

Exploring Habits for Positive Behavior Change

Hello, and welcome everyone to Exploring Habits for Positive Behavior Change . I am one of your moderators along with my colleague Jeannie Kuehler. I would like to welcome our guest speaker, Maureen Princtor. Maureen, she is a registered and registered dietitian and a national board-certified health and wellness coach. She has more than 15 years experience coaching in the behavioral health field. Maureen has committed her career in helping individuals live happier and more productive lives by coaching them on being their best selves. I like to turn the presentation over to Maureen.

Thank you so much for allowing me to talk today about this topic. Over the last 15 years, working as a health and wellness coach, I have learned so much about human behavior and habits. My clients and I continue to learn every day and it absolutely fascinates me on my people, at certain points of their lives, developing good, or bad, habits and how that occurs. I have been studying this and trying to figure this out. What is at the core of how we, as humans, change your behaviors for the positive? It is still a big mystery of course to some extent. If there was a magic formula and I knew what it was, I would be sitting on their island somewhere counting my money. It is complicated. Habit developments depends on many factors. And so, I wanted to share, with you, a summary of what I have learned and maybe you could take away some information to help make your positive changes, in your life. Also, I want to spread the message to not give up on yourself on changing your habits. I'm sure, many of you, and myself even, just because we have tried in the past to change a habit, doesn't mean we should stop trying. There are many ways to go about it and many things to consider to try, maybe differently than you have before. So, think about this. Your life, today, is essentially the sum of your habits. How in shape, or out of shape you are, are a result of your habit. How happy, or unhappy you are, are the results of your habits. What we repeatedly do, even the habit of how we spend our time thinking, and what we are doing each day, ultimately forms a person we are, the things we believe in the personality we portray. What if we want to improve? We want to form new habits? What is it that we need to do to replace the old habits? What are some ways you can go about this?

So today, we'll talk about this topic in more depth. I want to discuss why behavior change is difficult. We have habits we may not realize. I want to share ways to form those new habits and eliminate the bad ones. And also, a biggie, how to manage habit slipping and procrastination, which is where, a lot of times, we give up. I want to talk about various methods to track habits. It is usually more work but it is important for habit development. Before we go into this, I want to know a little more from you. I want to know what habits you would like to change. Just one. No one, besides myself, and the moderators, will see your answers. We'll go ahead with his poll question.

Okay, what habits would you like to change is the question. People are putting a lot of eating habits or eating behaviors. Also, physical activity, productivity. What they do with their free time. Procrastination. I see worrying. Lateness.

That is very common these days. The worrying and the anxious feelings we have those thought processes, I see that is another one.

It looks like some people want to start new habits and others want to stop habits. Thank you everyone for answering.

Yes, absolutely. Great answers of what habits you would like to change. Before we head into how, let's discuss why this is so difficult. Let's give ourselves some grace first. One of the biggest hurdles, I'm sorry.

Next slide. One of the biggest hurdles to changing our habits is the anatomy and physiology of our brains which is a hard thing to fight. The earliest humans, 200,000 years ago, had a brain similar to ours. In particular, the Neo cortex in the region responsible for higher functions like a witch and plans for the future. Back then, versus now, it was the same. You are basically walking around with the same hardware as your early ancestors . If they were hungry, they went and hunted their food. If they were thirsty, they walked down to a stream. They had instant gratification. As interesting as that is, the human brain did not evolve and is not used to a delayed return environment. It is only in the last 500,000 years that our society has shifted to this delayed return environment. Our brains just haven't caught up. A lot of what we decide, now, affects us later versus instant gratification which is what early humans needed to survive. Here we are in 2020, in the middle of a pandemic faced with the fact that our outcomes are a lagging measure of our habits. I feel like that is so important. Our art comes are a lagging measure of our habits. This is where boredom comes in. We want results now, not later. Putting in work, time, energy to have it now is not giving us what our prehistoric brains really want. But, there is hope. We can understand this and there are ways to overwrite some of it. Our brains form connections based on what we repeatedly do in our lives, both good and bad , whether it is worrying about every little thing, shopping, even good things, hitting the gym or meditating. Your repeated behaviors become connections in the brain. Making, or breaking a habit, actually involves a rewiring of your brain. A person desires something because her brain has become sensitized to the substance, or experience. If you have heard about dopamine, when a urges satisfied, dopamine, a feel-good neurotransmitter is released. That dopamine reinforces habits. The first time you do something, that dopamine reward comes after the event. Each time, thereafter, WMA -- dopamine gets released earlier and earlier. So, dopamine proceeding the action of motivating you to perform a behavior in the future. So again, this why changing behavior is hard. You are fighting the urge of dopamine. Let's say, for example, if you see the ice cream in the refrigerator after dinner, just thinking about is raising dopamine. And the basic human instinct is to seek that out. We will touch later, in the webinar, on how you can use this to your advantage. But, this is reality. This is how our brains work. There is hope that we can overcome this to some extent. Another challenge we face which makes change so hard is this myth of radical change, an overnight success. Experts say the biggest mistake people make is they are not setting high enough goals or if you want massive results, you have to take massive action. On the surface, these phrases are inspiring. What we failed to realize is any quest for rapid growth contradicts the stabilizing force in our lives. The natural tendency of life is to find stability. So, anytime equilibrium is lost, the system is motivated to restore it. If you step too far outside those bounds of normal, those forces in your life will scream to get you back into equilibrium. I hear this every day. I went to the gym every day for two weeks and I got sick. Or, a big project came up at work I had to stop going and I haven't been back since. Nearly all of us have tried to make a big change. You finally work up the motivation to stick to the diet. You have core workers bring in cake for your birthday or every birthday. You commit to going for a run in the evening and within a week, you're staying late at work. Unfortunately, behavior change and be -- habits are built versus just erected instantaneously. Another big problem with establishing habits is our distorted way of thinking that we are all guilty of at some point. It is called all or nothing thinking patterns. It is a cognitive distortion. And, all or nothing thinking is when you think you have failed but really only had a setback. And, all your all or nothing thinking causes you to do is to go overboard and turn that day, or week, into a career, calling you to act in failing ways to keep up that cycle. If you are on a weight loss diet and you decided not to eat sweets, and for whatever reason, you eat a cookie, you have that all or nothing mindset and you think, I blew it. I rent a whole day. I might as well just have five cookies or 10 cookies and not worry about what I am eating. When instead, eight better reaction would be I blew it. I had one, but one is not so bad. I will stop here and move forward and get back on it. It is a common thing with behavior change. And finally, I want to talk about the concept of discomfort. It is more uncomfortable to go on a walk in the morning versus staying in the warm bed. And, what we really need, to be willing to

do, is experience that discomfort and change. This is something we really don't talk about when it comes to behavior change. In fact, sometimes we think we should be able to get rid of the discomfort. We miss acknowledging the changes uncomfortable and takes, not just a can-do attitude, but an element of courage. It often doesn't feel good, in the moment, to initiate something new. No matter how much willpower we have, that discomfort may still be there. I teach clients mindfulness to accept whatever they are experiencing, as it arises, whether it is unpleasant or neutral. That could help you tolerate that discomfort. One of my former coaching clients, let's call her Mary. She showed me how this perspective can make a difference. We discussed the concept of discomfort. We talked about being honest on what level of discomfort she was willing to endure. I even had a scale. I asked her what level of discomfort are you willing to endure on a scale of one to numb 10. 10 being the most extreme that you can't stand it and she came back with a six. When she realized that the idea of discomfort is the part of it, she tried to stop getting away with lust discomfort and was able to develop a habit of getting up earlier so she could have less stress in her life and get physical activity. It was a small shift in thinking but it can be very powerful. What I would like to know from you, we are going to do another poll question. What do you think is your main reason for struggling with behavior change and developing new habits? Okay, I have a question and I would like you to answer as many as apply to you. The question is what is the main reason you struggle with change? There is a radio button next to the response. Please click on all the radio buttons that apply to you. I usually set ambitious goals and have trouble reaching them. It is hard for me to tolerate the discomfort when I tried to change. Or, I get frustrated when I don't see change happening quickly. Or, I get tired of doing what I need to do to reach my goals. Or, other. And again, please use the poll question to answer this. We are not broadcasting results, but I will let you know what the results are as soon as people are done entering. We still have a few people answering.

Maureen, it looks like the majority of people are saying I get frustrated when I don't see change happening quickly and then second, I get tired of doing what I need to do to reach my goals. It is followed up by a tie, I usually set ambitious goals and have trouble reaching them and it is hard for me to tolerate the discomfort I feel when I try to change.

Thank you so much for your honesty and being able to give us an idea. It is frustrating. We put the time and effort in. It goes back to your prehistoric brain that want sent instant gratification. Learning about that and understanding that, there are ways to overwrite that. That will be important.

Let's move on to the next slide. Like I mentioned before, I've been coaching clients on behavior change for any years. A huge influencer for how I coach is Jane clear, the author of the book atomic habits. He writes about habit and behavior change. In his work, he has identified three layers of behavior change. The first layer is changing outcomes. That will be more like losing weight or winning a championship. What is the outcome? Most of our goals, that we said, are associated with this level. The second layer is changing your process. That is more concerned with changing your habits and your systems. Implementing the new routine at the gym. Decluttering your desk or having a better workflow. Developing your meditation practice. That is how you will get to your goal or to your outcome. Most habits that we are building our associated with this level. Then the third, and the deepest layer, is looking, and changing your identity. This level is concerned with changing your beliefs, your self-image, even your judgments about yourself. This is who you are and who you want to be. Outcomes are about what you get. Processes are about what you do. Identity is about what you believe. When it comes to building habits that last, the problem is that one level is better, or worse, than the other. You need all of them. This is why I wanted to bring this up, the identity part. To build identity based habits, we have to focus on who we wish to become. People think I want to be skinny, that is your outcome. If I stick to the diet, I will be skinny. That is the process. They set goals and determine the actions they should should

take without taking in account their true beliefs that drive their actions. What say you want that her health. Right? If you continue to prioritize comfort over accomplishment, you will be drawn to relaxing rather than going on daily walks. It is hard to change your habits if you change your underlying beliefs that lead to your previous bad behaviors. You are much more likely to work out every day if you believe you are an athlete, it is a little extreme, for if you are a runner, you'll be more likely to run. You don't have to force it this way. You are simply asking the type of person you believe. The biggest barrier to this positive change is identity conflict. Good habits can make sense, rationally. But, if they conflict with her identity, you will fail to maintain them. A practical way you can think about identity change is by writing about who you want to be. I have my clients do this all the time and I think it really helps them frame their thinking about who they want to be and what they have to do. I will throw out an example. One of my clients, her identity statement was I want to be an Abbott walker and feel vigorous, and youthful, by being a role model for my family. I will be physically active as long as I can to make weight management, and stress management, part of my everyday. Wanting something is different than being something. Therefore, you have to ingrain any new habits into the fiber of your being. The most practical way to change, who you are, is to change what you do. But first, you have to figure out who you want to be. So, again, I want to do another poll. That's okay. Just take a moment and think about one of the goals you want to reach. Now, right an identity statement for that goal. You don't have to take a lot of time to do this. But, just raise your hand when you are done. Then, we will move on. I want you to take the time to think about who you want to be. Real basic.

Maureen, I will let you know when we have a good amount of people raising your hand. We have a majority of people who are done.

Excellent. All right. So, the next slide is how to create good habits. According to James clear why talked about before, a habit is a routine or behavior that is formed regularly for automatically. How do we develop that? First, you have to ask yourself some questions. How can I make it obvious? How can I make it attractive? How can I make it easy? And, how can I make it satisfying? All of you, I'm sure, and myself, have wondered, why don't I do what I'm say I'm going to do? Why don't I lose weight, stop smoking or say for retirement? Why do I say something important and they never make time for it? The answer to those questions can be found in these four loss of how to create a good habit. So, you want to make cues for good habits obvious in your environment. If you want to practice the guitar, put it in the living room where you walk by. If you want to drink more water, fill up a few water bottles each morning and put them around the house. Make it easy. One of my clients changed habits that was distracting him from being productive by using his computer only for work. If he was doing social media or emailing or have personal things, he decided I can't do that because it is too distracting. It is not keeping me from staying on track. Making it obvious that work is the only primary goal. So, he would use his tablet for reading and he would only uses phone for social media and texting. He had placed those in particular places. The point is is he is making it easier on himself by placing these things in those particular places and having boundaries for himself. Like we discussed earlier, habits are dopamine driven feedback loops. Any behavior that is habit-forming, taking drugs, eating junk food, browsing social media is associated with a higher level of dopamine. Dopamine is released when you experience pleasure or you anticipate it. It is the anticipation of a reward, not the fulfillment of it, which usually gets us to take action. But, reprogramming your brain to enjoy habits, we have to make them more attractive, by learning to associate them with positive experiences. For example, exercise. Exercise can be associated with a challenging task such as draining your energy or bring you down. But, you can view it in a way to discuss and develop skills and strengths. Instead of saying I need to run in the morning, say it is time to build endurance and get fast. And finances, saving money is associated with sacrifice. But, you can associated with freedom instead of living before your current means. Making it attractive. We want to

reduce friction associated with good behaviors. When friction goes, habits are easier. Optimize your environment to make actions easier. You want exercise, put out your workout clothes, your shoes or your bag. You want a diet, chop up fruits and vegetables and put them in containers. It is easy to start to bed. I see this all the time my job is to dock to them about this. That excitement . You end up trying to do too much, too soon. So, what I like to talk about to counteract that is to start out with two minutes. What I mean by that? When you start he knew habit, it should take less than two minutes to do. If you want to read it tonight, before bed, read one page. If you want to do 30 minutes of yoga, pick out your yoga mat. Commit to two minutes. The idea is to make your habit as easy as possible to start. We need that gateway habit. For example, running a marathon, that is a very difficult goal and it is very hard. But, if you run a 5K, that is hard. If you walk 10,000 steps, that is moderately difficult. Walking 10 minutes is easy. Putting on your running shoes is very easy. Your goal is maybe two run a marathon but the gateway habit is putting on your running shoes. The point to master is to show up. You can't improve a habit that doesn't exist. You have to make it easy to start and the rest will follow.

We can convert these laws to learn how to break a bad habit. Reducing exposure to the cues that cause bad habits, you will spend less time in that situation. Inversion of the first law, make it invisible. Don't have ice cream in the house. One of my clients started doing online grocery pickups and only with purchase food she needed and were in her eating plan. First, the impulse buying of high sugar foods, her poison, if you will, when she went into the grocery store. Inversion of the second law, make it unattractive. Again, pushing over that mindset. I like the benefits of avoiding bad habits. You can really use cognitive skills and use them to your advantage. Telling yourself that cigarettes really stink or tell yourself that sitting a leading role in your pants not fit. Make it difficult, too. Increase the number of your steps between you and your bad habit. Or, use a commitment device. A Fit Bit, no this is something that you know you need to do but it will not be easy. Restrict your future choices to the one that benefits you. And make it unsatisfying. Have a MAC accountability partner to watch her behavior. Make the cost of your bad habit painful , public. I am committed to this and I don't want to let my person and myself down.

What are some ways we can keep our habits on track? Well, first, and in my opinion, one of the most effective ways is self-monitoring, or even have tracking. And some of you may have done this before. But, self monitoring, is possibly the single most mechanism to change any thought or behavior. It is an actually broad term and it encompasses tracking yearly any problem to assess your progress or lack of progress. It is a skill that is ingrained in our lives. We are constantly monitoring ourselves, stepping on scales, looking at the speedometer or counting calories. I do find it is the basis of that ahahah experience. Do I really eat that many calories? Self-monitoring allows us to uncover necessary changes and set realistic goals. Study after study shows just monitoring your behavior is a powerful intervention in of itself. It does require planning. Fortunately, there are a lot of different technologies, options, that can make self-monitoring easier and more effective. I will give you some specific ideas in a bit. James clear is big on making a list that you check off every day of the habits you want to make part of your identity. Another effective way of keeping habits on track is accountability. A partner, a friend, a coworker. Who will you report back to regarding your commitment? And as part of your program, you do have access to coaching, most of you, anyway, to help you set goals and have short-term accountability. There are Facebook groups, online groups, and a lot of diet programs are based around accountability. I tell my clients, even a coach needs a coach. I need help with certain aspects of my life. That is why we have bosses and supervisors. We need accountability. Do you ever think about how professional athletes, or CEOs, how they live their lives? There are a lot of books written about this. I was the, these people are not perfect. They are human too. One thing they have figured out is sticking to a schedule. Their schedules they follow for the most part. They have to go to practices, they have to

go to meetings. They have to have their lives a certain way. They are very much accountable to a lot of different people. Just an example. Keeping your habits on track, think about this. Look at just improving your habits 1% at a time. If you can get 1% better, each day, for one year, you will end up 37 times better than when you are done. If you get 1% worse each day, for one year, you will decline down to zero. We are usually drawn to the media portrayal of the overnight success. But, it is really the small, daily, unnoticeable actions that lead to progress. When we think about 1%, that seems like it is so small, but the holy Grail of how to change is not that single 1% in prison, but thousands of them. A bunch of tiny habits stacking up. Each one a fundamental unit of the system. It could take months, it could take years. But, the improvements will come if you focus on upping your game by 1%. So, some more ideas to explore to keep your habits on track. Automate your habits. Today, with technology, automation can handle quite up that of different task. Mail delivery services, online grocery shopping, pharmacy can refill your prescription. Habits that handover can free up time and energy when you handed over to technology. If you can automate something that is a habit, that is important to your health, do it, if you can. It can be useful for behaviors, to have them in frequently. If you're rebalancing your investment portfolio or something that you don't do real often, that technology can help you to remember to do that for you. So, adjusting your environment. We covered that before in some of what we talked about creating good habits. Making sure your environment is conducive to what you want to do. If you don't want a small, stop going to the gas station to get cigarettes. It does sound simple, but those are realities. Or, join a culture where your desired behavior is the norm. Those of you who are for their with CrossFit, this is a great example. Or, like a walking or running club. Stranding yourself with people that you want to become like. Another way of changing your perspective, that thinking pattern we talked about. In order to get out of that negative inking pattern, you need to accept that it is okay to fall off. It is okay to do something wrong and it is okay to do something right. You will not be perfect. We have to stop holding ourselves to this high expectation that we wouldn't hold someone that we care about and love to. Give yourself permission to fail a little bit in the little things. Allow yourself, even for some players, knowing that will happen. Knowing that you eat a cookie now and again. Even be ready to forgive yourself. It does come down to your prospect. I had a client, let's call him Bill. He started trying to change his mind every time he wasn't in the mood to do something that was for his health. Especially, during the workday. He was working at home. He didn't used to with a pandemic. But then he had to. He was finding himself laying down during the day, here and there. He would say I am going to lay down for a quick nap. Then he would end up taking naps all the time. Anyways, he started to really change the way he thought about that. He started forcing himself to stay up. He knew that taking naps were not beneficial to his health and to his work.

So, when it comes to building a habit, feedback is often delayed. It can be difficult to visualize the progress you are making. Perhaps, you have been running for month but you still don't see a change in your body. Or, you managed to meditate for 16 days and you still feel stressed. Habit formation is a long race. It often takes way more time than we would want for those desired results to appear. While you are waiting for those long-term rewards to accumulate, you still need a reason to stick with it. You still need a reason to get attractive. You need immediate feedback. That is where habit trackers can come in. We touch on that before, habit tracking creates that visual cue. It helps motivate you. And it gives you some satisfaction in your record another successful instance of your habit. The most basic format, you can get a calendar and croissant each day you stick with your routine. You can get an old-fashioned planner. Some players have a section for habit tracker. You can develop your own spreadsheet. And like everything else, there are apps for habit tracking. Just a few that I have found and like is Habitca , Streaks, another one is StickK. Depending on what kind of learner you are, some of these strategies could be worth a try. You could even get out an old-fashioned notebook. One of my clients use a bullet journal. He is a visual learner. And if you're not aware with bullet journaling, you should check it out. If

you are, like him, a visual learner. You have to decide what habit you want to track. You would need to take some time to reflect your current habits and on the habits you would like to incorporate into your routine. It can be anything. It could be basic like brushing your teeth or complex habits like yoga. Implementing a yoga routine. The important thing is your habits are doable and measurable. Just to give you some ideas, from the habits I have tracked, eight hour sleep, walk, or, drinking water. I have meditation, I haven't incorporated yet. It is a work in progress. And then to read for 20 minutes. I have planner. I do those things. I can see where I'm making progress or where I need to put more work in. Now I want to hear from you. What ideas do you have? There are probably other ideas I don't have listed. But based on what we have talked so far, how will you track your new habits, if you did start something in the near future? So, please write your answers in the poll question court says type your answer here.

Maureen, we have people talking about keeping logs, or journals. Spreadsheets. Someone said old-school index cards.

Yes. Perfect. I love it.

A calendar.

Text friends for accountability. Fit Bit is a great one. It is super popular. Just writing a list. Anything that you can do to have that visual to give you that feedback.

Great, thank you everyone for entering.

Right. Next slide, please.

Here is a biggie. How to manage that procrastination. I know a lot of you have put that on one of the reasons for being the most difficult to change. We all have those. I noticed we procrastinate on applying our habits, especially when they don't give instant gratification. But, on a neurological level, procrastination is the result of the emotional part of your brain. Its strong-arms the reasonable, rational level of the brain which is the pre-cortex. The logical part of your brain surrenders when you decide to watch Netflix instead of going on a walk. There is a way to get the logical part of your brain some assistance. When you notice that you logical -- procrastination is a behavior that helps with stress. Whatever we put off is linked to something that is stressing us out. If you're stressed, you want to escape that stressor. We try to avoid it instead of just doing what we need to do. And, it momentarily makes you feel good and avoids the stress. I bet you have used counting, sometime in your life, as a psychological trick to get yourself to do something. Maybe you counted to three before jumping off a diving board or tried counting to 10 to calm herself down. The reason these tactics work as they help us focus on what we need to do. It cuts out all the consequences running in our brain that we don't like to consider. Several years ago, a CNN contributor, a world-famous speaker, Mel Robbins, she found her own little counting trick. Back then, she is unemployed. She is financially a mess. Her husband's business had gone under. She was in financial trouble and drinking too much. But, one night she noticed a commercial on TV that showed a rocket launch. It was five call . The next day, she decided to launch out of bed, like a rocket. She was laying in bed. Her alarm goes off. She counted backwards, she stood up and that is how she discovered the five second rule. You changed everything for her. She'll even say a sound so stupid. But, what it does, it prevented her from talking herself out of staying in bed or saying things to herself like one more minute. It just stopped her from making excuses. She started using this and other areas in her life. She was progressing so much. She realized that the right time will never

come. So, she just has to start. That five second rule will help you overwrite those feelings. Basically, it is a psychological intervention happen a small one. Remember, feelings are just suggestions. This is why these psychological interventions can work and override those procrastination urges. Mel Robbins talked about a neuroscientist, Antonio DiMaggio. His research suggests as much as 95% of our decisions are ultimately decided by feelings, not facts. He called us feeling machines that think and not thinking machines that feel. In other words, we usually think and feel. The often -- to solve this problem, Mel Robbins suggested that we let professional athletes inspire us. They consider feelings suggestions, rather than absolutes. This allows them to overwrite them. With the five second rule, it helps them push further to their goal. If you never thought you could run, swim, bike further, but you did it anyways, you know it is possible. Again, what you're doing and that five second rule, is psychological intervention on a small scale. You are changing your behavior to impact on how you feel. When people procrastinate, the present self benefits by avoiding unpleasant work. But, the future self-pay surprise. Just do something, anything, to get started. Another way to manage habitus is habit stacking. Habit stacking is something James Clear talks about in his book. You probably have some habits that you do every day. Basically you connect and you habit with the habit that you are a do. After I pour my cup of coffee, I will meditate for one minute. After I take off my shoes, I will immediately change into my workout clothes. After I make dinner, I will say one thing I am grateful for. Just acting habits you want to do with something you already do. And finally, we have dealt with this is disconnect. Our devices, they are distractions. There wonderful in some ways but they can be to distracted. You may have to get dressed up. You may have to put your laptop, at night, we are trying to go to bed, and a different room. Or, disable certain apps on your phone. There are a lot of really good -- difficult ways to do this. But, sometimes drastic measures are needed. All right. Next slide.

My hope for you today is you can walk away with just one idea of how to start changing your habits and behaviors. This will help you lead a more happy and healthy life. We talked about a lot of different ways to do this today. There is no magic formula. But, there are different tricks you can try. I encourage you to try what Mary did. She started to get up a few minutes earlier every day. And, that led to her to have enough time to work. It took time and it took rolling on that. Orville, my clients who change how he drove to work every day so I didn't drive by the gas station. He changed his environment. I really feel like there is a lot of information here. I hope that all of you can take something from this. I do have one last poll for you today. So, starting today, what will you commit to doing differently to practice your new habits? And you can just type them there. Disconnect. Running shoes. Time to do the map. I love it. The five second rule.

A lot of people, actually, Maureen, they have something to say about this. Talking about raking it down until. Putting my books where I see them.

I love it. This is great. Holding myself accountable. Making it easier to get started. Those small, little, two-minute habits. Those can be extremely effect of. I encourage you, if you want to learn more about this, I have resources listed on the last slide. Like I said, please don't give up on changing your habits. If you have tried, in the past, and were not able to continue, you may need just to adjust your thinking about it. Then, figure out what habits align with the person you want to be. What is your identity? Maybe write your identity thing. Accepting the discomfort of change. Committing to 1% improvement of what you're doing. Just don't give up. Thank you so much for letting me talk today.

Yeah, thank you, Maureen. I do want to remind all of you that, you have resources here, I guess you should talk about those? Did you want to talk about those real quick, Maureen?

Share. Atomic habits by James Clear. That is an excellent book. It gives a lot of really useful and applicable information on how to develop habits. The five second rule I talked about, Mel Robbins, she is phenomenal. If you have seen her Ted talks, she has some of those. There are some articles that talk about research and the science behind habit development that might be able to give you some more information.

I want to let everyone know that these are active links. If you click on the blue titles, they will open up to the page. You can click on those right now if you like and can bookmark those for later. I will switch the slide on you here in a moment. Okay, thank you so much for this. I want to let everyone know, don't forget about your EAP services. We are here. We understand everyone has a tough time in their life. We have a big chuckle we are doing every day. We are here to help you get through that. We would love to have you use our services to make your life better. You can call the toll-free number. Your company has a specific toll-free number for you as well as a website. If you are not sure what those are, please call HR and ask your manager to see if they can provide that information. Maureen, it looks like we might have time for one question. I have a simple one. They used to say it takes 21 days to change or make a habit or making you habit. So, is that true? If not, how long does it really take to making you habit?

That is an interesting question. Of course, there is no clear answer. But, I will say, in most cases, it will take much longer than 21 days and that is where the frustration comes. And, it depends on what you want to do. But, if you are using the idea of the 1% improvement, or the two minutes, I will do something for two minutes, then it will take much, much longer to get to where you want to be and live out that identity, then 21 days.

Okay, great. Mary and I used to coach together. I think a lot of times people get frustrated. They reach the 21 day park and something hasn't magically happened and they tend to think there's something wrong. It is definitely not that. We all move along in our own level of comfort or discomfort through the process. Thank you so much.

Change is a process. It is not an overnight thing. If you can walk away feeling falling off as part of the process, then, just keep on. Just keep on, keep on.

Yeah, absolutely. Some people talk about what do you do when you get a hick up like that? You run into something and you get off track. How do you get started again?

Well, and I think it goes back to where you are at in the process. But, in some instances, you may have to start all over, that's okay. But, just making sure you are getting back into the habit that you know that is in line with who you want to be. And, think about, if I am going to say be a walker, even if I am only starting off with walking for 10 minutes, then I will be able to build on that. And then if you fall off again, you get right back on it again.

Good point. It doesn't necessarily mean if I was running five miles and I stop, I will go off the first day and run five miles again. Build up gradually. Great advice. Thank you for sharing your expertise with us today. I want to ask everyone to please answer the satisfaction poll that is on your screen. You click the radio button next to your response and please rate your satisfaction with the day's webinar. We are not podcasting the results. Again, just click the radio button next to your response and that will broadcast your answer to us. And, I want to thank everyone for joining. Your certificate of completion is here for download. If you didn't get your questions answered, I encourage you to call in and talk to one of the EAP representatives. Thank you so much for joining today and have a wonderful day. [Event Concluded]

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