

The MotivAider

What is it?

Want to study better? Drink more water? Sit up straight? Stop snacking? Think positively? Smile more? The MotivAider is one of the simplest, most powerful, behavior-change thing-a-ma-doodles on the market today. It is small device worn on your belt, or carried in a pocket that quite simply reminds you to do what you have set your mind to.

Why does it work?

You may have a nagging bad habit that you have wanted to change for some time. Unfortunately, when most people recognize a bad habit that they want to change, they make a mental commitment to do so, but take little or no action to follow through. Our habits are so ingrained in our way of doing things that our brains “shut-off” any new way of thinking or behaving that does not match what we are used to. Even though we are *motivated* to change and may even *desperately want* to change, it is difficult for us to focus our efforts on actually changing. Maybe it’s not a bad habit that you want to change. Maybe you just want to create a new habit to be a better student or worker, or be more physically or psychologically healthy. Our own minds aren’t going to cue us to change our habits, but the MotivAider will.

How does it work?

The MotivAider is set to emit small, pulsing signals at certain intervals that you set (from every minute to once a day). Each time you feel the pulse, you are going to use the Focusing Protocol. The Focusing Protocol involves a word or image that you pair with a behavior that you want to change. For example, let’s say you want to de-stress. There are lots of different exercises you could practice in order to destress. You could practice deep breathing exercises, remind yourself to stop worrying about the small stuff, or write down three positive thoughts each day. All of these strategies can work as long as you make it a habit to practice them. Let’s say you want to use the Focusing Protocol to release muscle tension. You might pair the word “RELAX” with the behavior of loosening the muscles in your shoulders and neck. When the MotivAider silently signals you with its pulse, you stop whatever you are doing for just a moment, think the word “RELAX” and shake loose the muscles in your shoulders and neck. Repeating the word is an especially important part of the Focusing Protocol, as it activates that part of your mind that is intent on changing. That’s all there is to it!



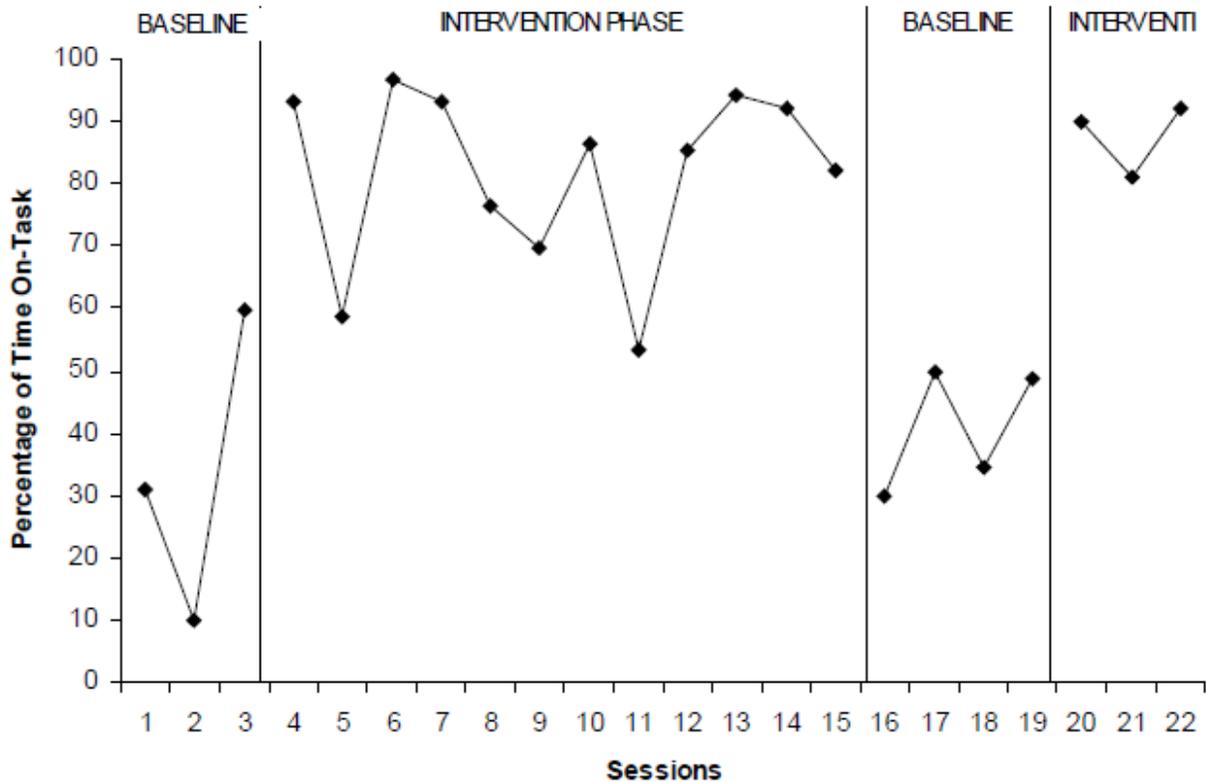
Your old habit won’t disappear immediately, but over time your new habit will surely catch on. The pulse is so quiet, no one will even know you are using it. The best part about it is that as you become used to developing your new habit, you will engage in the new behavior even when you aren’t using the MotivAider! For example, you will start to cue yourself to “RELAX” and shake loose your muscle tension on your own. That’s when you know your habits are truly changing.

Resources:

- If you search online for the MotivAider, you will find it for sale on a number different websites. The website to visit that has the lowest price is www.motiv-aider.com. On this site, the price is \$44.95 and the shipping is included.
- A free e-book that gives you more in-depth information on how to effectively use the MotivAider can be downloaded at www.habitchange.com under the Resources/Support tab.
- Please email Dr. Jonathan Thomas-Stagg at jstagg@illinois.edu if you have any questions!

Change that habit!

The best way to change your academic habits for long-term success is to invest time and energy into practicing strategies like using the MotivAider. It may not work great right away, but the effort you put in to practicing better academic habits is directly proportional to the success you will experience. Coaching at DRES can help you change your habits. To start coaching, please contact Dr. Jonathan Thomas-Stagg at jstagg@illinois.edu. Thanks!



Above is a graph from a study involving the MotivAider (Jellison, 2009). Participants in the study included four 9th grade students in a self-contained (i.e., special education) World History class. Each student was diagnosed with an Emotional Disturbance and chosen for the study because they exhibit high levels of off-task and disruptive behavior in the classroom. As you can see during “baseline” sessions (when the Motivaider was not in use), students’ percentage of time on-task was typically at 50% or below. During the intervention sessions, on-task behavior was highly improved, and similar to what is typically seen in regular education classrooms. This data demonstrates that even with students with severe emotional/behavioral difficulties, the MotivAider can improve your academic habits!

“Continuing to do things the old way is easy. Doing things the new requires making new habits. The problem is, despite the awesome capabilities of the human mind, no mechanism exists within it for reliably focusing attention on making changes. So no matter how motivated you are, if you are not constantly reminded to do things the new way, you’ll often continue to do them the old way.”

- www.motiv-aider.com

Source: Jellison, M.A. (2009). *The effects of the MotivAider on increasing the on-task behavior of students who have been diagnosed with severe emotional disturbances*. Unpublished manuscript.