



Be all that you are: 2008

by Claire Hitchfield

You can **keep on-track** with your health goals this year

“Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going.”

– Jim Ryub

Tantalise yourself

What is it that you really *want* to achieve from your health regime? (Sometimes the official reason for putting in the effort just sounds too hypothetical and maybe even a bit ‘prissy’ .. we all know we humans aren’t logical, be honest with yourself). Give up smoking to reduce your candidacy for a heart-attack, lose a kilo, lower your cholesterol levels, move better or reduce stress. Yeah, so what! How about changing the idea of how that might be? Find the *tantalising* image of the benefit you might experience if you did these things. Walk up those various flights of stairs without becoming breathless, remain injury-free for the whole tennis or golf season, lose the neck and shoulder tension that plagues you, feel great in your togs on the beach, fit your jeans again *and* have everyone tell you you look somehow more confident and younger!

Jim Johnson says in his book “The Sixty-Second Motivator” that you will find the motivation if you believe your goal is important enough and feel confident that you will achieve it.¹

Replace the thought, "I have too much to do at work today, I'll exercise later," with, "If I exercise now, I'll accomplish more at work later because I'll have more energy and think more clearly."²





“Be creative - in your thoughts, in your feelings, and in all of your actions.”³

Make it a team effort

Colleagues, friends or family members may be secretly waiting for you to start them off on this exciting journey! Share your commitment, enjoy the camaraderie and make the activity even more motivating.

Garner support

Recruit at least one person, and preferably a lot more, to encourage you, check up on you, motivate you, keep you in line, and keep you on track. Be accountable to these people. Tell them what you’re going to achieve.

Your partner, your kids, your co-workers, your boss, and everyone else who depends on you in some context will benefit when you are a healthy role

model in their lives.

A recent survey, conducted by recruitment firm Talent2 (Russell 2006), of 1,100 Australians found that physical activity programs at work reduce absenteeism by up to 20 per cent and physically active employees take 27% less sick leave.⁴

Recognise that there is time

Plan to deal with disruptions

Establish a routine, block out the same time in your diary each day, make it an inviolable commitment. Something happens and you miss a session, just get back to the schedule and stay present with *now*.

Identify those ‘at-risk’ situations where you may be tempted to bypass your session. Plan your strategy to minimise the likelihood of you losing your resolve. Have your workout partner call you sometime before the session to motivate you!

“Come to grips with the radical concept of ‘enough is enough!’”⁵

Pace yourself

Overwork yourself in the first few sessions and you could end up with an injury or completely demoralised. Enjoy the feeling of using your body. Think about how you’re moving, your form, and your breathing, focus and get more out of your chosen regime.

Exercise studies in recent years reveal that quality of effort and focus during sessions reaps more results than quantity.

One gruelling session a week is less effective than three or four less demanding, more enjoyable sessions.

Approach your goal by breaking it into manageable chunks. Self-confidence grows as you enjoy increased energy levels, feeling more comfortable in your own skin, having more strength and stamina and better coordination.

Acknowledge yourself

Finish a session and treat yourself to a magazine, some extra time with your family, a TV show, some new songs for your iPOD, or even a little extra time for yourself.

“Focus on understanding yourself instead of blaming others.” ⁶

Just do it, but with compassion

Listen to your internal dialogue coming up with this excuse or that compelling alternative, acknowledge it, then carry on with your regime. Notice how your inner satisfaction and sense of peace increases with your ability to ‘do it anyway! Psychologically and emotionally you’re stronger, more self-aware and an achiever!

Review

Sometime each day remind yourself of your goal and your progress. Enjoy the *process* without being too obsessed with the details of actual advancement. In a six month period there will always be occasional plateaus.

Resolve

Remain indifferent to challenges or setbacks. So what, you missed one session, leave it behind and pick up from where you left off. Life will present a wonderful collage of situations to cause you to falter. Each time you maintain your routine, each time you get ‘on the mat’ you are embedding your routine into your psychological software.

“You have to expect things of yourself before you can do them.”

- Michael Jordan

Believe and integrate

Believe you will do it, *now*. Visualise the day-to-day steps you take. Find ways to negate that inner critic - exaggerate the voice in your head so it sounds ridiculous - take the negative thought and see if you can change it into a physical sensation - where are you feeling it? Allow the feeling to develop fully and eventually it may even dissipate completely. Replace the thought with constructive, positive, action-oriented thoughts.

Maintain your routine, your sense of humour and *enjoy!*

"Vision without action is a daydream. Action without vision is a nightmare" *-Japanese Proverb*

Claire Hitchfield is a Pilates and yoga teacher at Now Breathe. Claire has had a torrid affair with exercise as an adult, extensively exploring mid-distance running, all forms of gym classes / weight-training, and boxing. Eventually Claire qualified as a Personal Trainer in 1996. Yoga was added into the equation and gradually took over as injuries and muscular imbalances became more problematic. Finally indoor netball and touch rugby dealt her knees a near-death experience. Yoga took over, followed more recently by Pilates. Imbalances, postural quirks, and stress levels sorted! Claire continues to attend workshops, training courses and independent studies to stay current with sports medicine developments, somatic therapies, and stress management techniques. Claire has a Diploma of Hypnosis incorporating NLP into classes.

⁴ *Public Health Agency of Canada*, link with research on Getting Started & Sustaining Active Living at Work Programs: [Workplace Wellness Research](#)

² *Dwyre Young, Theresa*. "Factors determining exercise adherence." [FindArticles.com](#), American Fitness Jan-Feb, 2005

^{3 5 6} *Dyer, Wayne W. Dr.* "Change your Thoughts - Change your Life." Hay House, 2007

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¹ *Johnson, Jim*. "The Sixty-Second Motivator." Dog Ear Publishing, 2006

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