STAYING MOTIVATED CHECKLIST

Simple step-by-step plan for staying motivated in business.

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DO ONE THING. SIMPLIFY.

- Taking on too much at once does not work nearly as well as simplifying your work load. Even just the thought of having too much going on zaps out your energy and your motivation. Start thinking about what you can cut out of your business to simplify it. You need energy and focus to stay motivated enough to meet your goals.

  Research conducted by the University of Pennsylvania shows it's harder to make decisions when you have lots of choices, and the result is less satisfying. So slimming down your options can help you increase your level of motivation.

  In another study conducted by researchers at Stanford University, heavy multitasking was shown to hurt your overall performance. Yet another reason to try to keep things simple.

FIND INSPIRATION.

- Finding inspiration might mean actively seeking out other entrepreneurs through an event near you or reading/listening to their stories. There are many online sites you can gain inspiration from including Podcasts, blogs and magazines.

MAKE IT A NECESSITY

- There's nothing like a make it or break it attitude. Set things up so you force yourself to make enough money to pay the bills even if you have other income.

  For example if you've got a job that pays the bills and you'd like to transition to a full-time business, force yourself to make enough from your business to pay your business bills.

  Gradually increase it so you have to pay a portion of your bills through your business. Like all your utilities. Or your car (a car payment, insurance, and gas). Keep moving forward with this until you are able to pay yourself enough of a salary through your business that you're paying for everything.

  When you see that bill coming, the realization that if you don't make enough you won't be able to pay for it can work wonders on your motivation level.

TAKE A BREAK FROM IT.

- This might mean stepping away for a few hours or even taking a 3-day or much longer break to re-charge. It really depends on your level of frustration and how much time you have. During your break do absolutely no work on your business.

  When you come back you should feel recharged with a better sense of what needs to be done along with renewed motivation. Again, if you don't have much time even a few hours can work wonders. Think about taking a walk, going shopping, visiting friends, or spending time with family.

BE AN INSPIRATION.

- Help others get ahead. This can mean helping other entrepreneurs with their business. Talk to someone you know who is struggling and see if you can offer some support or help them with their strategy.

  Often getting outside your problems and helping others can be a great way for you to gain the inspiration and confidence you need to solve your own problems.

GRATITUDE.

- Think about all the things you're thankful for. Make a list of the things that are working for you in your business right now. Do you have 100 subscribers on your email list? If so be thankful for them.

  This list can even be expanded to include the things you're grateful for outside your business. Maybe you're thankful for the time you spend with your family or a trip you have planned for the future.

  Thinking about what you have helps you center yourself. By being centered, you'll gain focus and clarity which leads to motivation.

HANG OUT WITH SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE.

- Find other entrepreneurs who are already successful to connect with. You may share common interests with them, live near them, or offer to help them (most people won't turn that last one down).

TALK TO CUSTOMERS.

- Many of your existing customers or email subscribers will like your brand and be positive and encouraging toward it. It's always encouraging to hear nice things about your products or services. This can definitely make you feel more motivated to create more and improve on what you already have.

DO YOUR BEST EVERYDAY.

- Doing your best throughout the day will help you feel you accomplished something even if there isn't any direct monetary value that comes from it. Strive to complete your tasks to the best of your ability every day and every day things will get easier.

FOCUS ON OTHERS

- Find out what you can do to help your audience achieve their goals. It can't all be about you. Businesses exist to provide valuable products and services to others. Sometimes when you get out of your head and start thinking about others you gain a lot more motivation.

  A study conducted through the University of Pennsylvania showed that hospital staff are more likely to use hand sanitizer when the reason for doing so was focused on other people's health as opposed to their own health. Although not related to business, this research goes a long way in showing that taking the focus away from yourself and putting it on others results in a higher level of motivation.

  An additional study conducted by the same set of researchers at the University of Pennsylvania showed that highlighting how much a job helps others significantly boosts motivation.

LEVERAGE.

- Do things that will help you grow, gain new skills, and serve a dual purpose. That way if the tasks you complete don't wind up growing your business they will help *you* grow or at least serve an additional purpose.

REWARD YOURSELF.

- Celebrate the completion of even the smallest projects. If you create a valuable piece of content you should reward yourself. If you finish with a product that's an even bigger accomplishment and you should get a substantial reward for it (like a 3-day break or more).

SET ACHEIVABLE GOALS.

- High rewards are very motivating, but they can backfire in a big way if your goals are seen as unattainable. A study conducted by researchers at Stanford University showed that small victories lead to more happiness than large acts, because with small victories the expectation doesn't exceed reality. That's why it's very important to set attainable, achievable goals, even on a daily basis.

For example, if you're working on a 100-page report you know you're not going to get that finished in a day. Instead, break it down into smaller chunks, like different chapters. Now you don't need to think about writing 100 pages, instead you may have 10 chapters of 10 pages each. Write one chapter a day. That's much easier and more realistic to do.

With many tasks like writing there are other activities you need to do other than the obvious tasks (like in this case doing the writing). These include creating a table of contents, formatting, and editing. Breaking it up this way gives you a variety of things to work on. When you're bored of one you can try working on another. That way you'll still be making progress. Seeing progress is a great way to help you stay motivated.

COME UP WITH LOTS OF IDEAS

- Make a list of all the ideas you have for growing your business. Figure out which one is the most likely to succeed and start with that one. Take it to completion. Once done, even if it doesn't have the impact you thought it would you still have your list of other ideas. Work through the next item on the list that you think will have the most impact on your business.

  By doing this you aren't stuck in a hole if your most recent task doesn't work out as expected. Instead of just sitting there, hopefully you'll keep moving forward with another idea.

PLAN.

- A lot of lost time comes from not planning things out. It can be highly un-motivating to flail around. Set goals at the beginning of the year. Set smaller goals throughout the year and try to stay on target.

  Make sure you think things through and give yourself the right amount of time with an extra buffer in case it takes you longer to finish up the task.

DO THINGS EVERYDAY THAT YOU ARE EXCITED ABOUT.

- It's hard to stay motivated if you're not having any fun. If you're trying to write that 100 page report, but hate every minute of it then add in something during the day that you actually like doing that will still move you forward. For example, you may like networking with others on social media. Alternate between the two things every so often throughout the day.

  A study done by Farnam Street takes this even farther. They claim you must do something emotionally relevant every 10 minutes to reset your attention and gain focus.

CONSIDER THE ALTERNATIVE ... WORKING FOR SOMEONE ELSE.

- That's often enough to motivate many entrepreneurs to get busy!