

KEEP GOING FOR LIFE

"I just need to get motivated" or "I just need to get in the right mindset" are words I often hear. As if waiting for a lightning bolt of inspiration is going to help.

Here's the reality: you won't always feel motivated. AND you don't need to be motivated or feel motivated or be in the right mindset in order to take action. Just like you don't need to feel in love to act lovingly toward your partner.

Sure, it's a heck of a lot easier when do feel motivated, when you do feel 'in love', but it's not the reality.

Release yourself from needing to 'feel' before you take action.

You don't have to do it all. Simply ask "what can I do right now that will help just a little bit". And by taking action, you will start to feel.

During the Whole YOU Transformation Program, participants shared some pretty big breakthroughs, such as "I gave myself a compliment this week, and for the first time, I sincerely accepted it" or "I had a really stressful week, but I really managed to focus on what I truly needed and food wasn't an issue", or "Last week I gave up. I slipped back to my old way of thinking and my old habits. Then something shifted and I decided to keep going. Usually when I slip up I back track for a good 6 months". *These are HUGE breakthroughs. Much bigger than simply sticking to a diet plan.*

Despite all of your successes, you may wonder how to truly stick to healthy habits for the long term, or to keep working on improving, if you're 'not yet where you want to be'.

Health and fitness is not a 21 day, 4 week, or 90-day fix... *it really is a lifestyle.* When you start a new program, it's exciting. But then that excitement wanes, and staying on track becomes just a little less, well, exciting. And without a consistent commitment to taking care of you, the default is usually to slip back into old, unhealthy habits.

I'm going to share with you some strategies to make your new way of thinking and being, a permanent lifestyle change. You got this!

1. **Accept that it takes work.** Just like it takes consistent effort to make a marriage work, it takes daily effort to take care of yourself. As habits form it does get easier, but it still takes effort. *You are worth it.*
2. **Have a coach.** Yes, I am a coach, and I own Ascend Fitness + Lifestyle, a health coaching business. That's because I 100% believe in the power of having a coach. I have a coach, and I would have never reached the level of success that I have reached without a coach. There's a reason why our clients stick with their program long term and transition into making a lifestyle change. Our clients have coaching, support and

accountability. We have clients who report that the only reason they were able to fit in a workout when work or life became busy was because they knew they had booked an appointment and their coach was waiting. Yes, even with a coach, there's the potential of 'falling off the wagon'; it happens. But, with a coach, you're guaranteed to get right back on. Consistency is key to your success.

3. **Join a community of likeminded people.** You don't need to do it on your own. Study after study shows what when people get healthier with other people, they are more likely to stick with it. It's also way more fun!
4. **Top up your motivation daily.** *"Motivation is like food for the brain. You cannot get enough in one sitting. It needs continual and regular top ups"* -Peter Davies
Listen to podcasts (I know a great podcast to listen to ;), read inspirational quotes, follow empowering social media accounts.
5. **Rewrite your STORY.** Your actions stem from your beliefs, and your beliefs start with your thoughts. It may sound a bit woo-woo, but a fast track toward being and acting the person you want to be starts with your self-talk. Personally, I start each day with affirmations.

My affirmations used to be short statements, more like mantras. My affirmations have now evolved into longer statements that align with how I would feel if I was a 'level 10' in a certain area. The trick, though, is to find the emotional connection to the words. It's not enough to simply recite the paragraph; you need to FEEL it. Here are some of my current affirmations:

- I have a healthy, peaceful relationship with food and my body. I can easily say, "I'm not hungry" and move on with ease. I feel light and energetic. I eat with relaxation and gratitude. I am present.
 - I completely love, accept and appreciate where I am right now. I am exactly where I need to be. I am strong, beautiful and healthy.
 - When I work I feel relaxed, energized and organized. I am clear on my vision and am relentlessly focused on my goals
6. **Set regular, realistic action goals and track them.** Every week in this program I have given you a daily/weekly success list. If you want to make long-term changes, you need to focus on small, daily habits.

So often we set goals, but only revisit them monthly, or yearly. We don't think about them daily, and therefore miss out on the opportunity to achieve our goals. Why action based goals? Because you can control action; you cannot always control results. Skip the "I will lose 10 pounds by August 15th" goal and focus on the action steps.

Personally, I set weekly goals in the aspects of life that matter to me the most. I call these areas Healthy Body, Family Love, Healthy Mind and Fantastic Entrepreneur. Each week I update and print out my goals in my journal. I've included my weekly

success tracker in the handouts of this lesson. It's made a huge impact on my life: both personal and business.

7. **Revisit your WHY regularly.** You may want to put your why as part of your weekly plan so you can read it a few mornings per week. For every problem there's a solution (I learned that lesson when building my business). If your why is strong enough, you'll find the how. Sometimes you need to become creative with the how, or more realistic with your plan depending on your situation. In episode 16 of the Fit and Vibrant You Podcast, Wendy Mader shares her strategy of reading her personal mission statement each morning while brushing her teeth.
8. **Journal.** If you don't journal, I highly recommend that you start. Journaling can help give you clarity, break through problems, get to know yourself better, and reduce stress. Personally, I also use my journal to keep my weekly challenge/ goals. Not sure how to journal? Here's a simple way to start:
 - Get a journal or note book. If you like pretty things go to a specialty store and find a pretty journal. If you're stuck on how to create the perfect start to your journal, start on page 2. That's what I do.
 - Block time to journal. Morning is likely best.
 - Write down something you're grateful for in life and three things that define success for that day. Yep, stop at three. Any more and you'll have an ongoing to-do list and never feel accomplished. You can of course write more than these two things, but this is a fantastic place to start.
 - The next day, reflect on your previous day's wins and challenges. One or two sentences are fine. Then, start again with gratitude and defining success.

Here are some examples of 'success items'

I will be 100% focused on my one-on-one meeting with Mike from BNI

Between 1 and 4PM I will shut off all distractions and be relentlessly focused on my work projects

I will complete Week 5 Handouts

I will prepare my family a healthy meal and really enjoy time spent as a family

Grocery shopping

9. **Remember that fitness, health, and motivation ebbs and flows.** Some days you'll be 'on'. Somedays you won't- and that's okay. Don't be hard on yourself, but have a plan to get back on track. Just because you ran a stop sign on your way to the store, doesn't mean you should say 'f**K it' and run every stop sign after that. Need a plan to get back on track? See tip #1.