

10 tips

to get motivated to practice at home

Recovering from brain injury like stroke or TBI? Then you know the importance of consistent home practice to promote neuroplasticity to heal your brain. Understanding what motivates us to keep up a home practice habit can be the key to **improved recovery outcomes.**

1

USE A PLANNER

Why it works: A weekly plan helps you think critically about what day, time and duration you have to practice, and makes you more likely to stick to it.

2

SET REALISTIC GOALS

Why it works: Using SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) goals help focus your efforts and use your time more productively.

3

BUILD ACCOUNTABILITY

Why it works: Create accountability by telling a friend or loved one when you plan to practice, and letting them know when you've finished.

4

UNDERSTAND WHY YOU ARE PRACTICING

Why it works: Connecting therapy homework to your treatment goals can help you understand why it's so important. Ask your clinician for help, and consider writing your own rationale in a notebook.

5

LINK NEW HABITS TO OLD ONES

Why it works: Linking a new habit—like homework — with an old one, makes you more likely to do it. For example, schedule homework with your morning cup of coffee, or after you eat dinner.

6

MEASURE YOUR PROGRESS

Why it works: Measuring progress helps you compare performance over time. Use your planner, a notebook, or a performance measurement app.

7

BUILD IN REWARDS

Why it works: Rewards make us more likely to do tasks we don't like. Find a fun activity you can enjoy when finished with homework, like watching TV or taking a walk.

8

IDENTIFY YOUR BEST ENVIRONMENT

Why it works: Find what works for you: are you motivated surrounded by people in libraries or coffee shops? Or are you more motivated alone at home?

9

MODIFY HOMEWORK

Why it works: You're more likely to try a practice activity if you know it can be modified if you don't like it. Try it 2 or 3 times, and if it's not working, change it.

10

USE A TIMER

Why it works: A timer helps check motivation. Start with 10 minutes, for example, and if you've lost motivation, stop; but if you're still motivated, keep going.

