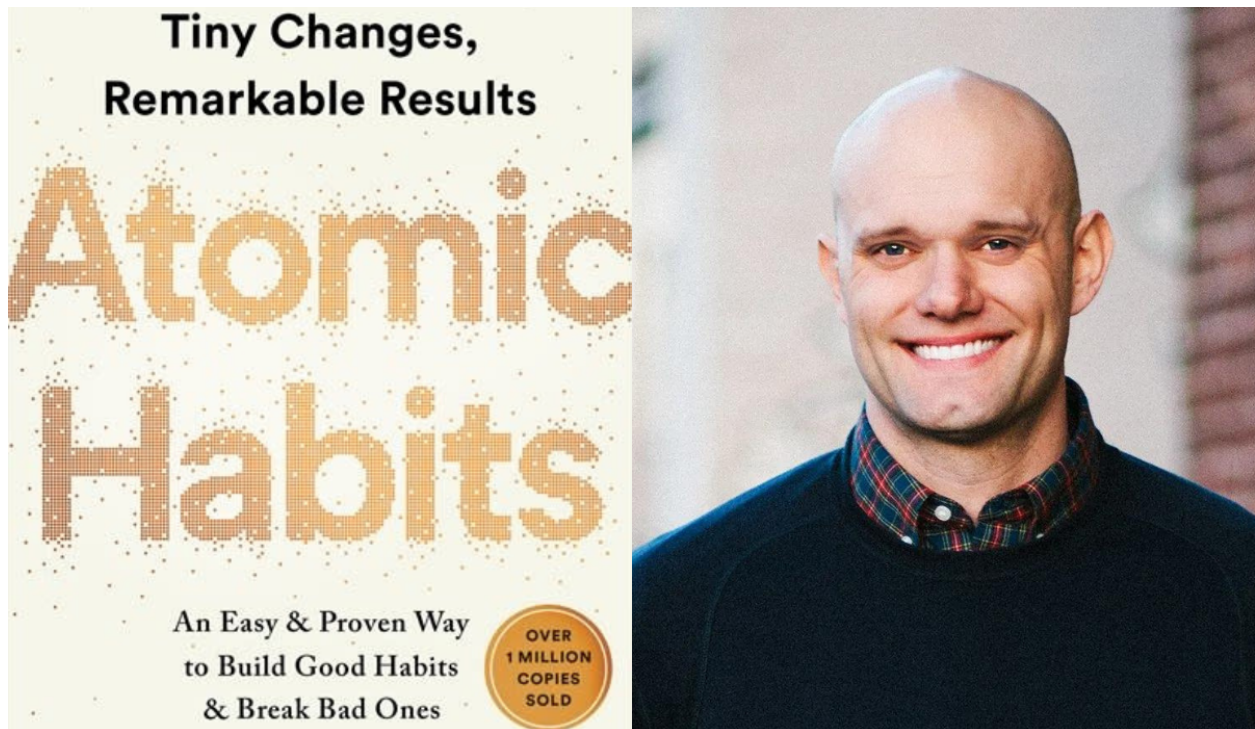


BOOK NOTES: Atomic Habits

[Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones: Clear, James: 9780735211292: Amazon.com: Books](#)



Announcement:

New virtual LeanBook.Club starting December 20th!

Book: [Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones: Clear, James: 9780735211292: Amazon.com: Books](#)

When: Starting December 20, 2023, weekly on Wednesdays from Noon to 1 PM Eastern for nine weeks.

Sign-Up: Sign-up at www.leanbook.club. I am limiting this to 15 participants. Microsoft Teams invitations will be sent to participants.

Next Steps: Sign up, order your book*, and read the first week's assignments on

*I certify that I have NO affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this book or with the author. [#lean](#) [#bookclub](#) [#networking](#)

Agenda

- Week 1, 12/20/23, Introduction The Fundamental (Chapters 1-3)
- Week 2, 12/27/23, Bye-Week
- Week 3, 1/3/24, The 1st Law (Chapters 4-7)
- Week 4, 1/10/24, The 2nd Law (Chapters 8-10)
- Week 5, 1/17/24, The 3rd Law (Chapters 11-14)
- Week 6, 1/24/24, The 4th Law (Chapters 15-17)
- Week 7, 1/31/24 Advanced Tactics (Chapters 18-20)
- Week 8, 2/7/24, Author Q&A (TBD)
- Week 9, 2/14/24, Lean Book Club Live at [SHS Conference](#)

Book Notes: [BOOK NOTES: A Colony Drive](#)
[Hartsdale, NY](#)
[10530 Atomic Habits](#)

Topic Submission:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdhSAILrgOXZJhQAEGrUmhhGDP_q5xKdNYphLI6QL_lfpO-dq/viewform?usp=sf_link

Amazon Book Order and Review: [Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones: Clear, James: 9780735211292: Amazon.com: Books](#)

Author's Website: [Atomic Habits: Tiny Changes, Remarkable Results by James Clear](#)

Author:

James Clear is a writer and speaker focused on habits, decision making, and continuous improvement. He is the author of the #1 New York Times bestseller, Atomic Habits. The book has sold over 5 million copies worldwide and has been translated into more than 50 languages. Clear is a regular speaker at Fortune 500 companies and his work has been featured in places like Time magazine, the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal and on CBS This Morning. His popular "3-2-1" email newsletter is sent out each week to more than 1 million subscribers.

Notes:

- Week 1, 12/20/23, Introduction The Fundamental (Chapters 1-3)

- a. Introduction: My Story

- i. I knew that if things were going to improve, I was the one responsible for making it happen.
 - ii. the surprising power of small habits
 - iii. A habit is a routine or behavior that is performed regularly—and, in many cases, automatically. As each semester passed, I accumulated small but consistent habits that ultimately led to results that were unimaginable to me when I started.
 - iv. changes that seem small and unimportant at first will compound into remarkable results if you're willing to stick with them for years.
 - v. Behavioral scientists like Skinner realized that if you offered the right reward or punishment, you could get people to act in a certain way. But while Skinner's model did an excellent job of explaining how external stimuli influenced our habits, it lacked a good explanation for how our thoughts, feelings, and beliefs impact our behavior. Internal states—our moods and emotions—matter, too. In recent decades, scientists have begun to determine the connection between our thoughts, feelings, and behavior. This research will also be covered in these pages.
 - vi. Human behavior is always changing: situation to situation, moment to moment, second to second. But this book is about what doesn't change. It's about the fundamentals of human behavior. The lasting principles you can rely on year after year.

- b. THE FUNDAMENTALS: Why Tiny Changes Make a Big Difference

- c. **Chapter 1: relentless commitment to a strategy** that he referred to as “the aggregation of marginal gains,” which was the philosophy of searching for a tiny margin of improvement in everything you do.

- i. Why do small improvements accumulate into such remarkable results, and how can you replicate this approach in your own life?
 - ii. WHY SMALL HABITS MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE It is so easy to overestimate the importance of one defining moment and underestimate the value of making small improvements on a daily basis. Too often, we convince ourselves that massive success requires massive action.

- iii. Meanwhile, improving by 1 percent isn't particularly notable—sometimes it isn't even noticeable—but it can be far more meaningful, especially in the long run. The difference a tiny improvement can make over time is astounding.
- iv. 1% BETTER EVERY DAY 1% worse every day for one year. $0.99365 = 00.03$ 1% better every day for one year. $1.01365 = 37.78$
- v. Habits are the compound interest of self-improvement. The same way that money multiplies through compound interest, the effects of your habits multiply as you repeat them. They seem to make little difference on any given day and yet the impact they deliver over the months and years can be enormous. It is only when looking back two, five, or perhaps ten years later that the value of good habits and the cost of bad ones becomes strikingly apparent.
- vi. Similarly, a slight change in your daily habits can guide your life to a very different destination. Making a choice that is 1 percent better or 1 percent worse seems insignificant in the moment, but over the span of moments that make up a lifetime these choices determine the difference between who you are and who you could be. Success is the product of daily habits—not once-in-a-lifetime transformations.
- vii. it doesn't matter how successful or unsuccessful you are right now. What matters is whether your habits are putting you on the path toward success. You should be far more concerned with your current trajectory than with your current results.
- viii. Your outcomes are a lagging measure of your habits. Your net worth is a lagging measure of your financial habits. Your weight is a lagging measure of your eating habits. Your knowledge is a lagging measure of your learning habits. Your clutter is a lagging measure of your cleaning habits. You get what you repeat.
- ix. Time magnifies the margin between success and failure. It will multiply whatever you feed it. Good habits make time your ally. Bad habits make time your enemy.
- x. Habits are a double-edged sword. Bad habits can cut you down just as easily as good habits can build you up, which is why understanding the details is crucial.
- xi. Positive Compounding Productivity compounds. Accomplishing one extra task is a small feat on any given day, but it counts for a lot over an entire career. The effect of automating an old task or mastering a new skill can be even greater. The more tasks you can handle without thinking, the more your brain is free to focus on other areas. Knowledge compounds. Learning one new idea won't make you a genius, but a commitment to lifelong learning can be transformative. Furthermore, each book you read not only teaches you something new but also opens up different ways of thinking about old ideas. As Warren Buffett says, "That's how knowledge

works. It builds up, like compound interest.” Relationships compound. People reflect your behavior back to you. The more you help others, the more others want to help you. Being a little bit nicer in each interaction can result in a network of broad and strong connections over time. Negative Compounding Stress compounds. The frustration of a traffic jam. The weight of parenting responsibilities. The worry of making ends meet. The strain of slightly high blood pressure. By themselves, these common causes of stress are manageable. But when they persist for years, little stresses compound into serious health issues. Negative thoughts compound. The more you think of yourself as worthless, stupid, or ugly, the more you condition yourself to interpret life that way. You get trapped in a thought loop. The same is true for how you think about others. Once you fall into the habit of seeing people as angry, unjust, or selfish, you see those kind of people everywhere. Outrage compounds. Riots, protests, and mass movements are rarely the result of a single event. Instead, a long series of microaggressions and daily aggravations slowly multiply until one event tips the scales and outrage spreads like wildfire.

- xii. It's a hallmark of any compounding process: the most powerful outcomes are delayed.
- xiii. But in order to make a meaningful difference, habits need to persist long enough to break through this plateau—what I call the Plateau of Latent Potential.
- xiv. When you finally break through the Plateau of Latent Potential, people will call it an overnight success. The outside world only sees the most dramatic event rather than all that preceded it. But you know that it's the work you did long ago—when it seemed that you weren't making any progress—that makes the jump today possible.
- xv. THE PLATEAU OF LATENT POTENTIAL
- xvi. FORGET ABOUT GOALS, FOCUS ON SYSTEMS INSTEAD
- xvii. Eventually, I began to realize that my results had very little to do with the goals I set and nearly everything to do with the systems I followed.
- xviii. What's the difference between systems and goals? It's a distinction I first learned from Scott Adams, the cartoonist behind the Dilbert comic. Goals are about the results you want to achieve. Systems are about the processes that lead to those results.
- xix. Are goals completely useless? Of course not. Goals are good for setting a direction, but systems are best for making progress. A handful of problems arise when you spend too much time thinking about your goals and not enough time designing your systems.
- xx. Problem #1: Winners and losers have the same goals.

- xxi. The goal had always been there. It was only when they implemented a system of continuous small improvements that they achieved a different outcome.
- xxii. Problem #2: Achieving a goal is only a momentary change.
- xxiii. Achieving a goal only changes your life for the moment. That's the counterintuitive thing about improvement.
- xxiv. In order to improve for good, you need to solve problems at the systems level. Fix the inputs and the outputs will fix themselves.
- xxv. Problem #3: Goals restrict your happiness.
- xxvi. The implicit assumption behind any goal is this: "Once I reach my goal, then I'll be happy."
- xxvii. Problem #4: Goals are at odds with long-term progress.
- xxviii. The purpose of setting goals is to win the game. The purpose of building systems is to continue playing the game. True long-term thinking is goal-less thinking. It's not about any single accomplishment. It is about the cycle of endless refinement and continuous improvement. Ultimately, it is your commitment to the process that will determine your progress.
- xxix. If you're having trouble changing your habits, the problem isn't you. The problem is your system. Bad habits repeat themselves again and again not because you don't want to change, but because you have the wrong system for change.
- xxx. You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems.
- xxxi. Chapter Summary Habits are the compound interest of self-improvement. Getting 1 percent better every day counts for a lot in the long-run. Habits are a double-edged sword. They can work for you or against you, which is why understanding the details is essential. Small changes often appear to make no difference until you cross a critical threshold. The most powerful outcomes of any compounding process are delayed. You need to be patient. An atomic habit is a little habit that is part of a larger system. Just as atoms are the building blocks of molecules, atomic habits are the building blocks of remarkable results. If you want better results, then forget about setting goals. Focus on your system instead. You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems.

d. Chapter 2 How Your Habits Shape Your Identity (and Vice Versa)

- i. Changing our habits is challenging for two reasons: (1) we try to change the wrong thing and (2) we try to change our habits in the wrong way.
- ii. Our first mistake is that we try to change the wrong thing. To understand what I mean, consider that there are three levels at which change can occur.
- iii. THREE LAYERS OF BEHAVIOR CHANGE

- iv. The first layer is changing your outcomes. This level is concerned with changing your results: losing weight, publishing a book, winning a championship. Most of the goals you set are associated with this level of change.
- v. The second layer is changing your process. This level is concerned with changing your habits and systems: implementing a new routine at the gym, decluttering your desk for better workflow,
- vi. developing a meditation practice. Most of the habits you build are associated with this level.
- vii. The third and deepest layer is changing your identity. This level is concerned with changing your beliefs: your worldview, your self-image, your judgments about yourself and others. Most of the beliefs, assumptions, and biases you hold are associated with this level.
- viii. Outcomes are about what you get. Processes are about what you do. Identity is about what you believe.
- ix. Many people begin the process of changing their habits by focusing on what they want to achieve. This leads us to outcome-based habits. The alternative is to build identity-based habits. With this approach, we start by focusing on who we wish to become.
- x. The ultimate form of intrinsic motivation is when a habit becomes part of your identity. It's one thing to say I'm the type of person who wants this. It's something very different to say I'm the type of person who is this.
- xi. The goal is not to run a marathon, the goal is to become a runner.
- xii. When you have repeated a story to yourself for years, it is easy to slide into these mental grooves and accept them as a fact. In time, you begin to resist certain actions because "that's not who I am." There is internal pressure to maintain your self-image and behave in a way that is consistent with your beliefs. You find whatever way you can to avoid contradicting yourself.
- xiii. THE TWO-STEP PROCESS TO CHANGING YOUR IDENTITY Your identity emerges out of your habits. You are not born with preset beliefs. Every belief, including those about yourself, is learned and conditioned through experience.*
- xiv. Every action you take is a vote for the type of person you wish to become. No single instance will transform your beliefs, but as the votes build up, so does the evidence of your new identity. This is one reason why meaningful change does not require radical change. Small habits can make a meaningful difference by providing evidence of a new identity.
- xv. The most practical way to change who you are is to change what you do.
- xvi. Each habit not only gets results but also teaches you something far more important: to trust yourself. You start to believe you can actually accomplish these things.

- xvii. Decide the type of person you want to be. Prove it to yourself with small wins.
- xviii. The concept of identity-based habits is our first introduction to another key theme in this book: feedback loops. Your habits shape your identity, and your identity shapes your habits. It's a two-waystreet.
- xix. You need to know who you want to be. Otherwise, your quest for change is like a boat without a rudder. And that's why we are starting here.
- xx. Ultimately, your habits matter because they help you become the type of person you wish to be. They are the channel through
- xxi. which you develop your deepest beliefs about yourself. Quite literally, you become your habits.
- xxii. Chapter Summary **There are three levels of change: outcome change, process change, and identity change.** The most effective way to change your habits is to focus not on what you want to achieve, but on who you wish to become. Your identity emerges out of your habits. Every action is a vote for the type of person you wish to become. Becoming the best version of yourself requires you to continuously edit your beliefs, and to upgrade and expand your identity. The real reason habits matter is not because they can get you better results (although they can do that), but because they can change your beliefs about yourself.

e. Chapter 3 How to Build Better Habits in 4 Simple Steps

- i. Thorndike described the learning process by stating, "behaviors followed by satisfying consequences tend to be repeated and those that produce unpleasant consequences are less likely to be repeated."
- ii. WHY YOUR BRAIN BUILDS HABITS
- iii. A habit is a behavior that has been repeated enough times to become automatic.
- iv. As habits are created, the level of activity in the brain decreases. You learn to lock in on the cues that predict success and tune out everything else. When a similar situation arises in the future, you know exactly what to look for. There is no longer a need to analyze every angle of a situation. Your brain skips the process of trial and error and creates a mental rule: if this, then that. These cognitive scripts can be followed automatically whenever the situation is appropriate.
- v. Habits are mental shortcuts learned from experience. In a sense, a habit is just a memory of the steps you previously followed to solve a problem in the past.
- vi. The primary reason the brain remembers the past is to better predict what will work in the future.
- vii. Habit formation is incredibly useful because the conscious mind is the bottleneck of the brain. It can only pay attention to one problem at a time. As a result, your brain is always working to preserve your conscious

attention for whatever task is most essential. Whenever possible, the conscious mind likes to pawn off tasks to the nonconscious mind to do automatically. This is precisely what happens when a habit is formed. Habits reduce cognitive load and free up mental capacity, so you can allocate your attention to other tasks.

- viii. Conversely, when you have your habits dialed in and the basics of life are handled and done, your mind is free to focus on new challenges and master the next set of problems. Building habits in the present allows you to do more of what you want in the future.
- ix. THE SCIENCE OF HOW HABITS WORK The process of building a habit can be divided into four simple steps: cue, craving, response, and reward.*
- x. FIGURE 5: All habits proceed through four stages in the same order: cue, craving, response, and reward.
- xi. First, there is the cue. The cue triggers your brain to initiate a behavior. It is a bit of information that predicts a reward.
- xii. Cravings are the second step, and they are the motivational force behind every habit. Without some level of motivation or desire—without craving a change—we have no reason to act.
- xiii. The third step is the response. The response is the actual habit you perform, which can take the form of a thought or an action. Whether a response occurs depends on how motivated you are and how much friction is associated with the behavior.
- xiv. Finally, the response delivers a reward. Rewards are the end goal of every habit. The cue is about noticing the reward. The craving is about wanting the reward.
- xv. Second, rewards teach us which actions are worth remembering in the future. Your brain is a reward detector. As you go about your life, your sensory nervous system is continuously monitoring which actions satisfy your desires and deliver pleasure.
- xvi. a behavior is insufficient in any of the four stages, it will not become a habit.
- xvii. THE HABIT LOOP The four stages of habit are best described as a feedback loop. They form an endless cycle that is running every moment you are alive. This “habit loop” is continually scanning the environment, predicting what will happen next, trying out different responses, and learning from the results.*
- xviii. Problem phase 1. Cue 2. Craving Solution phase 3. Response 4. Reward
- xix. Problem phase 1. Cue: Your phone buzzes with a new text message. 2. Craving: You want to learn the contents of the message. Solution phase 3. Response: You grab your phone and read the text. 4. Reward: You satisfy your craving to read the message. Grabbing your phone becomes associated with your phone buzzing.

- xx. By the time we become adults, we rarely notice the habits that are running our lives. Most of us never give a second thought to the fact that we tie the same shoe first each morning, or unplug the toaster after each use, or always change into comfortable clothes after getting home from work. After decades of mental programming, we automatically slip into these patterns of thinking and acting.
- xxi. I refer to this framework as the Four Laws of Behavior Change, and it provides a simple set of rules for creating good habits and breaking bad ones.
- xxii. How to Create a Good Habit The 1st law (Cue): Make it obvious. The 2nd law (Craving): Make it attractive. The 3rd law (Response): Make it easy. The 4th law (Reward): Make it satisfying.
- xxiii. How to Break a Bad Habit Inversion of the 1st law (Cue): Make it invisible. Inversion of the 2nd law (Craving): Make it unattractive. Inversion of the 3rd law (Response): Make it difficult. Inversion of the 4th law (Reward): Make it unsatisfying.
- xxiv. Chapter Summary A habit is a behavior that has been repeated enough times to become automatic. The ultimate purpose of habits is to solve the problems of life with as little energy and effort as possible. Any habit can be broken down into a feedback loop that involves four steps: cue, craving, response, and reward. The Four Laws of Behavior Change are a simple set of rules we can use to build better habits. They are (1) make it obvious, (2) make it attractive, (3) make it easy, and (4) make it satisfying.

- Week 2, 12/27/23, Bye-Week
- Week 3, 1/3/24, The 1st Law (Chapters 4-7) **THE 1ST LAW: Make It Obvious**

a. Chapter 4: The Man Who Didn't Look Right \

- i. The human brain is a prediction machine. It is continuously taking in your surroundings and analyzing the information it comes across.
- ii. With enough practice, you can pick up on the cues that predict certain outcomes without consciously thinking about it.
- iii. We underestimate how much our brains and bodies can do without thinking.
- iv. This is one of the most surprising insights about our habits: you don't need to be aware of the cue for a habit to begin. You can notice an opportunity and take action without dedicating conscious attention to it. This is what makes habits useful.
- v. It's also what makes them dangerous. As habits form, your actions come under the direction of your automatic and nonconscious mind. You fall into old patterns before you realize what's happening.

- vi. If a habit remains mindless, you can't expect to improve it. As the psychologist Carl Jung said, "Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate."
- vii. THE HABITS SCORECARD
- viii. Pointing-and-Calling, is a safety system designed to reduce mistakes. It seems silly, but it works incredibly well. Pointing-and-Calling reduces errors by up to 85 percent and cuts accidents by 30 percent.
- ix. Pointing-and-Calling is so effective because it raises the level of awareness from a nonconscious habit to a more conscious level.
- x. The more automatic a behavior becomes, the less likely we are to consciously think about it. And when we've done something a thousand times before, we begin to overlook things. We assume that the next time will be just like the last. We're so used to doing what we've always done that we don't stop to question whether it's the right thing to do at all. Many of our failures in performance are largely attributable to a lack of self-awareness.
- xi. Once you have a full list, look at each behavior, and ask yourself, "Is this a good habit, a bad habit, or a neutral habit?" If it is a good habit, write "+" next to it. If it is a bad habit, write "-". If it is a neutral habit, write "=".
- xii. The labels "good habit" and "bad habit" are slightly inaccurate. There are no good habits or bad habits. There are only effective habits. That is, effective at solving problems.
- xiii. If you're still having trouble determining how to rate a particular habit, here is a question I like to use: "Does this behavior help me become the type of person I wish to be? Does this habit cast a vote for or against my desired identity?" Habits that reinforce your desired identity are usually good. Habits that conflict with your desired identity are usually bad.
- xiv. Hearing your bad habits spoken aloud makes the consequences seem more real. It adds weight to the action rather than letting yourself mindlessly slip into an old routine.
- xv. Chapter Summary With enough practice, your brain will pick up on the cues that predict certain outcomes without consciously thinking about it. Once our habits become automatic, we stop paying attention to what we are doing. The process of behavior change always starts with awareness. You need to be aware of your habits before you can change them. Pointing-and-Calling raises your level of awareness from a nonconscious habit to a more conscious level by verbalizing your actions. The Habits Scorecard is a simple exercise you can use to become more aware of your behavior.

b. Chapter 5: The Best Way to Start a New Habit

- i. implementation intention, which is a plan you make beforehand about when and where to act. That is, how you intend to implement a particular habit.
- ii. implementation intention is: "When situation X arises, I will perform response Y."
- iii. The punch line is clear: people who make a specific plan for when and where they will perform a new habit are more likely to follow through.
- iv. Many people think they lack motivation when what they really lack is clarity.
- v. When the moment of action occurs, there is no need to make a decision. Simply follow your predetermined plan.
- vi. The simple way to apply this strategy to your habits is to fill out this sentence: I will [BEHAVIOR] at [TIME] in [LOCATION].
- vii. Diderot's behavior is not uncommon. In fact, the tendency for one purchase to lead to another one has a name: the Diderot Effect. The Diderot Effect states that obtaining a new possession often creates a spiral of consumption that leads to additional purchases.
- viii. No behavior happens in isolation. Each action becomes a cue that triggers the next behavior. Why is this important? When it comes to building new habits, you can use the connectedness of behavior to your advantage. One of the best ways to build a new habit is to identify a current habit you already do each day and then stack your new behavior on top. This is called habit stacking.
- ix. Fogg's habit stacking formula is: "After I [CURRENT HABIT], I will [NEW HABIT]."
- x. This allows you to take advantage of the natural momentum that comes from one behavior leading into the next—a positive version of the Diderot Effect.
- xi. Habit stacking increases the likelihood that you'll stick with a habit by stacking your new behavior on top of an old one. This process can be repeated to chain numerous habits together, each one acting as the cue for the next.
- xii. Overall, habit stacking allows you to create a set of simple rules that guide your future behavior. It's like you always have a game plan for which action should come next.
- xiii. Exercise. When I see a set of stairs, I will take them instead of using the elevator.
- xiv. Habit stacking works best when the cue is highly specific and immediately actionable. Many people select cues that are too vague.
- xv. The 1st Law of Behavior Change is to make it obvious. Strategies like implementation intentions and habit stacking are among the most

practical ways to create obvious cues for your habits and design a clear plan for when and where to take action.

- xvi. Chapter Summary The 1st Law of Behavior Change is make it obvious. The two most common cues are time and location. Creating an implementation intention is a strategy you can use to pair a new habit with a specific time and location. The implementation intention formula is: I will [BEHAVIOR] at [TIME] in [LOCATION].
- xvii. Habit stacking is a strategy you can use to pair a new habit with a current habit. The habit stacking formula is: After I [CURRENT HABIT], I will [NEW HABIT].

c. Chapter 6: **Motivation Is Overrated; Environment Often Matters**

- i. We are changed by the world around us. Every habit is context dependent.
- ii. In 1936, psychologist Kurt Lewin wrote a simple equation that makes a powerful statement: Behavior is a function of the Person in their Environment, or $B = f(P, E)$.
- iii. In 1952, the economist Hawkins Stern described a phenomenon he called Suggestion Impulse Buying, which “is triggered when a shopper sees a product for the first time and visualizes a need for it.” In other words, customers will occasionally buy products not because they want them but because of how they are presented to them.
- iv. When the cues that spark a habit are subtle or hidden, they are easy to ignore.
- v. By comparison, creating obvious visual cues can draw your attention toward a desired habit.
- vi. If you want to make a habit a big part of your life, make the cue a big part of your environment.
- vii. Stop thinking about your environment as filled with objects. Start thinking about it as filled with relationships. Think in terms of how you interact with the spaces around you.
- viii. The power of context also reveals an important strategy: habits can be easier to change in a new environment.
- ix. You aren’t battling old environmental cues, which allows new habits to form without interruption.
- x. I know a writer who uses his computer only for writing, his tablet only for reading, and his phone only for social media and texting. Every habit should have a home.
- xi. If you want behaviors that are stable and predictable, you need an environment that is stable and predictable. A stable environment where everything has a place and a purpose is an environment where habits can easily form.

- xii. Chapter Summary Small changes in context can lead to large changes in behavior over time. Every habit is initiated by a cue. We are more likely to notice cues that stand out. Make the cues of good habits obvious in your environment. Gradually, your habits become associated not with a single trigger but with the entire context surrounding the behavior. The context becomes the cue. It is easier to build new habits in a new environment because you are not fighting against old cues.

d. Chapter 7 The Secret to Self-Control **The Secret to Self-Control**

- i. Robins revealed that addictions could spontaneously dissolve if there was a radical change in the environment. In
- ii. When scientists analyze people who appear to have tremendous self-
- iii. control, it turns out those individuals aren't all that different from those who are struggling. Instead, "disciplined" people are better at structuring their lives in a way that does not require heroic willpower and self-control. In other words, they spend less time in tempting situations.
- iv. If you're not careful about cues, you can cause the very behavior you want to stop.
- v. Bad habits are autocatalytic: the process feeds itself.
- vi. In the short-run, you can choose to overpower temptation. In the long-run, we become a product of the environment that we live in. To put it bluntly, I have never seen someone consistently stick to positive habits in a negative environment.
- vii. This practice is an inversion of the 1st Law of Behavior Change. Rather than make it obvious, you can make it invisible.
- viii. Instead of summoning a new dose of willpower whenever you want to do the right thing, your energy would be better spent optimizing your environment. This is the secret to self-control. Make the cues of your good habits obvious and the cues of your bad habits invisible.
- ix. Chapter Summary The inversion of the 1st Law of Behavior Once a habit is formed, it is unlikely to be forgotten.
- x. People with high self-control tend to spend less time in tempting situations. It's easier to avoid temptation than resist it. One of the most practical ways to eliminate a bad habit is to reduce exposure to the cue that causes it. Self-control is a short-term strategy, not a long-term one.
- xi. HOW TO CREATE A GOOD HABIT
- xii. 96 · Location 1242
- xiii. The 1st Law: Make It Obvious 1.1: Fill out the Habits Scorecard. Write down your current habits to become aware of them. 1.2: Use implementation intentions: "I will [BEHAVIOR] at [TIME] in [LOCATION]." 1.3: Use habit stacking: "After I [CURRENT HABIT], I will [NEW HABIT]."

- 1.4: Design your environment. Make the cues of good habits obvious and visible.
- xiv. HOW TO BREAK A BAD HABIT Inversion of the 1st Law: Make It Invisible 1.5: Reduce exposure. Remove the cues of your bad habits from your environment.

- **Week 4, 1/10/24, The 2nd Law (Chapters 8-10) Make It Attractive**

- a. **Chapter 8: How to Make a Habit Irresistible**

- i. After spending hundreds of thousands of years hunting and foraging for food in the wild, the human brain has evolved to place a high value on salt, sugar, and fat. Such foods are often calorie-dense and they were quite rare when our ancient ancestors
 - ii. When you don't know where your next meal is coming from, eating as much as possible is an excellent strategy for survival.
 - iii. We have the brains of our ancestors but temptations they never had to face.
 - iv. If you want to increase the odds that a behavior will occur, then you need to make it attractive.
 - v. Even though dopamine was blocked, they liked the sugar just as much as before; they just didn't want it anymore.
 - vi. without dopamine, desire died. And without desire, action stopped.
 - vii. For years, scientists assumed dopamine was all about pleasure, but now we know it plays a central role in many neurological processes, including motivation, learning and memory, punishment and aversion, and voluntary movement.
 - viii. Whenever you predict that an opportunity will be rewarding, your levels of dopamine spike in anticipation. And whenever dopamine rises, so does your motivation to act.
 - ix. It is the anticipation of a reward—not the fulfillment of it—that gets us to take action.
 - x. Before a habit is learned (A), dopamine is released when the reward is experienced for the first time. The next time around (B), dopamine rises before taking action, immediately after a cue is recognized. This spike leads to a feeling of desire and a craving to take action whenever the cue is spotted. Once a habit is learned, dopamine will not rise when a reward is experienced because you already expect the reward. However, if you see a cue and expect a reward, but do not get one, then dopamine will drop in disappointment (C). The sensitivity of the dopamine response can clearly be seen when a reward is provided late (D). First, the cue is identified and dopamine rises as a craving builds. Next, a response is taken but the reward does not come as quickly as expected and

dopamine begins to drop. Finally, when the reward comes a little later than you had hoped, dopamine spikes again. It is as if the brain is saying, "See! I knew I was right. Don't forget to repeat this action next time."

- xi. We need to make our habits attractive because it is the expectation of a rewarding experience that motivates us to act in the first place.
- xii. HOW TO USE TEMPTATION BUNDLING TO MAKE YOUR HABITS MORE ATTRACTIVE
- xiii. Temptation bundling is one way to apply a psychology theory known as Premack's Principle. Named after the work of professor David Premack, the principle states that "more probable behaviors will reinforce less probable behaviors." In other words, even if you don't really want to process overdue work emails, you'll become conditioned to do it if it means you get to do something you really want to do along the way.
- xiv. The habit stacking + temptation bundling formula is: After I [CURRENT HABIT], I will [HABIT I NEED]. After [HABIT I NEED], I will [HABIT I WANT].
- xv. Chapter Summary The 2nd Law of Behavior Change is make it attractive. The more attractive an opportunity is, the more likely it is to become habit-forming. Habits are a dopamine-driven feedback loop. When dopamine rises, so does our motivation to act. It is the anticipation of a reward—not the fulfillment of it—that gets us to take action. The greater the anticipation, the greater the dopamine spike. Temptation bundling is one way to make your habits more attractive. The strategy is to pair an action you want to do with an action you need to do.

b. Chapter 9: The Role of Family and Friends in Shaping Your Habits

- i. whatever habits are normal in your culture are among the most attractive behaviors you'll find.
- ii. THE SEDUCTIVE PULL OF SOCIAL NORMS
- iii. Humans are herd animals. We want to fit in, to bond with others, and to earn the respect and approval of our peers.
- iv. As Charles Darwin noted, "In the long history of humankind, those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed." As a result, one of the deepest human desires is to belong. And this ancient preference exerts a powerful influence on our modern behavior.
- v. We imitate the habits of three groups in particular: The close. The many. The powerful.
- vi. 1. Imitating the Close
- vii. We pick up habits from the people around us.
- viii. One of the most effective things you can do to build better habits is to join a culture where your desired behavior is the normal behavior. New habits seem achievable when you see others doing them every day.

- ix. Nothing sustains motivation better than belonging to the tribe. It transforms a personal quest into a shared one.
- x. 2. Imitating the Many
- xi. Whenever we are unsure how to act, we look to the group to guide our behavior. We are constantly scanning our environment and wondering, "What is everyone else doing?"
- xii. The human mind knows how to get along with others. It wants to get along with others. This is our natural mode. You can override it—you can choose to ignore the group or to stop caring what other people think—but it takes work. Running against the grain of your culture requires extra effort.
- xiii. 3. Imitating the Powerful
- xiv. We try to copy the behavior of successful people because we desire success ourselves.
- xv. Chapter Summary The culture we live in determines which behaviors are attractive to us. We tend to adopt habits that are praised and approved of by our culture because we have a strong desire to fit in and belong to the tribe. We tend to imitate the habits of three social groups: the close (family and friends), the many (the tribe), and the powerful (those with status and prestige). One of the most effective things you can do to build better habits is to join a culture where (1) your desired behavior is the normal behavior and (2) you already have something in common with the group. The normal behavior of the tribe often overpowers the desired behavior of the individual. Most days, we'd rather be wrong with the crowd than be right by ourselves. If a behavior can get us approval, respect, and praise, we find it attractive.

c. Chapter- 10: How to Find and Fix the Causes of Your Bad Habit

- i. 10 How to Find and Fix the Causes of Your Bad Habits
- ii. He systematically reframes each cue associated with smoking and gives it a new meaning.
- iii. Some of our underlying motives include:* Conserve energy Obtain food and water Find love and reproduce Connect and bond with others Win social acceptance and approval Reduce uncertainty Achieve status and prestige
- iv. At a deep level, you simply want to reduce uncertainty and relieve anxiety, to win social acceptance and approval, or to achieve status.
- v. Your habits are modern-day solutions to ancient desires. New versions of old vices. The underlying motives behind human behavior remain the same. The specific habits we perform differ based on the period of history.
- vi. You see a cue, categorize it based on past experience, and determine the appropriate response.

- vii. A craving is the sense that something is missing. It is the desire to change your internal state.
- viii. Neurologists have discovered that when emotions and feelings are impaired, we actually lose the ability to make decisions.
- ix. HOW TO REPROGRAM YOUR BRAIN TO ENJOY HARD HABITS You can make hard habits more attractive if you can learn to associate them with a positive experience.
- x. Now, imagine changing just one word: You don't "have" to. You "get" to. You get to wake up early for work. You get to make another sales call for your business. You get to cook dinner for your family. By simply changing one word, you shift the way you view each event. You transition from seeing these behaviors as burdens and turn them into opportunities.
- xi. Reframing your habits to highlight their benefits rather than their drawbacks is a fast and lightweight way to reprogram your mind and make a habit seem more attractive.
- xii. These little mind-set shifts aren't magic, but they can help change the feelings you associate with a particular habit or situation.
- xiii. For instance, if you always play the same song before having sex, then you'll begin to link the music with the act. Whenever you want to get in the mood, just press play.
- xiv. Maybe you take three deep breaths and smile.
- xv. Chapter Summary The inversion of the 2nd Law of Behavior Change is make it unattractive. Every behavior has a surface level craving and a deeper underlying motive. Your habits are modern-day solutions to ancient desires. The cause of your habits is actually the prediction that precedes them. The prediction leads to a feeling. Highlight the benefits of avoiding a bad habit to make it seem unattractive. Habits are attractive when we associate them with positive feelings and unattractive when we associate them with negative feelings. Create a motivation ritual by doing something you enjoy immediately before a difficult habit.
- xvi. HOW TO CREATE A GOOD HABIT The 1st Law: Make It Obvious 1.1: Fill out the Habits Scorecard. Write down your current habits to become aware of them. 1.2: Use implementation intentions: "I will [BEHAVIOR] at [TIME] in [LOCATION]." 1.3: Use habit stacking: "After I [CURRENT HABIT], I will [NEW HABIT]." 1.4: Design your environment. Make the cues of good habits obvious and visible. The 2nd Law: Make It Attractive 2.1: Use temptation bundling. Pair an action you want to do with an action you need to do. 2.2: Join a culture where your desired behavior is the normal behavior. 2.3: Create a motivation ritual. Do something you enjoy immediately before a difficult habit. The 3rd Law: Make It Easy The 4th Law: Make It Satisfying HOW TO BREAK A BAD HABIT Inversion of the 1st Law: Make It Invisible 1.5: Reduce exposure. Remove the cues of your bad habits from your environment. Inversion of the 2nd Law: Make It

Unattractive 2.4: Reframe your mind-set. Highlight the benefits of avoiding your bad habits. Inversion of the 3rd Law: Make It Difficult Inversion of the 4th Law: Make It Unsatisfying

- **Week 5, 1/17/24, The 3rd Law Make It Easy (Chapters 11-14)**

- a. **Chapter 11 Walk Slowly, but Never Backwards**

- i. all the best photos were produced by the quantity group.
 - ii. In the process of creating hundreds of photos, they honed their skills. Meanwhile, the quality group sat around speculating about perfection.
 - iii. I refer to this as the difference between being in motion and taking action. The two ideas sound similar, but they're not the same. When you're in motion, you're planning and strategizing and learning. Those are all good things, but they don't produce a result.
 - iv. Action, on the other hand, is the type of behavior that will deliver an outcome. If I outline twenty ideas for articles I want to write, that's motion. If I actually sit down and write an article, that's action. If I search for a better diet plan and read a few books on the topic, that's motion. If I actually eat a healthy meal, that's action.
 - v. **If you want to master a habit, the key is to start with repetition, not perfection.** You don't need to map out every feature of a new habit. You just need to practice it. This is the first takeaway of the 3rd Law: you just need to get your reps in.
 - vi. Each time you repeat an action, you are activating a particular neural circuit associated with that habit. This means that simply putting in your reps is one of the most critical steps you can take to encoding a new habit. It is why the students who took tons of photos improved their skills while those who merely theorized about
 - vii. perfect photos did not.
 - viii. **THE HABIT LINE**
 - ix. **FIGURE 11:** In the beginning (point A), a habit requires a good deal of effort and concentration to perform. After a few repetitions (point B), it gets easier, but still requires some conscious attention. With enough practice (point C), the habit becomes more automatic than conscious. Beyond this threshold—the habit line—the behavior can be done more or less without thinking. A new habit has been formed.
 - x. One of the most common questions I hear is, "How long does it take to build a new habit?" But what people really should be asking is, "How many does it take to form a new habit?" That is, how many repetitions are required to make a habit automatic?
 - xi. Chapter Summary The 3rd Law of Behavior Change is make it easy. **The most effective form of learning is practice, not planning.** Focus on taking

action, not being in motion. Habit formation is the process by which a behavior becomes progressively more automatic through repetition. The amount of time you have been performing a habit is not as important as the number of times you have performed it.

b. Chapter 12: The Law of Least Effort

- i. But the truth is, our real motivation is to be lazy and to do what is convenient. And despite what the latest productivity best seller will tell you, this is a smart strategy, not a dumb one.
- ii. Energy is precious, and the brain is wired to conserve it whenever possible. It is human nature to follow the Law of Least Effort, which states that when deciding between two similar options, people will naturally gravitate toward the option that requires the least amount of work.*
- iii. The idea behind make it easy is not to only do easy things. The idea is to make it as easy as possible in the moment to do things that payoff in the long run.
- iv. Too often, we try to start habits in high-friction environments. We try to follow a strict diet while we are out to dinner with friends.
- v. In an article published in the New Yorker titled “Better All the Time,” James Surowiecki writes: “Japanese firms emphasized what came to be known as ‘lean production,’ relentlessly looking to remove waste of all kinds from the production process, down to redesigning workspaces, so workers didn’t have to waste time twisting and turning to reach their tools. The result was that Japanese factories were more efficient and Japanese products were more reliable than American ones.
- vi. I like to refer to this strategy as addition by subtraction.* The Japanese companies looked for every point of friction in the manufacturing process and eliminated it. As they subtracted wasted effort, they added customers and revenue. Similarly, when we remove the points of friction that sap our time and energy, we can achieve more with less effort. (This is one reason tidying up can feel so good: we are simultaneously moving forward and lightening the cognitive load our environment places on us.)
- vii. Like a Japanese television manufacturer redesigning their workspace to reduce wasted motion, successful companies design their products to automate, eliminate, or simplify as many steps as possible.
- viii. Much of the battle of building better habits comes down to finding ways to reduce the friction associated with our good habits and increase the friction associated with our bad ones.
- ix. The purpose of resetting each room is not simply to clean up after the last action, but to prepare for the next action.
- x. People think I work hard but I’m actually really lazy. I’m just proactively lazy. It gives you so much time back.”

- xi. “How can we design a world where it’s easy to do what’s right?” Redesign your life so the actions that matter most are also the actions that are easiest to do.
- xii. Chapter Summary
- xiii. Human behavior follows the Law of Least Effort. We will naturally gravitate toward the option that requires the least amount of work. Create an environment where doing the right thing is as easy as possible. Reduce the friction associated with good behaviors. When friction is low, habits are easy. Increase the friction associated with bad behaviors. When friction is high, habits are difficult. Prime your environment to make future actions easier.

c. Chapter 13: How to Stop Procrastinating by Using the Two-Minute Rule

- i. “It’s a simple act, but doing it the same way each morning habitualizes it—makes it repeatable, easy to do. It reduces the chance that I would skip it or do it differently.
- ii. Researchers estimate that 40 to 50 percent of our actions on any given day are done out of habit. This is already a substantial percentage, but the true influence of your habits is even greater than these numbers suggest. Habits are automatic choices that influence the conscious decisions that follow. Yes, a habit can be completed in just a few seconds, but it can also shape the actions that you take for minutes or hours afterward.
- iii. Every day, there are a handful of moments that deliver an outsized impact. I refer to these little choices as decisive moments.
- iv. Nearly any larger life goal can be transformed into a two-minute behavior. I want to live a healthy and long life > I need to stay in shape > I need to exercise > I need to change into my workout clothes. I want to have a happy marriage > I need to be a good partner > I should do something each day to make my partner’s life easier > I should meal plan for next week.
- v. Chapter Summary Habits can be completed in a few seconds but continue to impact your behavior for minutes or hours afterward. Many habits occur at decisive moments—choices that are like a fork in the road—and either send you in the direction of a productive day or an unproductive one. The Two-Minute Rule states, “When you start a new habit, it should take less than two minutes to do.” The more you ritualize the beginning of a process, the more likely it becomes that you can slip into the state of deep focus that is required to do great things. Standardize before you optimize. You can’t improve a habit that doesn’t exist.

d. Chapter 14: How to Make Good Habits Inevitable and Bad Habits Impossible > Page 169 · Location 2049

- i. A commitment device is a choice you make in the present that controls your actions in the future. It is a way to lock in future behavior, bind you to good habits, and restrict you from bad ones.
- ii. Commitment devices are useful because they enable you to take advantage of good intentions before you can fall victim to temptation.
- iii. The key is to change the task such that it requires more work to get out of the good habit than to get started on it.
- iv. Commitment devices increase the odds that you'll do the right thing in the future by making bad habits difficult in the present.
- v. HOW TO AUTOMATE A HABIT AND NEVER THINK ABOUT IT AGAIN
- vi. Chapter Summary The inversion of the 3rd Law of Behavior Change is make it difficult. A commitment device is a choice you make in the present that locks in better behavior in the future. The ultimate way to lock in future behavior is to automate your habits. Onetime choices—like buying a better mattress or enrolling in an automatic savings plan—are single actions that automate your future habits and deliver increasing returns over time. Using technology to automate your habits is the most reliable and effective way to guarantee the right behavior.

● Week 6, 1/24/24, The 4th Law Make It Satisfying (Chapters 15-17)

a. Chapter 15: The Cardinal Rule of Behavior Change

- i. Feelings of pleasure—even minor ones like washing your hands with soap that smells nice and lathers well—are signals that tell the brain: “This feels good. Do this again, next time.” Pleasure teaches your brain that a behavior is worth remembering and repeating.
- ii. Cardinal Rule of Behavior Change: What is rewarded is repeated. What is punished is avoided.
- iii. Positive emotions cultivate habits. Negative emotions destroy them.
- iv. The fourth law of behavior change—make it satisfying—increases the odds that a behavior will be repeated next time. It completes the habit loop.
- v. immediate-return environment because your actions instantly deliver clear and immediate outcomes.
- vi. time inconsistency. That is, the way your brain evaluates rewards is inconsistent across time.* You value the present more than the future.
- vii. the costs of your good habits are in the present. The costs of your bad habits are in the future.
- viii. is worth noting that it is important to select short-term rewards that reinforce your identity rather than ones that conflict with it.

- ix. Chapter Summary The 4th Law of Behavior Change is make it satisfying. We are more likely to repeat a behavior when the experience is satisfying. The human brain evolved to prioritize immediate rewards over delayed rewards. The Cardinal Rule of Behavior Change: What is immediately rewarded is repeated. What is immediately punished is avoided. To get a habit to stick you need to feel immediately successful—even if it's in a small way. The first three laws of behavior change—make it obvious, make it attractive, and make it easy—increase the odds that a behavior will be performed this time. The fourth law of behavior change—make it satisfying—increases the odds that a behavior will be repeated next time.

b. Chapter 16: How to Stick with Good Habits Every Day

- i. Making progress is satisfying, and visual measures—like moving paper clips or hairpins or marbles—provide clear evidence of your progress.
- ii. Visual measurement comes in many forms: food journals, workout logs, loyalty punch cards, the progress bar on a software download,
- iii. A habit tracker is a simple way to measure whether you did a habit. The most basic format is to get a calendar and cross off each day you stick with your routine.
- iv. Benefit #1: Habit tracking is obvious. Recording your last action creates a trigger that can initiate your next one.
- v. Habit tracking also keeps you honest. Most of us have a distorted view of our own behavior. We think we act better than we do. Measurement offers one way to overcome our blindness to our own behavior and notice what's really going on each day.
- vi. Benefit #2: Habit tracking is attractive. The most effective form of motivation is progress.
- vii. Benefit #3: Habit tracking is satisfying. This is the most crucial benefit of all. Tracking can become its own form of reward.
- viii. In summary, habit tracking (1) creates a visual cue that can remind you to act, (2) is inherently motivating because you see the progress you are making and don't want to lose it, and (3) feels satisfying whenever you record another successful instance of your habit. Furthermore, habit tracking provides visual proof that you are casting votes for the type of person you wish to become, which is a delightful form of immediate and intrinsic gratification.*
- ix. First, whenever possible, measurement should be automated.
- x. Second, manual tracking should be limited to your most important habits.
- xi. Finally, record each measurement immediately after the habit occurs.
- xii. The habit stacking + habit tracking formula is: After I [CURRENT HABIT], I will [TRACK MY HABIT].
- xiii. After I hang up the phone from a sales call, I will move one paper clip over.

- xiv. **HOW TO RECOVER QUICKLY WHEN YOUR HABITS BREAK DOWN**
No matter how consistent you are with your habits, it is inevitable that life will interrupt you at some point. never miss twice.
- xv. The first mistake is never the one that ruins you. It is the spiral of repeated mistakes that follows.
- xvi. This is why the “bad” workouts are often the most important ones. Sluggish days and bad workouts maintain the compound gains you accrued from previous good days.
- xvii. **KNOWING WHEN (AND WHEN NOT) TO TRACK A HABIT**
- xviii. The dark side of tracking a particular behavior is that we become driven by the number rather than the purpose behind it.
- xix. In our data-driven world, we tend to overvalue numbers and undervalue anything ephemeral, soft, and difficult to quantify.
- xx. Chapter Summary One of the most satisfying feelings is the feeling of making progress. A habit tracker is a simple way to measure whether you did a habit—like marking an X on a calendar. Habit trackers and other visual forms of measurement can make your habits satisfying by providing clear evidence of your progress. Don’t break the chain. Try to keep your habit streak alive. Never miss twice. If you miss one day, try to get back on track as quickly as possible. Just because you can measure something doesn’t mean it’s the most important thing.

c. Chapter 17: How an Accountability Partner Can Change Everything

- i. inversion of the 4th Law: Make it immediately unsatisfying.
- ii. Pain is an effective teacher.
- iii. We repeat bad habits because they serve us in some way, and that makes them hard to abandon. The best way I know to overcome this predicament is to increase the speed of the punishment associated with the behavior. There can’t be a gap between the action and the consequences.
- iv. habit contract.
- v. social contract. As a society, we collectively agree to abide by certain rules and then enforce them as a group.
- vi. Chapter Summary The inversion of the 4th Law of Behavior Change is make it unsatisfying. We are less likely to repeat a bad habit if it is painful or unsatisfying. An accountability partner can create an immediate cost to inaction. We care deeply about what others think of us, and we do not want others to have a lesser opinion of us. A habit contract can be used to add a social cost to any behavior. It makes the costs of violating your promises public and painful. Knowing that someone else is watching you can be a powerful motivator.

- Week 7, 1/31/24 Advanced Tactics (Chapters 18-20) How to Go from Being Merely Good to Being Truly Great

- a. Chapter 18: The Truth About Talent (When Genes Matter and When They Don't)

- i. The secret to maximizing your odds of success is to choose the right field of competition.
- ii. you want to play a game where the odds are in your favor.
- iii. Embracing this strategy requires the acceptance of the simple truth that people are born with different abilities.
- iv. if you want to be truly great, selecting the right place to focus is crucial.
- v. In short: genes do not determine your destiny. They determine your areas of opportunity.
- vi. "Big Five," which breaks them down into five spectrums of behavior.
- vii. Openness to experience: from curious and inventive on one end to cautious and consistent on the other. Conscientiousness: organized and efficient to easygoing and spontaneous.
- viii. Extroversion: outgoing and energetic to solitary and reserved (you likely know them as extroverts vs. introverts). Agreeableness: friendly and compassionate to challenging and detached. Neuroticism: anxious and sensitive to confident, calm, and stable.
- ix. Our habits are not solely determined by our personalities, but there is no doubt that our genes nudge us in a certain direction.
- x. Pick the right habit and progress is easy. Pick the wrong habit and life is a struggle.
- xi. explore/ exploit trade-off.
- xii. What feels like fun to me, but work to others?
- xiii. What makes me lose track of time?
- xiv. Where do I get greater returns than the average person?
- xv. What comes naturally to me?
- xvi. When you can't win by being better, you can win by being different.
- xvii. Boiling water will soften a potato but harden an egg. You can't control whether you're a potato or an egg, but you can decide to play a game where it's better to be hard or soft. If you can find a more favorable environment, you can transform the situation from one where the odds are against you to one where they are in your favor.
- xviii. In summary, one of the best ways to ensure your habits remain satisfying over the long-run is to pick behaviors that align with your personality and skills. Work hard on the things that come easy.
- xix. Chapter Summary The secret to maximizing your odds of success is to choose the right field of competition. Pick the right habit and progress is easy. Pick the wrong habit and life is a struggle. Genes cannot be easily

changed, which means they provide a powerful advantage in favorable circumstances and a serious disadvantage in unfavorable circumstances. Habits are easier when they align with your natural abilities. Choose the habits that best suit you. Play a game that favors your strengths. If you can't find a game that favors you, create one. Genes do not eliminate the need for hard work. They clarify it. They tell us what to work hard on.

b. Chapter 19: The Goldilocks Rule: How to Stay Motivated in Life and Work

- i. The human brain loves a challenge, but only if it is within an optimal zone of difficulty.
- ii. The Goldilocks Rule states that humans experience peak motivation when working on tasks that are right on the edge of their current abilities. Not too hard. Not too easy. Just right.
- iii. He was always adding new material, but he also kept a few jokes that were guaranteed to get laughs.
- iv. A flow state is the experience of being "in the zone" and fully immersed in an activity.
- v. "What do the really successful people do that most don't?"
- vi. "At some point it comes down to who can handle the boredom of training every day, doing the same lifts over and over and over."
- vii. People talk about getting "amped up" to work on their goals. Whether it's business or sports or art, you hear people say things like, "It all comes down to passion." Or, "You have to really want it." As a result, many of us get depressed when we lose focus or motivation because we think that successful people have some bottomless reserve of passion. But this coach was saying that really successful people feel the same lack of motivation as everyone else. The difference is that they still find a way to show up despite the feelings of boredom.
- viii. Professionals stick to the schedule; amateurs let life get in the way. Professionals know what is important to them and work toward it with purpose; amateurs get pulled off course by the urgencies of life.
- ix. Professionals take action even when the mood isn't right. They might not enjoy it, but they find a way to put the reps in.
- x. The only way to become excellent is to be endlessly fascinated by doing the same thing over and over. You have to fall in love with boredom.
- xi. Chapter Summary The Goldilocks Rule states that humans experience peak motivation when working on tasks that are right on the edge of their current abilities. The greatest threat to success is not failure but boredom. As habits become routine, they become less interesting and less satisfying. We get bored. Anyone can work hard when they feel motivated. It's the ability to keep going when work isn't exciting that makes the difference. Professionals stick to the schedule; amateurs let life get in the way.

c. Chapter - 20: The Downside of Creating Good Habits

- i. The upside of habits is that we can do things without thinking. The downside of habits is that you get used to doing things a certain way and stop paying attention to little errors. You
- ii. Habits + Deliberate Practice = Mastery
- iii. Mastery is the process of narrowing your focus to a tiny element of success, repeating it until you have internalized the skill, and then using this new habit as the foundation to advance to the next frontier of your development.
- iv. MASTERING ONE HABIT
- v. MASTERING A FIELD
- vi. Reflection and review enables the long-term improvement of all habits because it makes you aware of your mistakes and helps you consider possible paths for improvement.
- vii. Then, I reflect on my progress (or lack thereof) by answering three questions: What went well this year? What didn't go so well this year? What did I learn?
- viii. My yearly Integrity Report answers three questions: What are the core values that drive my life and work? How am I living and working with integrity right now? How can I set a higher standard in the future?
- ix. Men are born soft and supple; dead, they are stiff and hard. Plants are born tender and pliant; dead, they are brittle and dry. Thus whoever is stiff and inflexible is a disciple of death. Whoever is soft and yielding is a disciple of life. The hard and stiff will be broken. The soft and supple will prevail.—LAO TZU
- x. Life is constantly changing, so you need to periodically check in to see if your old habits and beliefs are still serving you. A lack of self-awareness is poison. Reflection and review is the antidote.
- xi. Chapter Summary The upside of habits is that we can do things without thinking. The downside is that we stop paying attention to little errors. Habits + Deliberate Practice = Mastery Reflection and review is a process that allows you to remain conscious of your performance over time. The tighter we cling to an identity, the harder it becomes to grow beyond it.

d. Conclusion The Secret to Results That Last

● Week 8, 2/7/24

a. Little Lessons from the Four Laws

- i. Happiness is the state you enter when you no longer want to change your state. However, happiness is fleeting because a new desire always comes along.
- ii. Peace occurs when you don't turn your observations into problems.

- iii. Observation without craving is the realization that you do not need to fix anything.
- iv. With a big enough why you can overcome any how.
- v. "He who has a why to live for can bear almost any how."
- vi. Being curious is better than being smart.
- vii. Psychologists refer to this as System 1 (feelings and rapid judgments) versus System 2 (rational analysis). The feeling comes first (System 1); the rationality only intervenes later (System 2). This works great when the two are aligned, but it results in illogical and emotional thinking when they are not.
- viii. Your actions reveal how badly you want something.
- ix. Satisfaction = Liking–Wanting
- x. Cue > Craving (Feeling) > Response > Reward (Feeling)
- xi. As Aristotle noted, "Youth is easily deceived because it is quick to hope." Perhaps this can be revised to "Youth is easily deceived because it only hopes." There is no experience to root the expectation in. In the beginning, hope is all you have.

b. How to Apply These Ideas to Business

- i. Four Laws of Behavior Change:
 1. 1. Cue: Make it obvious. The most obvious cue is often the one that captures your attention. And the cue that gets your attention is the one that can initiate a habit.
 2. 2. Craving: Make it attractive.
 - a. Making your message personal—something as simple as saying the other person's name—helps connect with people in a meaningful way and is one way to make change a bit more attractive.
 - b. If people think the behavior your product requires is common, then frame those who don't do it in a negative light (deviating from the norm): "75% of people in your neighborhood are paying less than you on their energy bill."
 3. 3. Response: Make it easy.
 - a. The most effective way to employ the 3rd Law of Behavior Change is to map out the chain of behaviors that a customer must perform to purchase your product or use your service, and then search for any possible area where you can reduce the friction associated with the task.
 - b. "Business is a never-ending quest to deliver the same result in an easier fashion."
 4. 4. Reward: Make it satisfying.

- a. The speed of the reward is a crucial factor in the 4th Law of Behavior Change.

c. How to Apply These Ideas to Parenting

- i. When you're considering how to apply the ideas to your children, you're now shaping someone else's habits. This difference presents additional challenges, and this section will provide specific examples of how to apply the ideas to parenting.
- ii. Four Laws of Behavior Change:
 - 1. 1. Cue: Make it obvious.
 - a. Kindergarten classrooms are designed to make it very obvious where things go and what to do with them. According to Morgenstern, there are five primary features:
 - i. 1. Room is divided into activity zones.
 - ii. 2. It's easy to focus on one activity at a time.
 - iii. 3. Items are stored at their point of use.
 - iv. 4. It's fun to put things away—everything has a home.
 - v. 5. Visual menu of everything that's important.
 - b. Another option is to help your child create their own habit stacks (a concept discussed in Chapter 5 of Atomic Habits). If your child is struggling with study or homework habits, then you can use habit stacking to initiate a better study routine.
 - i. Remember, the formula for a habit stack is: After [CURRENT HABIT], I will [NEW HABIT].
 - ii. Additionally, you can use habit stacks as a way to incentivize the desired behavior. For example: After I practice piano for 10 minutes, I will play video games.
 - 2. 2. Craving: Make it attractive.
 - a. Humans are master imitators. As I cover in Chapter 10 of Atomic Habits, we imitate three groups: (1) the close, (2) the many, and (3) the powerful. In children's eyes, parents are both close and powerful (authority figures), so they often mimic the habits and routines of their parents. This is especially true for young children, who look to their parents for insights on how to engage with the world and solve problems.
 - b. Two of the biggest influences parents have on their children over time are (1) the genes they pass along to their kids and (2) the social environments they select for their kids. In other words, your children's habits are heavily

influenced by their peers, but you can influence the peers they hang around. You can choose which neighborhood you live in, which school you send them to, which extracurricular activities you expose them to, and more... and these environments are where they meet their peers.

- c. I put it in Atomic Habits: Join a group where the desired behavior is the normal behavior. When a child sees their friends performing a habit, it becomes a very attractive thing to do.

3. 3. Response: Make it easy.

- a. The idea is to make it as easy as possible in the moment to do things that payoff in the long run.”
- b. Many parents commit an error by making life too easy on their kids: they write papers for them, have tough conversations with coaches and teachers for them, and otherwise intervene whenever a problem or challenge arises. This might “make it easy” in the moment, but it violates the message I just shared above. Such hand-holding does not make it easy for your child to do the things that payoff in the long-run. Rather than doing the work for your child, you can make it easy for them to do the work themselves. For example, you can set up your child’s homework environment for success. Make sure they have a quiet place with pens, pencils, and paper and a room that is relatively free from distractions.

4. 4. Reward: Make it satisfying.

- a. Here’s the good news for parents: praise is naturally satisfying, and parents are in a perfect position to offer it. Every child enjoys being praised by their parents for a job well done. Of course, this is opposite of what many parents do. So often, parents criticize the very behavior they are hoping their children will exhibit.
- b. Praise the good, ignore the bad.
- c. That doesn’t mean you ignore every mistake your children make and never correct them. But it does mean that you remind yourself to focus on the good parts of their behavior and praise them for the actions you want to see.
- d. Ultimately, the idea is to make it satisfying to do the right thing.

- Week 9, 2/14/24, Lean Book Club Live at [SHS Conference](#)