

Online Learning: Staying Motivated

“Two things contribute to your motivation for any task: what you expect from yourself and what value you place on achieving a goal. The key to motivation is understanding that you have the power to change both your expectations of yourself and the value placed on a task.” (University of Michigan)

What are the benefits of increasing your motivation?

- Increases persistence
- Increases active learning
- Higher critical thinking
- Better engaged with learning materials
- Expands to other areas of life (personal or professional motivation)

You will get discouraged and demotivated at times. Refocus attention by asking yourself key questions.

1. What are your reasons for doing this task?

- Why do you need to accomplish this task? Is it that you want to complete it because you are interested and passionate or because you don't want to face a punishment?
- What is your purpose for accomplishing the task?
- How much do you value the task? If it has a low value, what can you do to increase its worth?
- Will this course help you with future courses?

2. What help do you need?

- Do you need help with your writing, with organizing your time, or with your math skills? There are offices on campus that can help. Use this opportunity to develop your skills.

3. Are you in control of your work? Here are some ways to manage your tasks:

- Use SMART goals. Ask yourself: Is it specific? Measureable? Attainable? Realistic? Timely?
- Use calendars and to-do lists to stay on track
- Consider restructuring the task so that you can finish it more easily

4. Do you know why you're struggling with motivation? Check in with yourself:

- If you're starting to procrastinate, try to figure out why.
- Ask yourself if you need to re-evaluate your goals
- Find supporters to cheer you on, provide resources and help you stay accountable.

5. Are you expecting perfection? It's important to allow for setbacks.

- Have a plan in mind for when this happens and accept that you can take control of the situation
- Be prepared to adjust your plan

6. Have you given yourself any rewards?

- Enjoy a job well-done
- Give yourself a reward that's realistic and will actually help keep you motivated.

References:

<https://sass.uottawa.ca/en/mentoring/tools/motivation>

https://mcgill.ca/counselling/files/counselling/staying_motivated.pdf

