

## Staying motivated and in control

It can seem daunting to think that you will have to manage diabetes for the rest of your life. Rather than be overwhelmed – and risk giving up on looking after yourself – it's better to concentrate on each day, and each moment, rather than thinking about a year in the future, or even a lifetime.

### ONE DAY AT A TIME

What you do every day is the key to achieving your goals long term. Opportunities arise every day to make a difference, and work towards your short and long term goals. And every time you make the most of an opportunity, you take a step in the right direction.

So what can you do today? Plan your day – think about a delicious, healthy meal you might have tonight, and plan a walk or other physical activity that you can do with a friend while having a catch up. Physical activity is not only good for your body but good for your mind too.

Once you've made the rest of today work for you, be proud. You've got this! Think about the rest of the week and have a goal, something to look forward to. You will be able to feel in control, and that is the first step to being in control.

As you plan and thrive one day at a time, and the weeks and months will immediately take care of themselves. And that's down to you and putting yourself first – something to be proud of.

And remember, if you have a tough day, where you feel your diabetes got the better of you, it's only one day. Tomorrow you can triumph, find ways to live well and treat it for what it is – a new day.

### HEALTHY REWARDS

It's natural to want to be rewarded for our achievements, and rewards can be helpful for staying motivated. It's important to choose healthy rewards for yourself, rather than take two steps forward and celebrate by taking one step back.

There are so many ways to reward yourself positively, all while achieving your goals. The most important thing is that you do something you enjoy. You might treat yourself by buying yourself that little something you've wanted for ages, or taking the time out to be treated with a massage.

Sharing your success with loved ones can be a reward in itself too, so planning a fun activity with your family or friends can give you something to look forward to and a reason to celebrate – with a healthy meal of course!

## DETERMINATION

We can all feel our determination wane. When those moments hit, remember why you decided to make a change. If you wrote down your goals when you started, look back on them. Remember how you felt then compared to how you feel now, and don't forget to acknowledge how far you've come.

Keeping a diary is a great way to track what might trigger you wanting to give up – it could be the same time of day, and a solution might be to plan a walk, chat or healthy snack at this time. Or it could be a certain part of your routine, and you can then think of inventive ways to combat that.

A diary can also help you see your progress. Some days it might feel harder than others, but reminding yourself what you achieved last week or last month can help you feel positive again, rather than stressed.

If using insulin, remember that stress can affect your blood sugar levels, so find activities that you enjoy that bring you calm, be it a run, yoga, reading a book or doing a crossword.

"The key to staying motivated to lose weight is similar to the fuel in a car— you don't need the motivation tank to be full to drive, you just need to prevent it from running empty. Most people see a drop in motivation as a signal of failure, but it's not."

Joshua C. Klapow, Ph.D., author of *Living SMART: 5 Essential Skills to Change Your Health Habits Forever*

## MOTIVATION TIPS

1

### Write down your goals

The more often you're reminded of what you're working towards, the more often you'll be reminded to take opportunities to make a change.

2

### Take one step at a time

Breaking down your goals into small steps you can take each day, week, or month, helps you build towards your long term goals.

3

### Keep a diary to track your progress

Keeping a record of the positive steps you made today can help you feel positive about doing the same again tomorrow. Likewise, making a note of how you overcame a challenge can help you do the same again should another challenge arise.

4

### Reward yourself positively

Don't forget to celebrate each time you achieve a goal – no matter how small.

5

### Share your challenges, and your successes.

Recruit your friends and family to be there when you need help getting through the tougher times, and be there to help you celebrate when you reach your goals.

Diabetes New Zealand is a leading national organisation and registered charity. Our aim is to support all people affected by diabetes to live well through: Providing information and support to help people take charge of their health • Acting as an advocate and representing all people with, or at risk of developing, diabetes • Raising awareness of diabetes, especially around lifestyle factors that can help prevent or delay type 2 and help manage and control type 1 and type 2.