

CHAPTER 16

Motivate Yourself into Action

*"It is in the compelling zest of high adventure and of victory,
and of creative action that man finds his supreme joys."*

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

To perform at your best, you must become your own personal cheerleader. You must develop a routine of coaching yourself and encouraging yourself to play at the top of your game.

Most of your emotions, positive or negative, are determined by how you talk to yourself on a minute-to-minute basis. It is not what happens to you but the way that you interpret the things that are happening to you that determines how you feel. It is your version of events that largely determines whether they motivate or demotivate you, whether they energize or de-energize you.

To keep yourself motivated, you must resolve to become a complete *optimist*. You must determine to respond positively to the words, actions and reactions of the people and situations around you. You must refuse to let the unavoidable difficulties and setbacks of daily life affect your mood or emotions.

Control Your Inner Dialogue

Your level of self-esteem, how much you like and respect yourself, is central to your levels of motivation and persistence. You should talk

to yourself positively all the time to boost your self-esteem. Say things like, "I like myself! I like myself!" over and over until you begin to believe it and behave like a person with a high performance personality.

To keep yourself motivated, and to overcome feelings of doubt or fear, continually tell yourself, "I can do it! I can do it!"

When people ask you how you are, always tell them, "I feel terrific!"

No matter how you really feel at the moment, or what is happening in your life, resolve to remain cheerful and upbeat. As Victor Frankl wrote in his best selling book, *Logotherapy*, "The last great freedom of mankind is the freedom to choose your attitude under any set of external conditions."

Refuse to complain about your problems. Keep them to yourself. As speaker/humorist Ed Forman says, "You should never share your problems with others because 80% of people don't care about them anyway, and the other 20% are kind of glad that you've got them in the first place."

Develop a Positive Mental Attitude

In Martin Seligman's 22 year study at the University of Pennsylvania, summarized in his book, "Learned Optimism," he determined that "optimism" is the most important quality you can develop for

personal and professional success and happiness. Optimistic people seem to be more effective in almost every area of life.

It turns out that optimists have three special behaviors, all learned through practice and repetition. First, optimists **look for the good** in every situation. No matter what goes wrong, they always look for something good or beneficial. And not surprisingly, they always seem to find it.

Second, optimists always **seek the valuable lesson in every setback or difficulty**. They believe that, *"difficulties come not to obstruct, but to instruct."* They believe that each setback or obstacle contains a valuable lesson they can learn and grow from, and they are determined to find it.

Third, optimists always **look for the solution to every problem**. Instead of blaming or complaining when things go wrong, they become action oriented. They ask questions like, "What's the solution? What can we do now? What's the next step?"

Third, optimists **think and talk continually about their goals**. They think about what they want and how to get it, most of the time. They think and talk about the future and where they are going rather than the past and where they came from. They are always looking forward rather than backward.

When you continually visualize your goals and ideals and talk to yourself in a positive way, you feel more focused and energized. You

feel more confident and creative. You experience a greater sense of control and personal power.

And the more positive and motivated you feel, the more eager you are to get started and the more determined you are to keep going.

Eat That Frog!

1. Control your thoughts. Remember, you become what you think about most of the time. Be sure that you are thinking and talking about the things you want rather than the things you don't want.
2. Keep your mind positive by accepting complete responsibility for yourself and for everything that happens to you. Refuse to criticize, complain or blame others for anything. Resolve to make progress rather than excuses. Keep your thoughts and your energy focused forward, on the things you can do right now to improve your life, and let the rest go