
- Lack of encouragement or support
- Weather
- Lack of convenient environment



## POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

- Identify your short-term and long-term goals
- Identify your motivations for unhealthy behaviors
- Mindfulness
- Create a budget
- Eat on a schedule
- Utilize food assistance programs if available
- If possible, join a support group
- Ask for advice from a dietitian
- Consume a sufficient amount of water throughout the day, including before and during meals
- Try eating small, frequent meals
- Eat snacks high in protein
- Consume enough fiber
- Keep a craving journal
- Try online searches. Use reliable websites, such as government websites, accredited institutions, or [eatright.org](http://eatright.org)

## POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

- Identify your short-term and long-term goals
- Monitor how you generally spend your time in a week, and identify three 30 minute time slots of availability
- Invite others to exercise with you
- If you have children, moving around and playing with them can count towards physical activity
- Join a club
- Explore and find something fun
- Create a schedule and try to stick with it. Sometimes the hardest part day-to-day just getting started.
- Start out slowly, learn how to get exercise appropriate for your health status, and do minimal risk activities.