

5 ways Dietitians motivate themselves to exercise

As a Registered Dietitian, I don't think a day goes by that I don't hear about another benefit of exercise. Research has shown exercise to be a powerful aid in so many areas - better sleep, sharper mind, better mood, more energy, and of course - a bikini bod.

Despite the knowledge, I do find myself low in the motivation department on occasion - it usually has to do with my time-crunch (sound familiar?). How am I supposed to get everything done *and* fit in my yoga class? I wondered how other RD's get themselves over the motivation hurdle, so I sent the question out to a listserv - I received a great response, and here are the top five techniques that came back to me:

1. Exercise with a friend (or friends!):

"I exercise in the early morning with a group of friends, so I'm accountable to someone if I don't show up. We have coffee together after our run - we joke that we run for coffee and not wanting to miss our 'coffee klatch' " - Kerry Neville, MS, RD, KLMN Nutrition Communications

"I have five different exercise partners - I live in Maine, so it really helps that I know that even if it is only 10 degrees and there is snow on the ground I will have someone waiting for me!" - Susan Quimbly, RD, LD

2. Make a plan and get it on your schedule:

"I look at my gym's schedule to see when yoga is offered, then plan my workouts around that. Then, I figure out cardio and weights for the rest of the week" - Milton Stokes, MPH, RD, CDN, miltonstokes.com

"I schedule my workouts on my calendar. My dropout rate is nearly 0%, as I am committed to my calendar - it truly does work!" - Robin Plotkin, RD, LD, robinplotkin.com

3. Add purpose to your exercise:

"I ride my bike to work - it serves the purpose of getting me to work, but also allows me space in the day to think without interruption from car radios, telephones, emails, kids, or clients." - Nancy Clark, MS, RD, CSSD, nancyclarkrd.com

"I have done many walks and runs for charity, which is a great motivator to stay in shape." - Kate Scarlata, RD

4. Focus on the outcome:

"I remind myself of the tremendous payoff I get immediately after exercising. It's a great way to destress, decompress, and refocus" - Tina Marinaccio, MS, RD, CPT, Health Dynamics, LLC

"I feel so good after a workout - all sweaty and loose. It's great. I miss it when I don't exercise." - Sharon Salomon, MS, RD, diaryofadietingdietitian.blogspot.com

5. Just do it:

"I just put my workout clothes in the car and drive to the gym every day after work. Once I am in my workout clothes, I never look back!" - Sandy Sfikas, RD, LDN, Editor, Diabetic Cooking

Finally, my personal technique is to pull a line straight from an Austin Power's movie - whenever my brains starts rattling off everything I could get done if I skip the yoga class today, I say "zippit!" to myself. Then, I repeat as needed until I find myself standing on my yoga mat, ready to begin.

Posted by Melinda Johnson on July 17, 2009 |