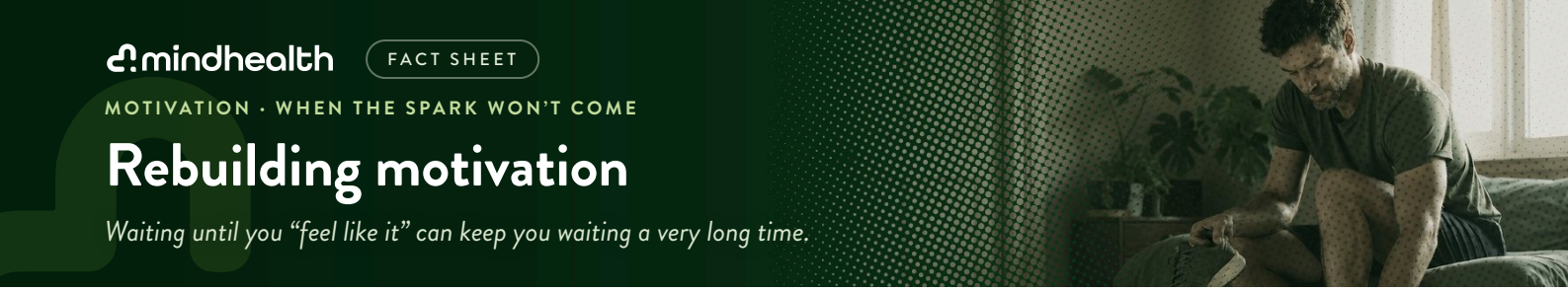
mindhealth FACT SHEET

MOTIVATION · WHEN THE SPARK WON'T COME

Rebuilding motivation

Waiting until you "feel like it" can keep you waiting a very long time.



Flat & stuck
Everything feels effortful

Waiting to feel ready
The spark never quite arrives

The first step
Where the change begins

01 Motivation follows action

We're often told to wait until we feel motivated, but with low mood, burnout and overwhelm, that spark rarely comes first. It usually works the other way around: action comes first, and motivation follows once we've started. Waiting to "feel like it" keeps us stuck, and the longer we wait, the harder starting feels.

02 Small beats big

When energy is low, big goals backfire: they feel impossible, so we don't start, and feel worse. The trick is to shrink the first step until it's almost too small to refuse: two minutes, one email, shoes on. Starting is the hard part; momentum tends to build once you're moving. Add a small, genuine reward and it compounds.

03 What genuinely helps

- ✓ Acting first: motivation tends to follow
- ✓ Shrinking the first step until it feels easy
- ✓ Scheduling it, rather than waiting to feel ready
- ✓ Pairing a task with a small reward
- ✓ Ruling out burnout or depression underneath

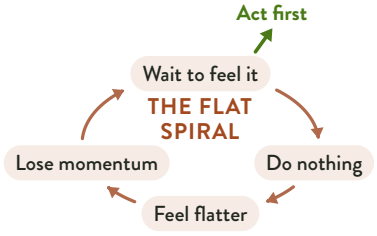
A PRACTICAL STORY

From waiting to feel ready to one small start



THE PATTERN

Act, then feel



Waiting for motivation keeps you stuck and flatter. A tiny first action starts the engine.

PRACTICAL TOOLKIT

Start tiny

1. Pick a step so small it feels silly
2. Do just that: nothing more required
3. Let momentum decide the rest

You don't have to feel ready to begin.

WHEN TO SEEK HELP

If flatness or lost motivation has lingered for weeks, it can be a sign of burnout or depression. Ask your GP about a Mental Health Treatment Plan to see a psychologist.

DID YOU KNOW?

Behavioural activation, which starts with doing rather than waiting to feel like it, grew from Peter Lewinsohn's research on depression in the 1970s.

Lewinsohn, 1974

THE KEY TAKEAWAY

You don't have to feel motivated to start. Start, and motivation often catches up.

Need support right now? Lifeline **13 11 14** · Emergency **000** — available 24/7. More options: **mindhealth.com.au/urgent-help**

TALK TO US WHEN YOU'RE READY

Parramatta and online, Australia-wide · **Book at mindhealth.com.au**

1300 084 200

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