



## Motivus

The word motivation derives from the Latin *motivus*, a form of *movere*, which means "to move." The difference between being motivated and unmotivated, then, is whether or not the subject in question is moving. A classic example of an unmotivated person is the co-called couch potato, who sits or lies unmoving while watching seemingly endless hours of television. The remote-control is the only thing that moves !

Generally, motivation is described as goal-oriented behaviour. The vast literature on the subject of motivation revolves around two aspects of goals: how an individual rates his or her chances of attaining a goal successfully and how he or she rates the value of the goal itself. The problem with motivation comes when individuals who have a good chance of success choose not to pursue a highly valued goal.

For most of us, when life is going well - whatever that means to us individually - we are motivated. It is adversity that knocks us down. The motivated get back up and get on with life. The less motivated tend to become resigned to their fate and to accept what life hands them. You have heard the expression "when the good gets going, the tough get going". I think that statement refers to motivation.

"Motivation is the study of the intrapersonal processes which direct, activate and maintain behaviour: (Green, Beatty and Arkin 1984 p 3)

If motivation is action, then the study of motivation is the study of why some people act while others don't. Biologically, the definition of inaction is death; those who are alive not active might best be described as burned out. What is burnout: Most simply, it is the result of unrelieved stress; it can be reached through one or two routes; more intense, shorter-term stress or less intense, longer-term stress (Golembiewski, 1988)

What is stress ? Jeffrey Gray defines stress, along with fear and anxiety, as one of the emotions. An emotion is a reaction to an actual, expected, missing or removed reinforcing event (a reward or a punisher). Fear is a form of emotion associated with the desire to terminate, escape from, or avoid a dangerous event, which might external or internal. Anxiety differs from fear in that fear deals with actual or threatened dangers, where anxiety deals with imagined or unreal dangers. As stress deals with both fear and anxiety stress may be defined as the emotion that results

from the desire to terminate, escape from, or avoid a real or imagined, current or imminent, negative stressors.

Golembiewski in a sample of ten thousand people where burnout was defined as the result of prolonged stress and therefore the ultimate state of demotivation occurs. *To read more on this topic please refer to The Owners Manual for the Brain by Pierce J. Howard Ph.D.*