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Motivation Through Extreme Chaos **By Ann Golden Eglé, MCC**

Think back to who and where you were on December 31, 2019. Armed with enticing 2020 goals in mind, you could not wait to begin a fresh, exhilarating brand new year.

Then 2020 hit us with unimaginable international chaos. Life was changing each day, each hour. Pandemic, stock market volatility, election intensity, deaths, killings, protests and riots. Through this turbulent time, your life has not been the same as it was last December, and it may never be again.

Even your work environment has changed. You do not directly see your colleagues, coworkers, direct reports, customers and clients. Zoom, while better than nothing, is not the motivational or relationship building tool we all crave to excel.

Some of you have thrived through this chaos, keeping your minds focused upon what is most important, having your best professional year ever. Some of you have been completely lost, losing motivation and confidence amongst the chaos and uncertain times. Most of you are somewhere in the middle.

Wherever you have been on the motivation scale the first six uncertain months of 2020, you have the power to make the final half of this year rock. How? Through rediscovering and amplifying your motivation.

My goal for you with this article is to provide a few tools for you to reclaim your motivation, to thrive and feel great about yourself and your accomplishments through the coming six months.

Though scientists have complicated ways of describing what motivates us, my experience is that motivation comes in one of two forms — inner (intrinsic) and outer (extrinsic).

With *inner motivation* we are self-motivated, not needing anything or anyone to spur us into action. Give us a challenge and we figure it out. Ideas, plans of action and goals come from within.

With *outer motivation* we excel through our leader or other outer sources laying out our path, showing us what we need to do to succeed. Outer motivation may also look like competing with or emulating others to succeed.

Both forms of motivation will propel you to succeed. However, the key is to know which you are and build upon it. Here are a few tools for you to experiment with for each form of motivation.

Inner motivation.

- Schedule abundant and uninterrupted alone time to create your goals and vision of success. This can happen in an afternoon or a few days of silent retreat.
- Allow ample time to process and work through your goals from beginning to end.
- Schedule blocks of uninterrupted time each day to focus and produce.
- Structure times for your calls and other activities each day to create a rhythm. For example, work on quiet, pensive projects each morning between 8-10am, phone interactions between 10am-noon, or vice versa.
- Know when you are at your best throughout your day and schedule activities accordingly.
- Gift yourself with periods of peaceful inspiration through nature, soft music, solo walks or runs, meditation.
- Find a coach or mentor as sometimes self-motivation can be lonely.

Outer motivation.

- Schedule regular purposeful meetings with your boss, letting him/her know precisely what you need. Perhaps it is direction, brainstorming, feedback or input on a specific project.
- Schedule meetings with other leaders at all levels of your organization or in your industry, as is appropriate, to learn from them and elicit their input.
- If you now work from home, open a Zoom meeting to have in the background for you and your coworkers as you work through the day. This is to resemble your place of work. As things come up you simply chat with co-workers just like you were in the office.
- If you are the leader, meet with your team more often than you think is necessary. Do not wait for them to come to you with their needs. Be proactive.
- Seek input from people who motivate you. For example, spend time researching a favorite motivational author or speaker's website, pick up their newest book.
- Watch TED talks pertaining to your industry or specific challenge.
- Be discerning with whom you solicit feedback. Everyone has an opinion, but not everyone's opinion will move you forward in the right direction.
- Find a coach or mentor to help guide you, providing objective feedback.

Irrespective of how you are motivated, through self or others, certain behaviors are vital to the success you attain for yourself. These basics, while familiar to us, are sometimes difficult to put into practice. Get enough sleep, exercise, hydrate, feed your body with proper nutrition and feed your mind and spirit with positive social interaction. Get outside.

While being proactive in the causes that are near and dear to your heart, I also challenge you to let go of the heaviness of the past six months. Find the motivation to break free from the chaos. Create and be your best for the second half of 2020. You have the ability and now additional tools. Make it happen.

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