

LACK OF MOTIVATION

How to keep adolescents motivated to learn and do well both in and out of school is not an easy question to answer. Generally speaking, somewhere in the middle grades the motivation of some young adolescents for learning takes a serious nosedive.

Early adolescence is a period of transition between elementary school and high school, which includes a heightened awareness of emerging responsibilities and adulthood. Behavioral characteristics valued by young adolescents change and conform to new relations among peers, family, and teachers within and outside the school.

Issues of motivation have a degree of uniqueness and certainly a special sense of urgency about them during adolescence. Students are entering a new period in their lives where achievements in school and society run parallel. As they grow older, they are given independence from the home and are easily influenced by activities happening outside the home. New social relations with teachers, peers, and parents can cause tension, and discouragement that can have serious long-lasting effects in school.

For some kids, trouble feeling motivated can have negative impact on academic, personal or professional success. Low grades, damaged friendships or a demotion at work are all realistic consequences of low motivation. Addressing the root cause of motivation issues is the first step in learning how to reengage in healthy behaviors.

Here are some of the possible things that can contribute to issues with lack of motivation:

- Adolescent biological changes: The onset of puberty can distract some teens. Distractions make it hard to think about anything that has previously

been important, such as the swim team or the social studies project that's due.

- Emotional/developmental issues or concerns: It may take extra effort to concentrate on a science project when a student is preoccupied with physical insecurities or concerned about being excluded from a social group, for example.
- Their school environment. An adolescent may lose motivation after moving from elementary school to a middle school or junior high...perhaps fueled by insufficient support in the new school or by an increased workload and expectations to which the student hasn't yet adjusted.
- Peer group or social pressures. Adolescents are prone to being influenced by friends who believe that academic success isn't "cool," or that girls aren't good at math for example.
- A change in how adolescents view their ability: As children move into their early teens, they may begin to believe that ability is fixed and then to compare their ability with that of others—the harder you have to try, the less good at something you must be. Why try hard if it won't help you to do well?
- A lack of opportunities: Lack opportunities to take the classes or participate in the activities that they need to spark their enthusiasm can be an influence in students from families with financial or emotional issues.
- Depression/Fear of Failure & Emotional or Psychological Issues: Depression can wreak havoc on academic and professional success. Treating the depression generally has a very positive effect on motivation and productivity. Fear of failure, presents itself students avoiding work and not even trying. Adolescents who have low self-esteem tend to believe that they are not capable of succeeding and often self-sabotage. Procrastination occurs for a variety of reasons, when procrastination becomes a habit, it may appear that the person is not motivated to succeed. Stress takes up a significant amount of cognitive and emotional energy. Some teens cope with stress and feeling overwhelmed by avoiding deadlines or finding triggers to engage in something negative again. Lack of sleep due to stress or being overwhelmed can also make it difficult to feel motivated.

WILDERNESS THERAPY HELPS

Since adolescence is a very influential period in a person's life, when good learning techniques, healthy habits and thought patterns become a part of daily life then the student can have a more productive academic career and successful future. Even though motivation must be a part of the school system, teachers, and parents there must be a conscious contribution by the student as well.

We have the solution for adolescent motivational issues at Pacific Quest. When students and families are in a pattern of unmotivated and unhealthy behavior we have a solution. The Pacific Quest wilderness therapy program ignites an adolescent's motivation by tackling some of the reasons students that they lose motivation. Whether it's from lack of confidence, lack of focus or, lack of direction ... If a young adult doesn't know what to do, how can they be motivated to do it?

Our wilderness therapy programs can also provide adolescents, teens and young adults with experiential treatment, blended with traditional individual and group therapy 24 hours a day. It has been shown that troubled teens have a greater capacity to develop relationships with peers and staff while being in the wilderness. This complete change of environment allows them to gain insight to prior unhealthy behavior and therefore the troubled teen can begin to make changes more quickly. This is achieved by overcoming the natural obstacles that the wilderness provides, which in turn builds on things like self care and self esteem.

Our Organic Gardening Horticulture Therapy and field staff teaches young adults the skills necessary to plant, grow, sustain, and harvest an organic garden. Believe it or not, weeding a garden plot, planting seeds, transplanting seedlings, watering plants, harvesting vegetables, cooking raw foods, and then composting waste are all significant parts of the lifestyle and culture of Pacific Quest which help students transcend all sorts of issues. By giving students the responsibility of caring and maintaining another living form, the student's motivation is sparked by their compassion.

Pacific Quest is one of a few wilderness therapy programs that are bringing empirically informed therapeutic techniques and therapists into the wilderness. Pacific Quest uses the evidence-based approaches like cognitive behavioral therapy to combat negative thinking, journaling to help shed light on depression and anxiety, and group activities to overcome social phobia and develop greater self-confidence, just to name a few.

If you feel your young adult's motivation could benefit from the Pacific Quest Wilderness Therapy Program or if you have a question about our therapeutic model, contact us at 808-937-5806 today.

LACK OF MOTIVATION OR FOLLOW THROUGH IN YOUNG ADULTS

Staying motivated is a struggle — a young adult's drive is constantly assaulted by negative thoughts and anxiety about the future. Everyone faces doubt and depression. What separates the highly successful is the ability to keep moving forward.

In today's technological age, there is a pressure to enjoy life or forget about one's responsibilities. Young adults are often susceptible to this notion and glamorous ideal. Life can be difficult, stressful, but also rewarding. In order to attain these rewards an individual must work for them. They must be motivated to make these successes happen for them. For some young adults, this seems like a far off dream, making some of them lose their motivation and drive to attempt to achieve them. Often, failure can be the most common culprit of a lack of motivation. Making some young adults give up, not attempt, or even start.

At Pacific Quest we offer solutions to students and families when they are in a pattern of unmotivated and unhealthy behavior. Our Organic Gardening Horticulture Therapy and field staff teaches young adults the skills necessary to plant, grow, sustain, and harvest an organic garden. Weeding a garden plot, planting seeds, transplanting seedlings, watering plants, harvesting vegetables, cooking raw foods, and then composting waste are all significant parts of the lifestyle and culture of Pacific Quest. By providing young adults the responsibility of caring and maintaining another living form, the student's motivation is sparked by their compassion. They come to care for their plants and nature, and want to see their efforts grow both figuratively and literally.

The Pacific Quest wilderness therapy program ignites young adult's motivation by tackling some of the reasons students lose motivation.

- Lack of confidence – If a young adult doesn't believe they can succeed, what's the point in trying?

- Lack of focus – If a young adult doesn't know what they want, do they really want anything?
- Lack of direction – If a young adult doesn't know what to do, how can they be motivated to do it?

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