

DON'T LET FEAR STOP YOU

The best way—maybe the only way—to motivate yourself to do hard things, to stretch outside your comfort zone and to persevere even when the going gets tough—is to get crystal clear about your why. It won't necessarily make things easier, but it will make the pain worth it. And sometimes that's enough.

And so, when it comes to your goals, do you know your big why? Do you know what is driving you and bringing purpose to your life? Do you know what is worth fighting for? And how can you use that motivation to get you where you want to be?

Find your why, and the rest will fall into place.

STEP #1

MANUFACTURE A CATALYST

If you are trying to work up the courage to start a business, your manufactured catalyst might be as simple as listening to an inspirational or entrepreneurial podcast every morning—something that will keep spurring you to take action. If you are trying to reach a weight loss goal, your catalyst might be hiring a trainer or joining Weight Watchers in order to have more accountability. If you are trying to go for a promotion work, your catalyst might be to start to create more opportunities by taking the initiative to ask your boss for more responsibility.

If the why feels too hard right now, then focus on creating an environment around you that will set you up for success. You might not have control over every circumstance in your life, but you do have control over far more than you realize. Put those safeguards in place and manufacture the catalysts that you know will eventually lead to change.

STEP #2

CONNECT WITH A LARGER PURPOSE

Now, keep in mind that knowing my why and connecting to a higher purpose didn't make losing the weight any easier. I still had to actually do the work of watching my calories and working out, even when I didn't feel like it. I still had to put safeguards in place, like hiring a trainer to hold me accountable and signing up for a meal delivery service that made choosing healthy options a whole lot easier. I still had to choose to stop eating Doritos

Your own larger purpose might not have anything to do with yourself. Your motivation might be driven by a sense of responsibility or obligation to your family, or to your friends, or to a cause that you believe in deeply. Maybe you feel called by God, and that your purpose is really just to be obedient. Maybe your motivation is wanting to be financially independent so that you can finally feel free. Maybe you just want to make a difference in the world.

STEP #3

KEEP YOUR WHY TOP OF MIND

Once you've connected to your higher purpose, it is critically important to keep that why of yours top of mind, and to keep reminding yourself what matters most, over and over again.

Because it is easy to forget, especially when things get hard.

And make no mistake—things will get hard! Because anytime you are pursuing a big goal or pushing past your comfort zone, or facing a fear or about to do something really important or really great, that is exactly when things start to get difficult and awkward and painful and very, very real.