

# How to Move a Mountain:

Finding Motivation when Motivation is Scarce

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November 16, 2011

The beginning of all great accomplishments starts with motivation. Einstein's motivation to understand the universe drove him to become one of the most respected physicists of modern time. In fact, the notion that you, the reader, are engaged in this article steams from motivation. Regardless of how much(or how little) motivation we show towards a challenge, motivation is ultimately the deciding factor that gets us out of our chairs and moving. Motivation can make the most daunting of tasks seem a little less dreary and provide us with the foresight to keep going. Even in the face of doubt, it is our motivation the gives us hope. It is motivation that makes life worth living. By definition, motivation is the reason for acting or behaving in a particular way. Motivation is the force that defines every individual. It is the force that is responsible for leading us down the path we currently find ourselves on.

Motivation can be divided in to two sub-domains; intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation refers to the desire to experience joy or happiness.(Wigfield) Intrinsic motivation is the reason why you choose to listen to music or watch movies. It is the power that is responsible for everything that you perceive to be pleasurable. It is also responsible for procrastination. Procrastination is the result of motivation being aimed in the wrong direction. Fortunately, extrinsic motivation allows us to keep our hands steady and keep or sights on target.

Extrinsic motivation is what drives us to accomplish a task and commonly trumps its intrinsic counterpart.(Ryan) Extrinsic motivation is the reason we are able to stop playing Call of Duty on our Xboxes and write a term paper and its the reason you get up everyday to go to work or class. The desire to better ones self or gain prosperity is solely the result of extrinsic motivation. One might suspect that motivation alone is enough to achieve their goals, unfortunately; with so many sources of motivation, it is misguided without control.

When setting out to achieve a goal, there are many sources of intrinsic motivation that can distract and cause a loss in motivation. One of the biggest reasons people lose motivation is lack of performance or experiencing failure. A child who lacks coordination at an early age may be less likely to pursue sports. This is because the hardest experience to gain motivation from is failure. Failure can lead to a feeling of being trapped, but it is important to stay focused.

Losing sight of *why* you are trying to achieve a goal is a major factor in motivation loss. It is easy for an individual, and especially a group, to lose focus on why they originally wanted to pursue a specific goal. In a group, members have different opinions on what motivates them. For some it's money, for others it's to make the world a better place. Either way, lack of motivation usually leads to lower quality work and less yield.

As with any problem, the best way to deal with motivation loss is to be prepared. In life, you are destined to fail from time to time; but it is how you deal with failure that will determine if you are successful in the long run. Winston Churchill, a widely respected wartime leader, was quoted as describing success as "...going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm". (BrainyQuote) It is also said that Thomas Edison, eighteenth century inventor, failed over ten-thousand times before he finally invented the incandescent light bulb. When asked if he felt like a failure, he simply replied "why would I feel like a failure?...I now know definitively over 9,000 ways that an electric light bulb will not work". (FI) There is one key factor that allowed these men to stay motivated in their goal in the presence of failure. Both men were able to prepare and accept failure as steps on the road to success.

For Churchill and Edison, the ability to stay focused on their end goal is what separated them from the elites of their time. Churchill never lost focus of why he was trying to prevent the

Nazi takeover of Europe and Edison stayed confident that his invention would eventually light the world; regardless of how many failed attempts.

Motivation is the universal entity that gives us a reason to live. Without it, we would not exist. Every living object thrives on its own motives. Our integral desire to survive proves that motivation is not only responsible for what we do, but it is who we are. Motivation gives us the power to rebuild cities lost to natural disasters. It gives us the hope for tomorrow when today is filled with doubt and it gives us the ability to propel ourselves forward and do what has never been done.

## Works Cited

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