



# Self-motivation

## Definition

Self-motivation, at its core, is the internal drive that propels an individual to take action and persist towards achieving goals without the need for external prompting or rewards. It stems from a deep sense of purpose, intrinsic interest in a task, or a strong personal desire for accomplishment. This inner force empowers individuals to initiate tasks, overcome obstacles, and maintain focus, even when faced with challenges or a lack of external encouragement. Self-motivated individuals are typically proactive, resilient, and driven by their own aspirations and values.

## How does it affect teenagers

Self-motivation in adolescence carries significant implications for various aspects of development. Academically, it fuels a proactive approach to learning, leading to greater engagement, persistence through challenges, and ultimately, better academic outcomes. Socially, self-motivated adolescents are more likely to initiate positive relationships, pursue their interests in extracurricular activities, and demonstrate leadership qualities. Emotionally, this inner drive fosters a sense of autonomy, self-efficacy, and resilience, equipping teenagers to navigate the complexities and pressures of adolescence with greater confidence and a stronger sense of purpose.





## Self-motivation and social inclusion

For teenagers at risk of exclusion, the development of self-motivation can be a particularly powerful protective factor. This inner drive can empower them to proactively seek out positive social connections and support networks, counteracting feelings of isolation and marginalization. Self-motivation can fuel their engagement in educational or vocational opportunities, potentially leading to greater economic stability and a stronger sense of belonging within the wider community.



### How to tackle it?

To cultivate self-motivation in at-risk teenagers, a comprehensive strategy is needed. This includes offering meaningful roles like volunteering, collaboratively setting and celebrating small, achievable goals to build confidence, fostering resilience and a growth mindset, and establishing a supportive environment where their voices and interests are valued. These elements work together to ignite their inner drive and encourage positive engagement.





## Warm up questions

- Think about a time you felt really driven to achieve something, even when it was tough. What was that like for you? What kept you going?
- What's one small thing you do regularly that shows your ability to motivate yourself? It could be anything!



## Questions for discussion

- How can educators or mentors help foster self-motivation in young people? What approaches have you seen work well (or not so well)?
- What's one piece of advice you would give someone who is struggling to find their self-motivation?

## Find out more

- "Motivation and the Power of Not Giving Up (for Teens)" by Nemours KidsHealth
- "A Very, Very Powerful Motivational Video For Teens" by TeachThought
- "Self Motivation | Brendan Clark | TEDxYouth@BarnstableHS"
- "Minute Motivators for Teens" by Toler Stan
- "Encouraging Self-Determination and Goal Setting Among Youth" by GovInfo





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