

motiv-

ation

journal

prompts

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01

intro

duct

ion

When you feel like quitting, think about why you started.

The definition of "motivation" is the following: the reason or reasons to move, shake, and make things happen.

When the topic of motivation comes up, it's hard to believe it's self producing. If you're unmotivated, where's the magic button to eject you from the couch to suddenly get you jazzed about going for a run? That button doesn't exist... Until you make it.

In fact, there are said to be three or more roots of motivation: intrinsic - doing something for our own personal joys, extrinsic - doing something for an external reward such as money, a degree, etc, or the motivation that comes from doing something for the sake of a collective, like family, religion, or community.

Regardless of what type of motivation gets you to peel yourself from bed in the morning, it's important to understand the sources so we can learn how to cultivate the extra "umph" to pick ourselves up when times get rough. *flashes back to me binging Netflix for 15 hours straight after a breakup.*

The 36 prompts in this e-book are all dedicated to help you not only understand your relationship with motivation, but inspire you to dig within yourself to create your own motivational road map to use time and time again.

Have no fear, you gon' persevere boo boo.

Grab your journal, a good pen, and a soothing beverage. Take a deep breath and let's unlock our truths about Motivation.

With love,
Joanna Franco

02

your

"why"

"why"

1. What's your "why" ?

What do you think you are on this Earth for? Have you felt like you had a purpose from a young age? Are you still searching for one?

Write about what keeps you going, what adds meaning to your life, what drives you forward.

Whether it's something you feel is natural or something you chose, what's your 'why'?

2. Define "ambition."

When you think of an ambitious person, what comes to mind? Is it your hardworking parent? Or a friend you admire? Is it a role model that's blazed the trail for humanity? Or a hometown hero who's kept the family bakery alive for over 100 years? Ambition isn't "one size fits all," and right now it's time to determine what it means to you. Where did your idea of ambition come from? Is it changing? Has it stayed the same? Do you feel ambitious, and if so, is that a positive or negative thing?

3. Make a list of all the things you love to do. How can you do them more often?

Since society designs our motivation to come from extrinsic reasons (diplomas, salaries, promotions), our own desires can get lost in the mix. This is an exercise to get to the root of what you actually enjoy. Have you been making time for activities that light you up? If not, how can you start? You might feel more energized to take on the world if you make space for your own happiness.

"why"

4. Where do you need validation from and why?

Ugh, that nagging need for validation. It's not our fault we crave validation from others - we're wired that way *think of crocodile tears from a baby begging for attention,* but it's helpful to reflect on who we think we need to be impressing, or defining ourselves to. Who or what are you currently trying to get the green light from? Why does it matter to you to receive it? Who are you trying to make happy and does it motivate you, or discourage you?

5. What are things in your life that don't make sense?

This question should be asked every month because odds are we all have kinks in our lifestyle design that need smoothing. We get in habits of work, sleep, repeat, and before we know it there are tons of inefficiencies swallowing precious time that could be used for something better. In my opinion, feeding two birds with one scone *way less violent than stoning them to death,* is the way to go. What passions can you couple with necessities? In order to innovate our lives, first we need to take inventory of everything that's not working.

5. How do you define enough?

This excerpt from an [article](#) changed my life:

At a party given by a billionaire on Shelter Island, Kurt Vonnegut informs his pal, Joseph Heller, that their host, a hedge fund manager, had made more money in a single day than Heller had earned from his wildly popular novel Catch-22 over its whole history. Heller responds, "Yes, but I have something he will never have – ENOUGH."

What is your enough? How do you stay accountable to that version versus someone else's definition of the word?

"why"

6. Where do you get your energy from? What takes it away?

Energy is limited - we give it, and in an ideal world, we receive it. But if we're not mindful, we can fall in the trap of constantly giving away our source of life and be left to crumble like a withering plant. It's time to make a list of everything that gives you energy, from the weather, to great friends. Make another list of everything you do that drains you, from activities at work, to depleting relationships. At the end of the exercise, ask yourself how can you better preserve your energy for things that make sense?

7. Reassess your priorities.

If you were to actually list all of the things that occupy your day and life right now, how would the priorities be numbered? I know we're all about writing, but today, let's focus on the priority levels and their rank. What comes first? What comes last? Are the priorities returning the favor in giving you joy, love, expansion? If our time is limited, our attention will be as well, and it's important to prioritize only those things deserving of our time.

8. When was the last time you felt inspired?

Write about the last time you felt that electric motivation, that lightbulb moment that has you counting down the minutes before you can start a new project or research ideas or take up a new routine. When did you last feel the buzz of creativity or the fire of ambition?

"why"

9. What are you chasing?

A recent [JoClub](#) online journaling seminar got us thinking a lot about what we're 'chasing,' this feeling of impatience we all experience but can't always put a finger on. In today's journal entry, try to locate it - are you chasing a specific dream? Society's idea of success? Are you chasing a feeling? A person? Do you think your means of getting there be worth it once you reach the finish line?

10. What is your relationship with failure?

From a young age, we're taught that for someone to win, someone has to lose. What if we rewired that concept all together? Think about all of those supposed "failures" that gave you the biggest blessings in your life. What if not getting into that program is what gave you extra time to develop your own business? Or that failed romance is what made you emotionally available to meet the love of your life? Or that friendship that grew apart is what introduced you to your new lifelong friends?

If we redefine our relationship with failure, we wouldn't be so scared to let go of what's no longer serving us or try new things. How can you fail more and consider it a great success?

11. How can you make better decisions?

What was the last big decision you made? Break down your step by step process. When you're facing a tough choice, what do you do first? Make a pros and cons list? Reach out to your unofficial board of advisors, aka friends and family that always support you like mirrors you can't avoid? And at the end of the day, what gets you confident enough to actually pull the trigger? How do you balance intuition, logic, and strategy all in one? What does a "win-win" look like to you?

"why"

12. Write about your moral compass.

When facing a difficult time in our lives, it'd be helpful to have a go-to moral compass to help in our direction. Create yours now - drawing it could even be fun. What values are you constantly striving to maintain? What are your morals, where do they come from, and why are they important to you? What are your non-negotiables? If we're aware of our internal compass, every opportunity and relationship that comes into question can be easily filtered. And if you're still in a tough spot, ask yourself, "does this make sense with my moral compass?" You'll know exactly what that means to you.

13. Write about money.

We've all been asked the question, "what would you do if money were no object?" Because it's assumed that money is the number one reason people avoid taking risks. The equation is as follows: we need money to live, we find a job and keep it by all means necessary, even if it comes at the expense of our happiness and dreams. What if we redefine our relationship with money? How much do you *actually* need to survive? How does scarcity mindset affect you? Who or what first taught you about the concept of money? And how does that narrative limit you today? Is the quest for money costing you far too much?

14. What motivates you to work harder?

Maybe you were born with motivation in your DNA, or inherited it from the sacrifice of immigration. Or you might struggle with motivation because the path has been blazed for you making things comfortable. Regardless, our relationship with motivation is a lifelong journey with highs and lows. What motivates you today might not be there tomorrow.

Write about your motivators, be they people, places or things - every tool, mindset or action that ensures you're determined to work harder. If you have none, what would you like to motivate you?

"why"

16. Who are the five people closest to you right now?

You might have a go-to energy boosting friend who's always moving and shaking and a 5 minute call has the potential to remind you of your own "why." That only works if you're surrounding yourself with motivated people. We are a sum of the five people closest to us. If you're feeling a lull in your energy, observe those around you and all of your interactions with them - do they inspire you, or tear you down? If you're feeling lackluster after hangouts, maybe it's time for a refresh in the friend group. Or you could encourage everyone's motivations with a fun group challenge *we vote 30 day journal challenge.* When we have others to be accountable to, we're more likely to stick with it.

17. Write about your potential.

Potential may seem like one of those tired buzzwords teachers like to recycle at every parent-teacher conference, but I've found it really useful to reflect upon as an adult. After all, many of us no longer have teachers around - we have to check ourselves and see if we're striving to our maximum *potential*.

Write your own report card today. Are you using your potential to its full extent? Are you afraid of where it may take you? Are you really grabbing it with both hands? Do you see it, or do those around you see it first? When they point out your potential, do you believe them? Odds are, you have it waiting to be unleashed, you're just held back by your residential "Negative Nancy." Nancy ain't paying rent, so it's time to kick her out and reach for the stars.

Today, be honest with yourself and write down your potential.

03

get

out

of your

head

out of your head

18. What are your limiting beliefs?

One of the most helpful things you can know as a person is that *you are not your negative thoughts*. In fact, those thoughts are most likely just there to try and keep you safe and small, they hold you back from your best **you**.

Your potential is infinite, so why haven't you been on the cover of Forbes yet? Well, for starters, maybe that's not your goal. But we all have our versions of success that we might be flirting with, but haven't committed to because of our "limiting beliefs."

Give your Negative Nancy a voice for today's entry, and read it out loud to realize that it's not you - if we give the thought space on paper, it will free up space in our minds so we can focus to get things done.

19. When was the last time you focused?

Write about the last time you really zoned in on a task, feeling, person or memory. Perhaps you found yourself wrapped up in a project, shocked at the amount of time that had passed once you finished. Perhaps you gathered all the caffeine necessary to access some tunnel vision for a deadline. What were the elements involved? What was the "why" behind the focus?

And what about when you journal? Do you take the stream-of-consciousness approach? Or do you ready, aim and fire with impeccable cognitive focus? What gets you excited enough to finally focus?

out of your head

20. What risks do you want to take?

Start this one by reminding yourself of all the risks you've already taken. How did you feel before, during, and after? Want to hear the good news? You survived! Odds are, you'll thrive on your next risk too - remind yourself of your own strength.

From the risk-takers out there to the risk-averse, what risks do you want to take? How long have you had the urge, and what are you hoping to fulfill?

Of course, some risks are probably not worth taking, but many - going after a dream, telling someone you love them, moving cities - could be held back by fear alone. What fears are holding you back? And what will it take for you to push them to the side and take that leap?

21. Take out your mental trash.

Write about the last time you really zoned in on a task, feeling, person or memory. Perhaps you found yourself wrapped up in a project, shocked at the amount of time that had passed once you finished. Perhaps you gathered all the caffeine necessary to access some tunnel vision for a deadline. What were the elements involved?

And what about when you journal? Do you take the stream-of-consciousness approach? Or do you ready, aim and fire with impeccable cognitive focus? What gets you excited enough to finally focus?

out of your head

22. How's your time management right now?

Covid burnout is real, and I frequently experience periods where my time management goes out the window. How's yours looking right now? Are you working on carving out 'me' time? Are you finding schedules to be a help or hindrance during these groundhog days?

Journal about your frustrations with how your days are looking, but also about the small victories involved in maintaining even the smallest sense of organization in a time of such disorder. How can you better manage your time?

23. What aspects of your life need a refresh?

If you're in need of a new hobby, a room makeover or a boost in a relationship, write about it in today's journal entry. Though perhaps a few too many of us may have hastily cut uneven bangs in one of the past year's lockdowns, you can't deny it feels good to make a change! What will this look like for you?

24. Write about your most recent learning curve.

You may have fallen flat on your face just as you felt you were right at the finish line, or maybe you discovered your own strength recently, or hurt somebody you care about without meaning to. Write about a recent learning curve that you now intend to carry with you and evolve from. Are you taking active steps and putting yourself in situations where you have the opportunity to learn? Even if it comes with growing pains?

04

extra

push

extra push

25. Write about self-improvement.

Like self-care, mentions of self-improvement are beginning to feel a little oversaturated. So let's ignore the commercialized aspects of it all for a second and get back to basics.

How do you define self-improvement? When have you noticeably experienced it in your life, and how can you meaningfully engage with the practice moving forward?

Today, write about all the areas you've grown, and where would you'd like to continue evolving. Maybe that means reading more books, journaling consistently, learning a new language, working out, or spending more time with family - today, make a road map to be kind to your future you.

26. Give yourself advice for the month ahead.

In today's journal entry, step outside of yourself for a minute, and give *you* the advice you'd give your dearest friend if they were walking in your footsteps. Do you need a little kick up the butt for some upcoming projects? Do you need some gentle words of advice for the coming weeks? Nobody knows you like you do. Today, cut out the middleman and tell yourself what you need to hear.

27. What's something small you can celebrate today?

A masterpiece is made of its finer details, after all. It's time to notice the small joys in your life. In today's journal entry, stop and smell the roses - even if it's just one, and the smallest, thorniest of the bunch. I'm sure there's something to be found that's worth celebrating.

extra push

28. Talk about a trait you're working on developing.

It's always a fun game to observe the people you most admire, and ask yourself - what do they *actually do* that makes them worth admiring? Are they a "3-minute or less email response time" kind of a person? Do they consistently look for new and expansive activities? Do they have an abundant friendship circle full of movers and shakers?

Taking note of their qualities is like making a wish list for everything you'd like to work on. After all, odds are those you admire learned their skills from someone they admire.

Who are your mentors, and what do they inspire you to develop? And why is it worth possessing?

29. How can you shake up your daily routine?

It could mean waking up earlier, approaching work differently or, heck, eating ice cream for breakfast! Today, write about your daily routine and try to find areas that could use a bit of a twist.

Today, write where your life has become too predictable, and make a plan to shake things up - sign up for a class, organize a virtual hangout, pick a park you've never explored and make memories. .

30. Congratulate yourself.

"For what?"

Why, there are tons of reasons to pat yourself on the back! Did you make someone smile today, are you living honestly, did you complete a journal prompt? Then congratulations are in order! Look at yourself in a gentle light today, and acknowledge the good things you've done recently. You might even find your inner hero.

extra push

31. What's one thing you're proud of?

Pride is an intimate connection with ones own achievement, or the achievement of someone near and dear. It can be a double edged sword but today, let's think on the positive side. Write about something you're proud of - could be a recent achievement, could be a quality you possess like patience, kindness, determination or empathy. It could be getting out of bed in a time when it often feels difficult to do so, or opening up despite the fear of vulnerability. We're all doing the best we can, so in today's journal entry, don't let yourself forget it!

32. How do you define success right now?

Like enough, the definition of success should be tailored to our individual desires. But of course, we only discover that on our deathbeds, or if we stumble upon an ebook that makes us reflect on it. Success is relative. Right now, where are you in your life? What do you consider a great success? Are you fighting your own logic, do you want to believe a degree is the epitome of success when you'd be content working a job that makes you happy, but pays less? This is less logic, more heart. At the end of your life, what will you have considered a success? Try to reverse engineer, and go from there.

33. What do you actually want to learn right now?

Motivation usually grazes over developing skills for ourselves simply because we desire them. Instead, most of our time is used to cram for exams, meet deadlines, and pull off family functions that we may or may not even want to attend. If you had it your way (which you do), what would you learn just for fun? What does your brain consider nutritious, and how can you make a game plan to learn?

extra push

34. How do you reward yourself?

Part of the psychology behind motivation is feeling rewarded after the completion of a task. It's easier to stay focused on a job (even if it makes us unhappy) because the reward is a weekly paycheck. Those kinds of rewards are like empty carbs, they fill you up, but aren't good for the soul. When it comes to developing intrinsic motivation, what will reward you? Is it the joy in getting to speak to a new foreign friend because you've just learned their language? Or will you actually reward yourself with a nice piece of jewelry, or 30 minutes of sitting still and enjoying a good view? Create your own rewards system, and see if it gets you excited about accomplishing the task. "If I finish this ebook, I get to be lazy on the couch for an hour," is what's keeping me going.

35. How can you dream bigger?

Today's friendly reminder is that you are your own worst enemy. You're probably harsher on yourself than anyone else. With those strict expectations of what you want out of life, you might be letting beautiful opportunities slip through the cracks, or you're being overly realistic which could cramp the style of your inner dreamer. Today, dare to dream bigger. Set some seeds into the universe, and see what happens. Careful, the universe has some strong ears, and you might get what you wish for after all.

36. Are you motivated?

Give yourself a time capsule of your current relationship with motivation. What's getting you excited? What are you striving towards? What seeds are you planting today that will blossom tomorrow? You'll want a receipt of your growth.

06

re

view

review

After completing the prompts, what was the most surprising thing you learned about yourself?

Have your thoughts on motivation changed?
Been enforced?

What prompt(s) were your favorites? Save them to repeat in the future.

What have you learned about motivation?

07

game

plan

game plan

Write down your longterm goals. What do you hope to achieve in the next five years? Date the paper.

Be sure to include:

- personal goals
- professional goals
- financial goals
- spiritual goals
- any other goals

Break down those longterm goals into smaller steps. What will you do this week? What about this month? What will you start doing on a daily basis? Grab a planner, and start planning.

with

love,

Jo Club

Follow us on Instagram for daily prompts and join the club for monthly journaling events!