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Faculty of EDUCATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH RESILIENCE



STAYING MOTIVATED FOR SUCCESS & WELLNESS

Tell us what
you think! 渋

WHAT IS MOTIVATION?

Motivation refers to the process of starting and persisting towards a goal.¹⁸ Whether you are writing a term paper or studying for an exam, motivation is important to get these tasks done.

WHY IS MOTIVATION IMPORTANT?

Motivation is a key factor that can affect **students' learning and performance**.^{5, 16, 17, 22} We often tend to think of motivation as fixed, but that's not accurate!

Motivation is a complex but <u>flexible</u> process that can be impacted by many different factors.^{3, 6, 7}

This infographic provides you with strategies to boost and maintain healthy motivation.



Your answers to these two questions can influence your **performance, choices, and persistenceand ultimately, your motivation** when completing a task.^{12, 21}

STRATEGIES FOR BOOSTING AND MAINTAINING HEALTHY MOTIVATION

Look for the brain icon to find strategies that would help your *self-beliefs*.



Look for the heart icon to find strategies that would help maintain your *value* for healthy motivation.

Outline

Submit

Revise

Draft

Break a big task down into smaller, achievable steps.

Sometimes, preparing for a big project or exam can be overwhelming.

Break this big task down into smaller steps to feel an initial sense of achievement.

For example, writing a term paper is a big task. Drafting an outline is a smaller, more achievable first step!



Reflect on past positive experiences/successes.

Your past positive experiences/successes can influence your beliefs about your ability to perform a task.^{1, 13, 20}

When taking on a new task, try to reflect on a time when you succeeded at a similar task in the past. This sense of achievement will enhance your motivation by improving your **beliefs about your ability** to complete this new task as well!

View our Improve Your Time Management resource to learn how to manage tasks better.

Reflect on your underlying motivation for completing academic tasks.

Reflect on the statement(s) that best represent(s) "why" you aim to complete academic tasks.[°]

•	Mastery Goal	Performance Goal
Approach	Mastering a task	Performing better than others on a task
	"I want to learn as much as possible."	"I want to perform better than other students."
Avoidance	Avoiding failure to master a task	Avoiding being outperformed by others
	"I want to avoid having gaps in my knowledge."	"I want to avoid doing worse than other students."

Reflecting on your reasons for pursuing a task and how this task is meaningful and relevant for you is key in the motivational process. Aim to have approach goals, rather than avoidance ones. For example, instead of saying, "I have to try harder so that I don't fail," try saying, "I want to try harder so that I can learn more".

Having a mastery-approach goal can boost your interest, strategy use, and likelihood of success in the task. 9, 19 To set a mastery-approach goal, reflect on the earlier question "Why do I want to do this?" and how the task is meaningful and relevant to your interests and needs.¹⁰

While having a performance-approach goal may help with achievement, this largely depends on your academic context.^{11, 19} For example, if your academic environment only emphasizes outperforming other students, it may be difficult for you to maintain a healthy goal orientation.

Remember that your abilities can grow.

Believing that your abilities can grow with effort and effective strategies can increase your chances of success!

Students who see intelligence and capability as something that can grow (growth mindset) tend to experience more positive emotions, less anxiety, and greater academic achievement.^{4, 12}

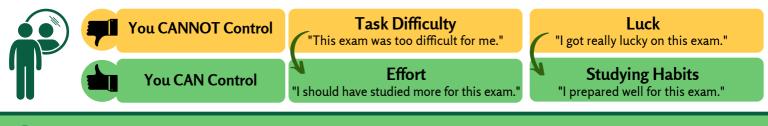


In contrast, students who see intelligence and capability as fixed (fixed mindset) tend to perceive failure as an indication of low intelligence, which often leads to feelings of helplessness.

View our Managing Expectations & Coping with Academic Challenges infographic to learn more about growth mindset.

Focus on what you can control.

Attributing your successes or failures (positive or negative situations) to factors **outside of your control** can negatively affect your self-esteem.^{2, 15} Instead, focus on what you can control in order to stay motivated to complete future tasks!



Foster social connection and belongingness.

Research shows that social connection and belongingness can positively impact one's motivation.¹⁴ You can foster connections with others by engaging in shared activities.

Try the following suggestions to foster connections with your peers and instructors!

Connections with Friends

Create a study group with your classmates Join a student association (e.g., reading groups) Volunteer or work at a student lounge or space at school

Connections with Teachers

CONTACT INFORMATION

Visit office hours and tutorials (e.g., lab, demonstration) Ask questions in class or after class Take advantage of other opportunities to interact with teachers





for this infographic

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