

8 Reasons You Are Not Motivated and Why You Need to Stay Motivated No Matter What!

By [Harrison Barnes](#)

Your most important asset—in fact your only real asset—is your life force that makes you want to work hard in order to succeed. This force can achieve anything, and it is something you need to keep turned on at all times. If you can keep this turned on, you will succeed.

I love movies and television shows about politics.

The same theme repeats itself in all of the shows: A very motivated politician fights to get ahead while their opponents constantly try to psyche them out and trip them up. Ultimately, the only thing that enables the politician to win is the ability to stay motivated in the face of adversity.

This is how it works in life too. Bad things happen. You fail. You get fired or laid off. Someone leaves you. You get sick. You get depressed. The only thing that can carry you through is that life force and passion within you.

The ability to stay motivated is about the most important thing in your career. If you cannot stay motivated, you will fail. It is as simple as that.

- Your true power comes from your ability to be motivated, to be hungry, to want change and to fight.
- Your lack of power comes when you numb this desire or allow people around you to numb this desire.

Just like any politician, if you are successful, people will try to knock you down and sap your motivation. If you are unsuccessful, you will attract other unsuccessful people whose main goal will be to keep you like you are (lest you find new friends).

One of the most fundamental components necessary for large-scale achievement is the desire to fight and try harder – anything that takes away from your desire to fight and try harder is detrimental to your success. Anything that contributes to your desire to fight and try harder is beneficial to your success.

- The main reason certain neighborhoods, schools, social clubs and friends are desirable is because they empower people to try harder.
- The main reason certain neighborhoods, schools, social clubs and friends are undesirable is because they disempower people from trying harder.

The reason some of the most motivated people in the world choose to work in places like New York City is because they are almost guaranteed to be surrounded by other incredibly motivated people wherever they go. As a general rule, people work extremely hard in New York City – and are expected to. The odds are that an average attorney in New York City is going to work harder and be even smarter than an attorney in Quincy, Illinois. It is just how it works when you work in areas where there are a lot of other motivated people.

The more you realize and understand that your success is related to your ability to stay motivated, the better off you will be. The choices you make in both your career and your life should be based on whether you are motivated to try harder.

Many people believe that there is something wrong with being very motivated and on edge. In order to “calm” their nerves, many people do many things to try and calm their motivation. None of these are necessarily good, and anything that takes away from this motivation should be treated with suspicion.

I know lots of people who have consciously numbed themselves out of life. Here are some of the ways people numb their motivation and escape:

1. You Choose to Surround Yourself With Unmotivated People

If you surround yourself with unmotivated people, the odds are very good that you too will become unmotivated.

If you are around motivated people, they will rub off on you. They will constantly be talking about their goals, continually achieving new things, and making you feel inferior if you are not trying. They will generally set the bar pretty high. The people you surround yourself with make a huge difference in how you feel about yourself and what motivates you.

Many people will isolate themselves by surrounding themselves with unmotivated people. If you surround yourself with people who are unemployed, unsuccessful and unmotivated, you will feel just fine being around them.

I live in a nice neighborhood in a major American city. I know a lot of extremely successful people (some worth billions) who you have probably heard of. I am certainly not a household name and do not have my picture in major magazines and newspapers every week. When I spend time with these people, it makes me motivated. Very motivated.

I often dream of moving back to the small town I grew up in and buying a nice house and settling down. I also dream of moving to the country somewhere and having a more simple life. If I did this, though, I can tell you what would likely happen: I would lose some of my motivation.

Being surrounded on all sides by very motivated people is important and it keeps me on my game and doing well. You should put yourself in a situation where you are surrounded by the most motivated people possible.

2. You Do Less Than You Are Capable Of

One of my favorite scenes in the movies is in *American Beauty* when a successful suburban father, Kevin Spacey, takes a job way beneath him in a fast food restaurant. This is something that I think a lot of people dream of--doing a job with no

serious and meaningful pressure that is way beneath them.

The problem with doing less than you are capable of is that it puts you in a position where you are not growing. If you are not growing, you are dying. It is important that you are constantly growing to the maximum extent that you possibly can.

There are countless people that I know who consciously are doing significantly less than they are capable of. Many people also put themselves in a position where they are very unhappy because they are doing less than they are capable of.

My mother spent the majority of her career working in a very boring government job. The problem with this was that she had an extremely high IQ and had some exceptional talents that she was unable to use. She took this job likely because she felt it was “safe” and gave her the ability to have free time and raise a family. The problem, however, was that she was constantly unfulfilled in her work and never happy. Her friends from work were never her intellectual equals.

She came home at night, smoked cigarettes and sat in front of the television living an unfulfilled life.

When she was in her late 50s, she got a job as a college professor for a few years but, by then, most of her career was over. In order to reach your full potential and be happiest, you need to do everything you are capable of.

3. You Do Not Take Care of Yourself

People can use a lack of exercise and bad dieting to numb themselves. How many people do you know who have completely let themselves go?

When you make an effort to look and feel your best, you are doing this because you want to be “in the game” and put your best foot forward in the world. It is important to look and feel your best, because this puts you in the best position possible to compete.

When I was in law school, I remember coming back after my second year and seeing a girl who must have lost at least 50 pounds and was quite beautiful. She looked completely different than she had before. She looked happier and more fit.

Within a few months, she was back to her old self and looking depressed, overweight and unhealthy.

While I took this at the time to be a commentary on the nature of law school, it also said to me that her life would be quite different if she had chosen to continue to look as good as she was capable of looking. She would have had different friends, more interest from the opposite sex and more job opportunities. By not being her best self, she was eliminating these opportunities. If she had been her best self, she would have put herself in a completely different world.

4. You Abuse Drugs, Pills or Other Substances

Many use substances such as pills or marijuana to numb themselves. At any town in America, if you go to the doctor and tell them you are stressed out, cannot sleep, are anxious, or depressed, you can get drugs to numb this. I know lots of people whose lives have been positively benefited from being prescribed various mood altering drugs—and they work. However, people can also overdo it, and this is where the problems start and can get out of control.

When you use drugs in such a way that it saps your motivation and turns you into a complete zombie, then something is wrong. I see this too much around me, and it is disturbing.

There is nothing wrong with being motivated, anxious and driven. There is nothing wrong with being overly excited about work and achievement. There is something wrong if you feel you need to tone this down, or calm down. If you get “too mellow,” people who are not mellow will pass you by quite quickly.

Marijuana is a big one. If you smoke enough of this you will become completely and nearly permanently “chilled out” and not have the motivation to do much of anything. This will affect your career negatively, and it will affect your life negatively. I know plenty of very high-functioning people who smoke marijuana for fun and recreation. That is not what I am talking about. I’m talking about abusing something to the extent that you stop caring about much of anything.

Some pills can cause this effect as well. For example, painkillers can severely numb people to what is going on around them and leave them in a bad state. I’ve seen a lot of people get hooked on painkillers as well.

5. You Escape into a Hobby or Other Activity

Many people also escape into hobbies or other activities to forget about the world around them. While there is certainly nothing wrong with having hobbies whatsoever, they can also be used to numb the pressure of the world around them.

I’ve known people who get home from work and go into a room and do nothing but paint or write and hardly ever see their families. I’ve seen men do this with tennis and golf quite often. If you are using a hobby like this, it is no different than a drug.

While competition is one thing, there are people who allow this competitive nature to literally take over their life and then have nothing left to give to their profession and work at the end.

One of the reasons people often escape into hobbies, or other activities, is because of a sense of satisfaction and control in these hobbies that they do not get in their career.

While escape is perfectly acceptable, and probably even recommended for many people, allowing yourself to escape completely into something to such an extent that you have nothing left to give is not a good idea.

6. You Do Work That Does Not Make You Happy or Passionate

After a career as an attorney, I became a legal recruiter. To my astonishment, I liked this work so much that I found myself popping out of bed at 4:30 or 5:00 a.m. in the morning quite regularly to go to work. I was that excited about the work and liked it that much.

When I was practicing law in a large law firm, such enthusiasm simply was not there. The last thing I was going to do was get up at 5:00 am to do some legal work for fun. You might say that I was a bit “dead” inside from the work and the environment that I was in. The work I was doing numbed me.

As a consequence of finding my new calling, I was very happy. If you enjoy what you are doing, and it “lights you up” to the extent that you are popping out of bed early in the morning like this, then you are doing something right. You need to be doing something that gives you this life force in your work. It is 100% essential.

Choosing a profession is like choosing a mate. If you were to meet someone you did not like being around, who you were not attracted to, who you had nothing in common with, and who made you sick to your stomach, this person would be a bad fit for a marriage partner—even if they had a lot of money. Jobs and professions are like that too. Just because it pays a lot of money, if it does not make you happy, it is not worth it.

7. You Listen to People Who Tell You Not to Be Motivated

Not too long ago, I read the book *The Four Hour Workweek*. I could not believe that people were falling for this nonsense. The author, Tim Ferris, had made money working four hours a week selling a vitamin via mail order where he made overly inflated promises about its value (something to the effect of “It will make you x-times smarter in only days”).

The premise that someone can work four hours a week in a legitimate business is ridiculous. If I put a pill out and tell everyone it will cure cancer, I could probably work four hours a week too. Lots of people have done this and lots of people have gone to prison for it too.

The problem with the “four-hour work week” is that if you work just four hours a week, remember that a lot of the people you are competing with will be working a 60-hour work week – and will blow you away in whatever field you are in. Any promise of success without hard work is nearly impossible.

If you are going to achieve anything, you are going to need to work very hard and for a long time in almost every instance. You absolutely cannot take your foot off the pedal. The second you do this for even a short length of time, you will get burned. You need to keep the pressure on.

You should never listen to people who tell you that you should not be working hard or be motivated.

You need to have this power constantly driving you forward—some might call it the spirit of God.

8. You Believe the Things “They” Say About You

- The first time Jerry Seinfeld went on stage, he was booed off the stage.
- The Beatles were dropped by their first record label and were told, “We don't like your sound, and guitar music is on its way out. You have no future in show business.”
- Soichiro Honda, the Founder of Honda Motor Company, was turned down for a job as an engineer at Toyota.
- Stephen King's first novel, *Carrie*, was rejected 30+ times, and he threw it in the trash (it was retrieved later by his wife).
- Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team.
- Vice President Dick Cheney flunked out of Yale twice. Former President George W. Bush joked with Cheney about this fact, stating, “So now we know – if you graduate from Yale, you become president. If you drop out, you get to be vice president.”
- When Oprah Winfrey was 22, she was fired from her job as a television reporter and told she was “unfit for TV.”
- Stephen Spielberg was rejected from film school three times.
- Elvis was fired after his first performance at the Grand Ole Opry. Jimmy Denny, manager of the Grand Ole Opry, told him, “You ain't goin' nowhere, son. You ought to go back to drivin' a truck.”
- In Thomas Edison's early years, he was told he was “too stupid to learn anything.”
- Walt Disney was fired from a job as a newspaper editor because he was told “he lacked imagination and had no good ideas.”
- Steve Jobs was fired from Apple, the company he started.

In a 2005 commencement address at Stanford University, Jobs explained, “I didn't see it then, but it turned out that getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything. It freed me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life.”

Most people, when confronted with such negativity, simply go numb. If you choose to go numb and stop trying, you may end up not reaching anywhere near your full potential. The people who end up achieving the most are the ones who keep going and refuse to believe what “they” say about them. In fact, most successful people have become so precisely because they kept their passion alive and did not allow others to influence how they felt about themselves.

Conclusions

Do not allow yourself to go numb. The most important thing you can do is stay alive and keep your passion alive. There is nothing more important than the life force—God—that guides you in what you do.

Read More About If You Are Not Engaged in Your Job, You Should Find a New One:

- [Never Abandon Work You Are Exceptional At](#)