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## Intention

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### Definition

Intention strength can be defined as the quantity of personal resources that an individual is prepared to invest in executing a behavior. Intention strength is closely akin to the concept of “motivation,” with high levels of intention strength understood to represent strong motivation to perform a behavior. Intentions play a prominent role in several theories of health behavior, including the *theory of reasoned action* (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975), the *theory of planned behavior* (Ajzen and Madden 1986), the *health action process approach* (Schwarzer 2001), and the *temporal self-regulation theory* (Hall and Fong 2007). From an empirical perspective, intentions are among the strongest predictors of health behavior performance. However, a number of factors are known to moderate intention-behavior relations, including perceived/actual controllability of the

behavior, as well as habit strength (Webb and Sheeran 2006).

### Cross-References

- ▶ [Cognitive Mediators](#)
- ▶ [Theory of Planned Behavior](#)
- ▶ [Theory of Reasoned Action](#)

### References and Further Readings

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- Schwarzer, R. (2001). Social-cognitive factors in changing health-related behaviors. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 10, 47–51.
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