

Intrinsic Motivation

By Granville D'Souza

Finding our intrinsic motivation is one of the fundamental quests in life, one we grapple with almost every day. Many think that finding our intrinsic motivation is the key to finding happiness.

Intrinsic motivation is the fundamental basis for our feelings of contentment and aptitude — as well as our feelings of joy and rapture. Intrinsic motivation is a drive that originates from within oneself. This contrasts with extrinsic motivation that is driven from an external source.

An intrinsic reward is an internal payoff, such as the feeling of accomplishment from a job well done. Extrinsic rewards include money or promotions that come from other people's acknowledgement of our talents. Intrinsic motivation is about intangibles and values; external motivation is frequently about tangibles and stimulation from others.

Intrinsic motivation sustains an activity for its own sake. You engage in a task because you enjoy it, you are interested in it, and it arouses your curiosity. In contrast, extrinsic motivation is sustained by an outside force and expectation of some reward or recognition.

Here are several techniques that you can use to get yourself moving in the right direction.

Tip 1: Find Mentors

Look around and seek out your role models — people who are working to make things happen in their lives. Set up a time to talk to them to find out what attitudes or choices they have made personally and professionally to help themselves get and stay motivated. Find role models in emotional intelligence, too. People with amazing social skills, who are able to light up a room wherever they go, or can soothe the distress of others with mastery, diffusing tense situations with aplomb. These are people to emulate and follow.

Tip 2: Bring Out The Best In Yourself

In order to bring out the best in yourself, you have to first be able to recognize what your special gifts and talents are. Are you cognizant of the skills and abilities that you possess? Often, we don't recognize our own innate gifts or talents because they are a part of who we are, and we often take for granted the things that come easily to us.

In order to bring out the best in yourself, take some time to identify what "your best" is. Find a quiet space, sit down with a pen and paper and brainstorm. Make a list of the things that you know you do well, or that you've been complimented on. Just write and let your thoughts and ideas flow. Once you are finished writing, go back over your list and highlight the "talents" that stand out for you. These are your "highest personal strengths".

Once you have identified your gifts and talents, relish them; take time to be proud of who you are, what you can do, and what you bring to the people in your life. Another way to go about this exercise is to ask five people whom you trust to give you genuine feedback. Ask them, “What do you see as my top strengths?” Their inputs will reinforce what you know about your strengths.

Tip 3: Build Your Self-esteem

There are behaviours that you can incorporate into your life to help you bring out the best in yourself on a day-to-day basis:

Be kind to yourself.

Put more energy into noticing the things that are good about you than into noticing what you consider to be faults. Change what you think needs changing and then love and be kind to yourself every day.

Allow yourself to be joyful, playful, and carefree.

The more fun you have in your life, the more motivated you will feel about continuing to create the life you want.

Give yourself a “pat on the back” and recognize your achievements.

Don’t wait for other people to tell you that you are wonderful; tell yourself in a sincere and humble way.

Tip 4: Chart Your Life

In life there is always a better way to chart your course! Begin by developing a game plan in which you have taken into account the following things:

- Your mission, purpose, and passion that we talked about.
- Your personal values.
- Your signature strengths.
- The dreams and goals you have for your life.

Charting your life is similar to developing a business plan that is based on your visions, values, and goals. Figure out what you want: what are your goals and your dreams?

If you’re not sure, take a few moments and make a list of some of the things that you would like to accomplish. Pick out one or two on which to move forward. Think about each of the areas that are listed above and write about them.

When you know your purpose and passion, they along with your personal values will be the foundation of your plan. How will you accomplish or live up to your purpose, passion, and values? What personal strengths can you employ to help you? Then, dream big and envision your purpose and passion, developing them to the very highest potential.

To conclude, intrinsic motivation, or self-motivation, is the engine that moves our lives, the force that pushes us forward. It is our internal drive that gives us the desire to achieve and accomplish goals.



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