Taking Control of our lives
Posted by unanumun - 20 Jul 2014 00:23

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I have been noticing that there is a common problem that many of us are having. Namely, the feeling that our lives are out of control. I see people writing in threads and chats that they are overwhelmed with what is going on in their lives, frustrated with things not working out, and procrastinating because they are not in the mood to get things done.

I myself have these feelings many times, but it used to be alot worse.

Until I got introduced to the world of productivity and time management. There are some great tools that I would to share with anyone that is interested. They come from a book called Getting Things Done by David Allen.

One of his big things is the concept of keeping clear written lists of everything that you have to do. He explains, based on his years of coaching, that as things are put on paper they go off your head, and once you trust your lists, your head will be cleared up and free to thing healthily and productively. His big example is that once he is aware of everything he needs to do, he can enjoy mowing his lawn because he knows and is aware of everything that he is not doing and has made the conscious decision to mow the lawn, and can now do so without his mind nagging him that there are other things he should be doing.

Another big concept of his is breaking things that you have to do, into clear "next actions". For example if you have to get your car fixed it can be an overwhelming thing for you. However if you stop and think what is the concrete next thing that I can do to get my car fixed you might realize that it is to call your friend to get the number to a good mechanic.

Deciding that you have to call your friend is alot easier to have on your mind than "get car fixed". This tool is amazing to be able to realize that even the bigger things that are sitting on your mind, usually really have one simple task for you do to do now.

by using just these two tools, you will immediately start to feel more in control of all those things your mind is telling you to do. It will help you relax and be able to think clearly.

there are alot more tips if anyone is interested.

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Re: Taking Control of our lives
Posted by skeptical - 20 Jul 2014 06:45

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What about the list you need to make in order to make a list?

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1. get a pencil...

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Re: Taking Control of our lives
Posted by Pidaini - 20 Jul 2014 17:22

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Thank You!!

Those are great tools to get to living that way, I personally do the same thing mentally as soon as I start to get nervous about things, I guess that writing down everything that I take as an overload would be obsessive......because by me, needing to do *anything* is an overload!!

Changing my attitude to just living in the moment, taking only the next step, and not worrying about the next (or the past) has changed my day to day life, for the exact reasons that you explained!! It is also what the 12 steps are tools for, to learn how to live that way, just not only in the "doing things" area, but in every area!!

Thank You for sharing!!

KUTGW!! and please KOP the good stuff!!!
That sounds eerily like living One Day at a Time!!!

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Re: Taking Control of our lives
Posted by unanumun - 20 Jul 2014 17:41

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Skep yup it helps for that too/

Pidaini,

I have found through working the system, that once I took the first few days to write everything down, it was easier to keep writing everything down afterwards. I have written everything that my mind told me to do in the last year in a half. I know that all I have to do is either in the application on my phone, in the inbox tray behind my desk, or the mailbox/email in box and those inboxes get emptied usually within a week. There is absolutely nothing else that I have to or want to do that is not there. (there are almost 400 items in the list but there are ways to keep that from overwhelming you. That's the next chapters in the book - how to properly organize everything)

The overload goes away with time as you keep capturing everything into your list. Whenever I am getting overwhelmed it is usually because my inboxes got too backed up or because I haven't properly reviewed everything which should be done once every week or two.

The problem with doing it mentally is that you are not freeing up your mind.

And yes I have learnt through this system to live one task at a time. I have my ups and downs with the system but that is life. As the author says, when you fall off the horse you just have to get back on and start clearing your thoughts again. It took me a long time to really put everything into practice but it has been a real life changer.

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Re: Taking Control of our lives
Posted by cordnoy - 22 Feb 2015 17:06

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some good stuff here!

How about it?

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Re: Taking Control of our lives
Posted by unanumun - 26 Feb 2015 17:10

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Interesting article on habits. Being that many of us have gotten into the bad habit of watching porn and masturbating (without going into the addiction issue) I thought I would share it.

The 5 Ways to Trigger a New Habit

by James Clear | Read this article on JamesClear.com

In his best-selling book, The Power of Habit (audiobook), author Charles Duhigg explains a simple three-step process that all habits follow. This cycle, known as The Habit Loop, says that each habit consists of…

The Trigger: the event that starts the habit.

The Routine: the behavior that you perform, the habit itself.

The Reward: the benefit that is associated with the behavior.

The image below shows how these three factors work together to build new habits. [1]

The 3 R's of Habit Change

Each phase of the loop is important for building new habits, but today I'd like to discuss the first factor: habit triggers.

There are five primary ways that a new habit can be triggered. If you understand each of them, then you can select the right one for the particular habit that you are working on. Here's what you need to know about each trigger…

Trigger 1: Time

Time is perhaps the most common way to trigger a new habit. Common morning habits are just

one example. Waking up in the morning usually triggers a cascade of habits: go to the bathroom, take a shower, brush your teeth, get dressed, make a cup of coffee, etc.

There are also less commonly recognized ways that time triggers our behavior. For example, if you pay attention you may notice that you repeat certain tasks mindlessly at different points during the day: heading off to get a snack at the same time each afternoon, taking a smoking break at the same time each morning, and so on.

If these patterns are bad habits, then you may want to take stock of how you feel at this time of day. In many cases, your habits are a signal of how you feel. Bored? Maybe your afternoon snacking habit is a way of breaking up the monotony of the day. Feeling lonely? Maybe your smoking break is a way to connect with fellow co-workers. The point is, if you understand the reason why these habits pop up at the same time each day, then it can become easier to find a new habit to fill the void. Bad habits are replaced, not eliminated.

How I use it: Time-based triggers can also be used to stick with routines over and over again. This is my preferred method. For example, every Monday and Thursday I write a new article and post it on JamesClear.com. The time and date drive this pattern. It doesn't matter how good or how bad I feel about the article. It doesn't matter how long or how short the article is. All that matters is that I stick to the schedule. The time triggers the habit.

Trigger 2: Location

If you have ever walked into your kitchen, seen a plate of cookies on the counter, and eaten them just because they are there in front of you, then you understand the power of location on our behavior.

In my opinion, location (i.e. environment) is the most powerful driver of mindless habits and also the least recognized. In many cases, our habits and behaviors are simply a response to the environment that surrounds us. The famous study on water versus soft drink consumption is one example of how our environment can either promote good habits or lead us toward bad ones.

However, location-based triggers are not simply things we respond to, they can also be things

we create. Multiple research studies by David Neal and Wendy Wood from Duke University have discovered that new habits are actually easier to perform in new locations.

One theory is that we mentally assign habits to a particular location. This means that all of the current places that you're familiar with (your home, your office, etc.) already have behaviors, habits and routines assigned to them. If you want to build new habits in these familiar locations, then you need to overcome the triggers and cues that your brain has already assigned to that area. Meanwhile, building a new habit in a new location is like having a blank slate. You don't have to overcome any pre-existing triggers.

How I use it: When I arrive at the gym, I head to the same spot each time to get ready, change into my lifting gear, and start my warm up. This location in the gym is a simple trigger that helps prompt my pre-workout routine (more on the power of a pre-game routine). There are bound to be some days when I don't feel like exercising, but the location-based trigger helps me overcome that and get into my workout ritual as painlessly as possible.

Trigger 3: Preceding Event

Many habits are a response to something else that happens in your life. Your phone buzzes, so you pick it up to check your latest text message. The little notification bar lights up on Facebook, so you click it to see what it signals. These are examples of habits that are triggered by a preceding event.

When it comes to triggers that are useful for building new habits, I find preceding events to be one of the most useful. Once you understand habit stacking you can develop all sorts of ways to tie new habits into preceding events. (Example: "When I make my morning cup of coffee, I will meditate for one minute.")

How I use it: For over two years, I have used a preceding event to stick with a daily gratitude habit. Each night, when I sit down to eat dinner, I say one thing that I was grateful for that day. (It's worth noting, one reason I believe I have been able to stick with this habit so consistently is because it is so small. The smaller the habit, the easier it is to build into your life.)

Trigger 4: Emotional State

In my experience, emotional state is a common trigger for bad habits. For example, you may have a habit of eating when you feel depressed. Or, you may default to online shopping when you feel bored. The emotional states of depression or boredom are triggers for these negative habits.

Unfortunately, although emotions are very common triggers for our behavior, I find that they are harder to control and utilize for building good habits. Mostly, I think this is because if you want an emotion to trigger a positive habit, then you often need to be consciously aware of the emotion as you are experiencing it. In other words, you have to be emotional and aware at the same time … and that can be hard to do. Paying attention is a powerful, but difficult, way to build better habits.

How I use it: I'm trying to get better about noticing when I am holding tension in my body and experiencing stress. When I do notice that I'm feeling particularly stressed, I'll use this emotional state to trigger a deep breathing habit.

I like to follow a 3-1-5 breathing pattern: three seconds in, pause for one second, five seconds out. I'll usually repeat this sequence three to five times. I find this little breathing exercise to be a great instant stress reliever. It's particularly useful because you can literally do it anywhere.

Trigger 5: Other People

It is probably no surprise to you that the people you surround yourself with can play a role on your habits and behaviors. What may be a surprise is just how big of an impact these people can make. One study in the New England Journal of Medicine found that if your friend becomes obese, then your risk of obesity increases by 57 percent — even if your friend lives hundreds of miles away.

As far as I can tell, the best way to make use of this information is to surround yourself with people who have the habits you want to have yourself. As Jim Rohn says, "You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with."

How I use it: I'm not a heavy drinker, but nearly every time I go out with friends I get a drink. Why is that? If I'm not yearning for a beer, why get one? It's simply a response to the environment that I am in and the people I am around. [2]

Before You Choose Your Trigger

No matter what trigger you choose for your new habit, there is one important thing to understand. The key is to choosing a successful trigger is to pick a trigger that is very specific and immediately actionable.

For example, let's say you want to build a new habit of doing 10 pushups each day at lunch time. You might start by choosing a time-based trigger and saying something like, "During my lunch break each day, I'll do 10 pushups." This might work, but it's not very specific. Do you do your pushups at the beginning of your lunch break? At the end? Any time?

Alternatively, you could create a trigger around a very specific preceding event that happens right around your lunch break. For example, "When I close my laptop to leave for lunch, I'll do 10 pushups." In this case, the very specific action of "closing the laptop" is a perfect trigger for what to do next (your 10 pushups). There is no mistaking when you should do the new habit.

As always, self-experimentation is the only real answer. Play around with these five habit triggers and see what works for you.

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Re: Taking Control of our lives
Posted by cordnoy - 10 Jan 2016 02:44
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Una,

you still writin' lists?

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Re: Taking Control of our lives
Posted by unanumun - 10 Jan 2016 17:40
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yup.

except i am still working on doing the lists. one thing at a time.

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