

No Sweat: How the Simple Science of Motivation Can Bring You a Lifetime of Fitness

Michelle Segar

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The definition of exercise gets a welcome overhaul in this inspiring guide to self-care and self-love.

To say that *No Sweat* is about exercise isn't quite right. Yet to say it's a motivational self-help book isn't quite right either. As Michelle Segar, PhD, compassionately illustrates, the two are intertwined, and her book gives an individualized plan for reflection, physical activity, and, ultimately, self-love.

No Sweat centers around the "science of motivation"—what motivates an individual, what that means for one's health, and, most importantly, how one's relationship to the self is essential to well-being. Segar bids the reader to reflect on extrinsic motivators—cultural and societal pressures and ideals about lifestyles and body image—as opposed to the intrinsic: doing what is pleasurable. She shows that an intrinsic motivation will inevitably be more durable. Her idea is to replace the punishment of impossibly regimented workouts with flexible definitions of "exercise" that work with each individual's preferences, lifestyle, and needs. She makes the case for a forgiving yet effective mind-set change that inspires not just a healthy relationship to exercise (or, as Segar prefers to call it, movement) but also self-love.

Segar's client, Sandy—who wants to lose weight and keep it off—cannot stick to a gym routine. She becomes bored after a few weeks of using the elliptical trainer. Segar asks her to try something else, and Sandy says she likes to walk outside, but quickly dismisses that as "not count[ing] as exercise," revealing long-held assumptions of many about what fitness "should" look like. Segar asks, why can't two minutes of movement count as exercise? Or dancing to your favorite song?

Segar frames the participatory activities carefully, gently edging readers to, for example, write out all the beliefs and expectations that have been "undermining your motivation," and then to rip up the paper to reclaim power over the mind and body. Yet she says to skip the exercise for now, or keep the paper as a reminder if desired, saying, "Do what feels right for you."

No Sweat excels as a book that genuinely inspires self-care and self-love.

PAIGE VAN DE WINKLE (Fall 2015)

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