

Feeling Unmotivated?!

Here's a guide to help you out!

Everyone feels unmotivated sometimes. The key is learning strategies to help you stay committed to your goals, even when you feel unmotivated. Here is a guide to help you out. Make sure you have a pen/pencil nearby so you can fill out all of the questions.

1.) Establish a WHY!

If you want to be consistent with your practicing and training, there has to be a reason to why we do what we do. When we establish a WHY, we are able to take action on what we truly want, rather than just going with whatever emotion we feel on a certain day.

For example, my deep "why" for growing Feis Fit each day is because I believe that every person has a unique God-given gift and it is our purpose as human to use that gift to help others. Every once in a while I have a day, I really don't feel like working. But I do it anyway, because I think about my deeper why. I picture all the people I'm helping, then get to work.

Same thing with taking care of my body. I workout and eat healthy because I need a healthy body and mind to serve my purpose in the world.

I also value discipline. So even when I don't want to train or work hard, I remember that I must put forth full effort because of my underlying value of discipline.

Now, maybe your "why" isn't quite as deep yet, and that's okay. Your "why" is an ever evolving process. But start asking yourself the question...why do you dance? Why are your goals important to you? Why is practicing and improving your dancing important to you?

Get super clear on your why and refer back to it when you have a day you're feeling unmotivated.

Exercise A:

What are your goals?

Why do you want to achieve them?

Why is that important to you?

Why do you want to practice and train?

Why is that important to you?

2.) Take action

Any action. Even the smallest step forward will help. A big misconception is that motivation is comes from the outside. That it just hits us someday and then stays around forever. Sometimes we get short term bursts of motivation...like when we watch a motivational speech or attend a competition but the majority of the time, motivation comes from action. When we take action it creates an emotional reaction, which leads to us taking further action.

Once you do a very small task, it gives you the feeling of “okay I think I can do a little more” and we continue taking action.

One example of this is setting a 10 minute timer on days you don't feel motivated to train or practice. Just do it for 10 minutes. Then, at the end of the 10 minutes, if you still feel super stuck and unmotivated to train or practice, move on with your day. BUT if you think you can do even just 5 more minute, set a timer for 5 minutes and continue for those 5 minutes.

When you feel unmotivated, ask yourself what the smallest task you can do is, then take action!

Exercise B:

What is one small action you can take if feeling unmotivated?

3.) Set improvement goals with deadlines

Imagine you had a project due at school in 6 months. How intensely would you be working on that project? If you're anything like me, that project would not be at the top of my to do list. Now, imagine you had a project due tomorrow morning that wasn't yet complete. How intensely would you to working on it?

Probably a whole lot more, right?!

When we have something that is due in our immediate future, we are going to be way more committed to it than if you have something due, let's say, 6 months from now.

So if you want to master a skill, set a deadline in the next 4-6 weeks for yourself to see progress. Write down the date and track your progress.

Exercise C:

What is 1-2 dance skills you want to improve upon (it can be a technique, move, anything!)

When do you want to achieve noticeable improvement by?

4.) Create behavioral goals

There are some things in dance that we can't control. We can't control the judges, who is in our competition, but we can control our input each day. We *can* control our input each day.

That's why it's important that we focus on our input. So, come up with a behavioral goal. This is something *you can control*. Examples include practicing drilling for 20 minutes a day, practicing turnout 4 days a week, or doing core and mobility work each day.

Exercise D: List 1-3 behavioral goals you can focus on for the next 4-6 weeks?

5.) Know that you're not always going to be motivated

You aren't going to always *feel* motivated. Feelings come and go. When you accept this, it becomes much easier to stay consistent with practicing because you learn to rely on *discipline* and not *feeling like it*.

What can help, is knowing how to talk to yourself when you are in a place of feeling unmotivated. One phrase that helps me is, "I know I'm not always going to feel unmotivated, so that's why I need to practice training no matter how I feel."

Exercise E: What's one phrase you can tell yourself, that will help you get to work, when you're feeling unmotivated?

6.) Take Action...do something. Even just one thing.

Action creates motivation. Next time you don't feel like training or practicing, just take one small action. It can even be just 5 minutes of drills or warming up. A lot of time when we feel unmotivated, it's because we are focusing on the gap in-between us and our goals rather than the steps we need to take right in front of us. We look at the big picture and start feeling overwhelmed. The overwhelm can make us feel quite unmotivated.

Instead of looking at the big picture, just take one small step forward. Small steps forward are what eventually lead to large strides in improvement.

Exercise F: What is one small action you can start with when you really don't want to train or practice?