



Lady of America Newsletter – July 2010 – Measuring Progress at Mid-Year Fitness: Staying Motivated

We are at the half-way point of 2010. What a great time to stop and assess where you are, where you were and where you are going in your fitness program. Even with the best intentions, staying motivated to eat right and exercise can be tough. Motivation is crucial to reach your goals — no matter if you are almost there, half-way there or just starting out. Self-motivation comes from caring about yourself. In other words, it starts with you and requires a balance of self-communication, an acceptance of change and small incentives along the way.



Chances are that if you've been following a workout routine and watching what you eat you've noticed the changes not only on the scale, but in the way your clothes fit. To keep you focused and on track, we've come up with some tips to keep you motivated to achieving the next level of your health and fitness goals.

1. **Set realistic goals and believe in them.** Take a moment to see what you achieved in the past six months. Did you meet any of your New Year's resolutions? Are you seeing results on the scale or in how your clothes fit? Now is the time to look ahead and set realistic and specific short-term and long-term goals — set no more than three goals to keep you focused. For example, if you have slacked off on weight training, a goal might be to weight train three times per week at half-hour sessions. Maybe you've been thinking about adding running to your program but you keep making excuses that hold you back. A short-term goal could be to buy the running shoes and socks and run for 20 minutes three days a week. A long-term goal may be to begin running and train for a 5K or half-marathon taking place in eight months.
2. **Review your goals on a consistent basis.** It's not enough to write down your goals, you need to review them on a consistent basis to help you achieve them.
3. **Break out your photo album.** Looking through your albums can boost your mood and allow you to see the bigger picture, say researchers at the University of Chicago and the University of Georgia. The weight-loss link? According to the researchers, big picture thinkers are better able to focus on long-term goals and better able to take short-term steps in reaching their long-term goals.
4. **Envision your success.** Think the "Law of Attraction." Visualize yourself in a pair of skinny jeans or nice and toned. If you have health issues that prevent you from doing something you've always wanted to do, visualize yourself doing that activity. As you begin to see physical changes and feel more energized you will naturally want to increase your frequency.
5. **Have a winning attitude.** Positive thoughts motivate healthy behaviors. If you believe you can do something, most likely you will.
6. **Schedule your workouts.** Make fitness a priority by scheduling the time in your calendar.
7. **Don't sabotage.** No matter how well you've done up to this point, chances are you have your moments of self-sabotage with self-destructive thoughts. When you catch yourself self-sabotaging,

stop and try to turn it into a positive. For example, instead of saying “I will never lose weight,” try “I haven’t lost as much weight as I would like, but I am losing. Slow and steady will win the race.”

8. **Reach out and touch someone.** Buddy up and exercise with other women who have similar fitness and weight loss goals as you.
9. **Listen to lose.** Researchers from Brunel University in England say that exercising to the right song can help you lose weight because you push yourself harder and exercise longer. The key is finding the tunes that will get you going and keep you moving. The researchers say songs with tempos between 120 and 140 beats per minutes are best for exercising. Think dance and rock songs.
10. **Share your success.** Read success stories and share your own. Sharing triumphs and hardships with others teaches you how to persevere and reach your goals.
11. **Make it personal.** Write down your reasons for wanting to get fit and the benefits you reap if you reached these goals. Tape the list to the refrigerator as a constant reminder.
12. **Track your progress.** If you haven’t been doing so, journal every day. Also, take your measurements monthly. Recording your efforts can help you work toward your goals — and remind you that you’re making progress even when the scale doesn’t budge or the cellulite isn’t disappearing.
13. **Celebrate your triumphs.** When you reach a goal, treat yourself to a new pair of workout shorts or new tunes for your iPod.
14. **Have fun.** Bored with your exercise routine? You are most likely to stick to an exercise program if you enjoy what you are doing. Over time, what was once fun can become monotonous and soon you won’t be motivated. Try something different — join a gym, or sign up for a Zumba dance class.
15. **Constantly challenge yourself.** Take your achievements to the next level by adding more weight, signing up for a half-marathon, 5K, etc.

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