

Mindful Self-Management Exercise: Self-Motivation

This exercise will help you and your adolescent learn how to build self-motivation by using positive self-talk to recover from a setback or obstacle.

- Each exercise takes 10 minutes or less.
- Familiarize yourself with the exercise before using with your adolescent.
- Use the script to guide the exercise. Adjust language as needed.
- All exercises begin with **Breath Awareness** followed by a **Mindfulness Activity** that teaches a practical mindfulness skill.
- Each exercise ends with **Reflecting Questions** to discuss with your adolescent. Invite your adolescent to stay in mindful silence until the Reflecting Questions.

Breath Awareness

Let's get into a mindful posture to focus on how to use self-talk to motivate ourselves when facing a difficult task or event. You may sit, stand, or lie down—whatever feels best today. If you choose a seated position, sit up straight and place your hands on your thighs. Close your eyes, if that feels comfortable, or gaze softly downward. I'll guide you and do this with you. Begin breathing slowly and deeply, in and out. (pause)

Place your hands on your belly. Notice the rise of the belly as you breath in through your nose (pause) and the fall of the belly as you breathe out through your mouth. Let's do this three more times. (pause)

Mindfulness Activity

Continue your rhythmic, mindful breathing. Think about a time when you were trying to do something and got so frustrated that you felt like you hit a wall and there was no way around it. (pause)

It might have been a complicated school assignment, not being able to perform well at an activity, or having difficulty communicating with a friend or family member. (pause)

You might have felt frustrated, disappointed, depressed, or angry. Notice what you are feeling and where in your body you are feeling this emotion. (pause)

When challenging feelings like these come up, it's really hard to keep trying. Getting angry won't be helpful. Blaming yourself or others just causes more difficult feelings. (pause)

When you catch yourself beating yourself up with negative self-talk, you can try to be a friend to yourself instead. Imagine saying something kind and encouraging to yourself such as, "It's okay. I'm just stuck right now, but I can figure this out." (pause)

Notice what that feels like. (pause)



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This kind of self-talk gives you time and permission to take a break from the situation so you can figure out what to do next. (pause)

Sense what being patient and showing compassion to yourself feels like in your body. (pause)

Maybe you need to get more information, practice the skill a few more times, ask for help, or try a whole new strategy. (pause)

Positive self-talk in challenging situations can give us the strength and creativity to find the best way to deal with the walls we face. (pause)

Think about the wall, not as an obstacle, but as a signal to pause, encourage ourselves, and consider another way to resolve the problem. (pause)

If your eyes are closed, open them.

If you are able, share the **Getting Over the Wall** handout.

Reflecting

Take this opportunity to have a conversation about your shared experience using the following reflecting questions:

Reflecting Questions

- What?** What did you notice about the feelings you felt when you imagined hitting a wall?
- So What?** Why do you think using positive self-talk might help you get past a wall in your life?
- Now What?** In what other situations might this strategy help you?



Lions Quest is a social and emotional learning program of Lions Clubs International Foundation.

Getting Over the Wall

