

J A N U A R Y 2 0 1 2

# Motivation

As the New Year begins, often so do the attempts to keep our resolutions or simply to be more motivated in our lives.

January marks the beginning of a new year and the hopeful start of a clean slate. But what is it for some of us that hold us back from doing those things we want and keeping those promises to ourselves that we resolved to?

Motivation is literally the desire to do things. It's the difference between waking up before dawn with a spring in your step ready to tackle the tasks of the day and lying around the house watching TV. It is the crucial element in setting and attaining goals. Research shows you can influence your own levels of motivation and self-control. If you want to be more motivated it is up to you to figure out what you want, set goals to achieve it, power through the pain period, and become who you want to be.

## Motivating Activities in the Area:

### Take a class:

J Sergeant Reynolds Community College offers courses covering a variety of topics and interests. Visit: <http://www.jsr.vccs.edu/> or call 804-371-3000

### Meditate:

Ekoji Buddhist Temple in Richmond offers guided meditation sessions and is open to the public. Visit: <http://www.ekojirichmond.org/> or call 804-355-6657

### Exercise:

There are many ways to do this at home and in the community; walking every day, running in your neighborhood. There are also a large variety of gyms located in Richmond and the surrounding areas. Exercising with a buddy helps keep your interest and is a great motivator.

## Tips to help guide goal achievement

- **Put your goals in writing:** The act of writing down what you're going to do is a strong motivator.
- **Make a list of obstacles:** Think of everything that might stand in your way then decide what you can do
- **List the benefits of achieving your goal:** Knowing exactly what you will gain from reaching your goal is a strong motivator.
- **Identify subgoals:** Break down complicated plans into manageable chunks. Be specific about what has to be accomplished. Decide what you are going to do and when.
- **Enlist the help of others:** Find someone, a coworker or friend, with whom you share a common goal. Get someone to go to the gym with you, or to quit smoking with you, or to share healthy meals with you. A partner can help you stay committed and motivated. Look for role models, people who have already achieved the goals you seek to reach. Ask them for advice and suggestions.
- **Get organized:** When you are prepared and organized, you will feel better about your ability to reach your goals. Having information scattered in too many places makes you feel out of control and undermines motivation.