



## About & Fundamentals

- By: James Clear
- Notes by: Brandon Yeager at BrandonYeager.com
- Injury playing baseball.
  - Made college team...since not playing much...focused on making himself better.
- Habit is a routine, or behaviour that is performed regularly - and in many cases, automatically
  - Same habits = same results.
  - Began writing each Monday and Thursday on Habits on his blog at jamesclear.com
  - 1000 subscribers year 1, 100,000 by year 2.
  - Became speaker to companies on habit formation, behaviour change and continuous improvement.
  - Created Habits Academy, and wrote this book in 2018.
- Backbone of the book is his 4-step model: cue, craving, response, and reward...and the 4 laws of behaviour change that arise from it.
  - similar terms to BJ Skinner in 30's and Charles Duhigg from the Power of Habit.
  - Ideas to build your life, family, or business around.

## The Fundamentals

- Dave Brailsford and the British Cycling Team.
- Quote by James: Habits are the compound interest of self-improvement. Metaphor.
- Because change doesn't happen quickly, and we don't see the results instantly, we think it's not working.
  - Story: Also, think of plane flying from LA to NYC...being off 3.5 degrees lands you in Washington DC.
  - Current Trajectory trumps Current Results
  - Metaphor: Habits are a double-edged sword. Can take you down or build you up.
  - Ice Cube Progress...temp rises one degree at a time...until 32...ice begins to melt.
  - Habits need enough time to breakthrough the Plateau of Latent Potential.
  - Seed of EVERY habit, is a small, tiny decision.
  - Results have very little to do with goals, and mostly everything to do with systems.
  - Goals are the results you want to achieve. Systems are the processes that lead you there.
  - Fix inputs to fix the outputs.

## How are Habits Shape Our Identity (and vice versa)

- Changing habits is a challenge for 2 reasons. First, we try to change the wrong thing. Second, we try to change the habits in the wrong way.
- Framework: 3 Layers of behaviour change. Outcomes are about what you get. Processes are about what you do. Identity is about what you believe.
- Problem is the direction of change. Setting a new goal, does not change who we are.
  - Smoker saying...I'm trying to quit versus...I'm not a smoker. Huge shift in identity.
  - It's one thing to be a person who says I want something...versus I am something.
  - Goal is not to read a book, but become a reader.
  - Goal is not to run a marathon, but to become a runner.
  - Goal is not to learn to play a guitar, but to become a musician.
  - When behaviour and identity align (like an eclipse...my metaphor).
  - P.37 Interesting. Latin. Identity...from essentitas...being and identidem...repeatedly. our identity is literally our "repeated beingness".
  - Changing WHAT you do, changes WHO you are.
  - Important to let your identity, values, and principles drive feedback loop rather than results.

## Build Better Habits in 4 Steps

- Habits are simple solutions to recurring problems we face each day.
- 4 Stages...cue, craving, response, reward.
- Brain creates loops...if then, then that.
- All behaviour is driven by the desire to solve a problem...habits are designed to solve problems we face.

## 1st Law-Make it Obvious

- Man Who Didn't Look Right
  - We may not be aware of cues that start our habits.
  - Before building new habits, should get a handle on the current ones.
  - Talks about a Habit Scorecard.
  - Talks about not being good habits or bad habits, there are only "effective" habits.
  - Bad habits may not necessarily be bad in the quick state, but may be over time.
- Point and Call
  - Verbalize our bad habits and the bad outcomes that will or could arise.
- Best Way to Start New Habits - Implementation Intentions
  - 2 Most Common cues...time and location. Implementation Intentions leverage both.
  - When situation X arises, I will perform response Y.
  - OR...I will (BEHAVIOR) at (TIME) in (LOCATION). The key use an acronym BLT if rearranged. YES!
  - Writing down implementation intentions helps.
  - Habit Stacking - Stanford Professor BJ Fogg
    - stacking is a form of implementation intention. Instead of pairing with time and location, paired with another habit.
    - Fogg's Habit Stacking formula: After (HABIT #1), I will (HABIT #2). me: I rewrote the subject wrong.
    - Creates a continuous chain that gets to live from one to the next.
- Motivation is overrated.
  - Quote: LOVE THIS. Environment is the invisible hand that shapes human behaviour.
  - Be the architects of our environment.
  - Habits can be easier to change in new environments. eg...from next chapter is Vietnam soldiers' addictions to heroine.
  - One space, one use.
  - Build good habit cues...pictures, tools, resources.
- Secret to Self-Control
  - "disciplined" people are better at structuring their lives in a way that does not require heroic willpower and self-control.
  - For bad habits: make it invisible.

## 2nd Law-Make it Attractive

- How make a Habit Irresistible
  - Dopamine driven feedback loops.
    - Dopamine is released not only when you EXPERIENCE something, but when you THINK OR ANTICIPATE it.
    - It is the Anticipation of a reward, not the fulfillment of it, that gets us to take action.
    - Desire is the engine that drives behavior.
    - Habit Bundling...uses in conjunction with habit stacking.
    - After I (HABIT DOING), I will (HABIT I NEED)
    - After I (HABIT I NEED), I will (HABIT I WANT)
    - After I get done with lunch break, I will make 3 sales calls. After I make 3 sales calls, I will check social media.
    - After I pull out my phone, I will do 10 pushups. After I do 10 pushups, I will check FB.
- The Role of Family and Friends
  - We imitate the habits of 3 groups. The close. The many and The powerful.
  - The close...what those around us do, we do.
  - The Many...Most days, we'd rather be wrong with crowd than be right by ourselves.
  - Imitate the powerful.
  - Join a culture that promotes good behaviour.
  - personal quests turned to shared ones always survive easier.
- Find and Fix Causes of Bad Habits
  - hanging with Mike from Maine.
  - Make bad habits sound sooo bad and detrimental to us.
  - "Have" to vs "Get" to.
  - Reprogramming mind from bad to good...is good!

## 3rd Law-Make it Easy

- Walk Slowly, But Never Backward
  - The Best is the enemy of the good. We let procrastination, the need for more information and research, stop us in our tracks.
  - p.142...interesting. doesn't feel good to fail or be made fun of, so we do things to avoid that...we will do things...being in motion, but often fall short of taking action.
  - practicing not planning is where real results come to life.
  - Mastering a habit starts with repetition, not perfection...get your reps in.
  - Habits form based on frequency, not necessarily time.
  - Of times hears...How long to form a new habit? Should be asking...how many repetitions does it take to form a habit?
- Law of Least Effort
  - Generally, people will choose the path of least resistance...whatever is the easiest.
  - Make good habits easy and convenient to do.
  - Make your environment EASY to get the right actions done...want to draw? set paper and pens. want to improve diet? prepare veggies.
- How to Stop Procrastinating by Using the 2 Minute Rule
  - p.160. Great quote. Habits are like the entrance ramp to a highway. They lead you down a path and, before you know it, you're speeding toward the next behaviour.
  - 2 Minute Rule...when starting a new habit, find something that takes less than 2 mins to do.
  - Read before bed each night...turns into read 1 page.
  - Run 3 miles turns into put my running shoes on.
  - p.163 nice diagram.
  - Love this! If you show up at the gym five days in a row - even if it's just for two minutes - you are casting votes for your new identity.
  - good table on p.166...habit shaping.
- How make Good Habits Inevitable and Bad Habits Impossible
  - Commitment Devices...power interrupters...auto lights on.
  - Automate parts of life. Spending. Sleep. Good shoes.

## 4th Law-Make it Satisfying

- Cardinal Rule of Behaviour Change
  - A reward that is certain now is typically worth more than one that is merely possible in the future.
  - What is immediately rewarded is repeated. What is immediately punished is avoided.
  - Examples of Stopping going to dinner...put \$50 into account for Trip. Immediate.
  - Physical Shifting...marbles one jar to another...paper clips from one jar to another. Moving cards from one side to another.
  - Habit Tracking...crossing off days...visually recording wins. Doubles chances of success.
  - Helps focus be on the process. not breaking routines, etc.
  - Downside: you now have to do 2 habits! Sometimes that is more than people can take. But observing progress is soooo rewarding.
  - After I hang up the sales call, I will move a paperclip.
  - After I weigh myself, I will enter into MFP.
  - WHEN you miss due to an emergency...NEVER miss it in a row!
  - The bad workouts are sometimes the most important part.
- Accountability Partners
  - The more immediate a pain, the less likely the behaviour.
  - Customers pay on time when there are late fees.
  - Writing yourself a contract and signing it.

## Advanced Tactics - Going from Good to Great

- Truth about Talent
  - Habits are easier when they align with your natural abilities.
- The Goldilocks Rule
  - Novelty helps keep stagnation from happening.
- The Downside of Creating Good Habits
  - Habits + Deliberate practice = Mastery
  - Repeating habits helps build identity.
  - Change your identity to something more powerful and permanent. Im a CEO will only last so long.
  - The tighter we cling to an identity, the more difficult it can be to grow beyond it.
- Secret to Results that Last
  - Atomic habits...can I change transform your life? It is possible.
  - Small habits don't add up. They compound.