



# WHAT DRIVES YOUR **MOTIVATION** TO BE ACTIVE?

What motivates you to be physically active? Are you competitive? Curious? Are you driven by a desire to be healthy? Do you seek out challenges, validation or feedback?

Whether motivated by money, fear, guilt, personal values or pleasure, our reasons can have a profound influence on our mindset, choices and behaviors. Many fire fighters are aware of the benefits of exercise but are not sufficiently motivated by the prospect of preventing injury and chronic disease. Instead, these same individuals may respond more favorably to factors such as guilt from a loved one, competition with friends, or the sense of relatedness that comes from group environments.

Ultimately, the design and implementation of any exercise-related intervention for fire fighters should accommodate the diversity in members' motivation to ensure a successful outcome. What we are motivated by may be more important than how much we are motivated.

Strategies to support fire fighters with varying motivational states include:

## **Motivated Primarily by Rewards and Guilt**

- Turn it into a game. Provide incentives to initiate activity by creating a contest or game (e.g., step count, Pokémon go).
- Vary the type of activities. Integrate activities that are viewed as more meaningful, simpler, etc.

## **Motivated Primarily by Personal Value**

- Create daily or weekly challenges. Provide opportunity to compete against peers or self.
- Establish a new health or fitness goal. Target something specific such as mobility, awareness, aerobic capacity, etc.

## **Motivated Primarily by Pleasure**

- Build opportunities for social interaction. Support a sense of relatedness by providing opportunity to interact with others.
- Create opportunities to explore. Support a sense of autonomy by using new activities and challenges to engage, excite and empower.