

## Can motivational speeches pump up your gym performance?

Level 1: Elementary / Pre-Intermediate

### 1 Warmer

a. Match the words with the pictures.

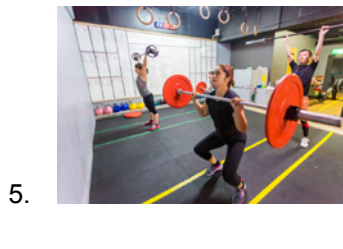
barbell

bench press

dumbbell

kettlebell

medicine ball



### 2 Key words

a. Fill the gaps in the sentences using these key words from the text.

dominate

genre

motivational

strict

underdog

1. Listening to a \_\_\_\_\_ song can improve your mood and boost your productivity.
2. A \_\_\_\_\_ person has definite rules that people must follow.
3. An \_\_\_\_\_ is someone that no one expects to win because they are not as good as others.
4. If you \_\_\_\_\_ others, you control and do better than them.
5. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a style of music, film, or other media.

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antisocial

burnout

isolation

lone wolf

tough love

6. An \_\_\_\_\_ person is not interested in meeting new people.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ is being away from other people.
8. A \_\_\_\_\_ is someone who enjoys being alone and doing things alone.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ is a strict but kind way of dealing with someone who has a problem.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ is when you have no mental or physical energy because of doing an activity too much.

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**Jenny Valentish**

**14 January, 2024**

- 1 Weightlifters were the first sports people to use motivational speeches as they bench-pressed, but they have since become common. You can find a lot of these speeches in online playlists so that you can listen at the gym or, if you're feeling tired, watch on your laptop. Dramatic music usually accompanies the voices.
- 2 When it comes to motivation, I need encouragement – if someone says “great job”, that makes me feel good, but I also need a strict teacher. I usually take my workouts seriously (I do Thai boxing and bodybuilding), so I've been listening to tracks from Australian company Fearless Motivation
- 3 Fearless Motivation started in 2015. Back then, Arnold Schwarzenegger was a popular choice. Now, big players have millions of subscribers, while Fearless Motivation says its tracks have 500 million listens on Spotify.
- 4 The basic idea is always: you're the underdog. Nobody knows how much you've suffered. Nobody cares, either. So now you need to dominate.
- 5 My friend Eilish, a kettlebell sport athlete, loved this genre a few years ago. She stopped listening after deciding these speeches were making her antisocial. “It created an even stronger sense of isolation. It makes you think, ‘You're not the average person. You are stronger and more powerful.’
- 6 “I think I liked it at first because I felt like a lone wolf. It gives you the freedom to be by yourself and different from everybody else.”
- 7 I find a track by Tom Bilyeu. He's the founder of a motivational media company. The better tracks get louder and louder, like Eminem's classic song Lose Yourself. However, when Bilyeu tells me that I can't be in a successful relationship if I haven't read books on the differences between men and women, that seems to have nothing to do with moving up to a heavier kettlebell weight.
- 8 These speeches offer tough love, but following their advice completely would probably lead to burnout or injury. But I find my perfect balance with The Wolf King Speech. It's a 20-minute male/female double-header that spends less time trying to guess my life story and more on telling me I'm just like other people.
- 9 Just like these speeches, kettlebell workouts are all about movement, so I decide to do as many swings as possible before I finish. I just hope nobody wants to get past me to the dumbbells any time soon.

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### 3 Comprehension check

a. Answer these questions about the text.

1. Who were the first sports people to use motivational speeches?
2. What kind of music can you often hear during motivational speeches?
3. How does the author feel if someone says "great job"?
4. Why did Eilish stop listening to motivational speeches?
5. According to Eilish, what does this genre make you think?
6. What would probably happen if you followed the advice of motivational speeches completely?
7. What is the author's "perfect balance"?
8. How does the author finish this workout in the gym?

### 4 Key language

a. Match the adjectives in the left column with the nouns in the right column to make collocations from the text.

- |                 |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| 1. motivational | a. music   |
| 2. perfect      | b. teacher |
| 3. dramatic     | c. person  |
| 4. strict       | d. speech  |
| 5. average      | e. balance |

b. Use the phrases on task A to complete the sentences below.

1. It isn't easy to find the \_\_\_\_\_ between work and personal life.
2. The \_\_\_\_\_ uses their phone about 10 hours a day, according to a study.
3. The athlete made extra money giving a \_\_\_\_\_ to the sales team of a major company.
4. When I was in high school, I had a very \_\_\_\_\_ who taught mathematics. Everyone feared him!
5. The movie was terrible. It was a comedy, but \_\_\_\_\_ played in the most inappropriate moments.

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### 5 Discussion

a. Discuss these questions with a partner.

- Do you listen to music, the radio, podcasts, etc., when working, studying, or exercising? Why (not)?
- What do you do to concentrate better while studying, working, or exercising?

### 6 In your own words

a. Use a search engine to find more information about motivation and find different ways people can motivate themselves. Choose one of these activities and collect some information about it. Report your findings to the class.