

BE STRONG

Eat. Move. Live

THE KNOWLEDGE

BUILDING SELF-AWARENESS FOR A BETTER YOU

This weeks focus: Increasing self-awareness to help us to achieve our goals and become a better version of ourselves.

Why is it important?: Self-awareness is the practice of truly understanding your own beliefs and values, moreover, the way you react to situations, your habits and behaviours. It is the cornerstone of developing good, healthy habits. Once you begin to develop greater self-awareness, you will begin to take control of your reactions and improve your chances of achieving your goals.

What will we tell you?: How you can become more self-aware and learn to respond to things in a way that is more aligned with your goals.

HOW TO DEVELOP GREATER SELF AWARENESS

- 1 Move more** - If we are more present in our feelings when we move our bodies, we become aware of how our body feels and how our emotions change when we move. This helps us to understand what movement we enjoy and which types of exercise help to resolve the mental and physical aches and pains we experience day to day, making us more likely to engage in it regularly.
- 2 Practice mindfulness** - Mindfulness requires you to acknowledge thoughts and feelings as they pass through your brain, but then let them go. You can start to do this by taking part in a mindfulness session, where you focus on your breath, acknowledge thoughts and feelings as they pass through your brain, then let them go as you refocus back on the breath. In time, with more practice you will do this naturally, in day to day life, allowing you to let go of negativity without taking you into a spiral of negative thoughts and behaviours.
- 3 Ask for feedback** - Ask people you trust for feedback on certain aspects of your life. Whether that's ideas for goals or plans, their view on your response to situations, or even feedback on how they see you. You will receive some gems of advice and also lots of esteem-boosting compliments about the strengths and abilities you didn't know you had.
- 4 Identify your emotional Kryptonite** – What is it that upsets you? What always gets you riled up and causes you to behave irrationally, then make a series of bad decisions when it comes to food, drink and exercise? Identifying these nuggets allows you to rethink your reactions, and devise a strategy for dealing with what upsets you or causes irrational behaviour.
- 5 Write down goals, plans and priorities** – This action doubles your chances of success. By writing something down, we turn it into something tangible. How many of us write notes on our hands, phones or diaries so that we don't forget things? Why not do it for our longer-term plans, goals and priorities too? Use your goal tracker and progress tracker for this, in your tracker dashboard.
- 6 Reflection and journaling** – This is a really valuable practice. It is often done in professional practice to help you identify areas for improvement and also to help you understand when you are doing well. Looking back at your performance over the previous week recognising what went well, and what can be improved upon and how, can be a very productive process. It's no coincidence that those who do this regularly and thoroughly have a great deal of success.

KEY MESSAGES

Increased self-awareness is powerful in lifestyle change. When you acknowledge and understand your thoughts, feelings and behaviours, particularly around food and exercise, you can address negative routines and habits, and develop strategies to allow you to have a more positive response to set backs, boost your motivation and improve your progress.