



Westchester Institute
for Human Development

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Welcome!

**Community Support Network Transition
Institute 2022**

Strategies to cope with stress and promote both wellness and independence

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Teaching Skills that Matter =
High Levels of Student Success



Qualities of a Sustainable & Independent Learner

- Resilience
- Social & Communication Skills
- Self-Advocacy
- Self-Regulation
- Self-Reflection
- Social Responsibility
- Problem Solving
- Management & Organization



Facts about Emotions

- Humans are born with the capacity for basic emotions, including anger, joy, interest, surprise, fear, and disgust.
- Although humans are born with a biological readiness for shame and guilt, these emotions require more cognitive development and emerge later in life.
- Emotions are time limited and subside after reaching a peak intensity.

From Emotion Regulation in Psychotherapy by Robert L. Leahy, Dennis Tirsch, and Lisa A. Napolitano. Copyright 2012 by The Guilford Press.



Facts about Emotions

- Although emotions are of relatively brief duration, they are self-perpetuating.
- When an emotion persists for days, it becomes a mood. Unlike emotions, moods lack a clear prompting event. Moods may last for months, days, and years. Depression is a mood, but sadness is an emotion.

Emotion Regulation in Psychotherapy by Robert L. Leahy, Dennis Tirch, and Lisa A. Napolitano. Copyright 2012 by The Guilford Press.



Function of Emotions

- Emotions motivate actions
- Provide us with information
- Communicate/influence others
- Communicate to the self/self-validate



Labeling Emotions

- Name it to Tame it
- The more granular the better
- Separation between self and emotion: "The emotion I'm experiencing is..." versus "I'm...."
- Acceptance versus fighting it
- Validate and Understand
- No Judgement.



Second Layer of Emotions

- It isn't the emotion itself that is a problem, it is the reaction/response to that emotion
- Second Arrow principle
- Anxious about being anxious, sad about being sad.
- There are no "good" and "bad" emotions.
- Living life will include experiencing the range of emotions



Emotional Regulation Steps

- 1) Label first - Remember Name it to Tame it
- 2) What information is this emotion telling me? What action is it motivating me to do?
- 3) Identify the outcome of that action - what needs is that action really serving?
- 4) Acceptance of the emotion: Making room for it: Recognition of the discomfort and the difference between discomfort versus damage



Emotional Regulation Steps

- 1) Separate immediate moment versus longer term values and goals
- 2) Identify what action would move you closer to your goals - versus what would satiate needs in that moment
- 3) Validate and Understand
- 4) Empower self to make choice

"You don't need to feel good to get going, you need to get going to give yourself a chance at feeling good" - Brad Stulberg



Thoughts

- What are Thoughts?
- What are they not - They are not facts
- Interpretations of our world - our mind trying to make sense of what is happening - stories our mind is telling us



Automatic vs. Intentional Thoughts

- We do not choose or have control over what thoughts occur automatically, we do control what thoughts we "listen" to or allow to guide our actions
- Like breathing - involuntary and voluntary
- Can't tell ourselves not to do something - give self something to do instead



Separation of Person from Thoughts

- You are not your thoughts. "I can't do this" versus "I notice I'm having the thought that I can't do this"
- Your mind is a body part - it has a function - it's function is to interpret the world and produce thoughts
- Your job isn't to control what thoughts are produced, it's to control what thoughts you listen to
- You are in charge, your mind works for you. You don't work for it.
- It very often offers thoughts that are wrong and/or not helpful!



Thanking the mind

- Thank you for doing your job of providing me with a possible way of interpreting this situation...but
- Rational versus irrational
- When rational - accept it and make a plan - be solution focused
- When irrational - gently unhook - thank mind for the suggestion or doing it's job of trying to protect



Cognitive Reframing

- What was your mind's initial reaction or interpretation
- What is an alternative way of viewing that situation
- Choosing to listen to/act on that thought instead
- Viewing challenges in a positive way, opportunities to learn/to improve?
- How do you view the intention of others?
- Get to versus have to?



Combine Thoughts with Emotional Regulation

- Ask self what thoughts am I experiencing when also labeling and naming emotions
- Thoughts can be water or gasoline to the emotion
- Same process
 - 1) Accept versus fighting
 - 2) Validate and understand
 - 3) What's the outcome of listening to this thought or emotion - who's needs is that serving
 - 4) Make a choice that brings you in the direction of your longer term values not needs of that moment



How to Practice

Situation - Thoughts - Feelings - Behavior

- Practice separating the categories - understand the process at work during day to day life
- Make it your own - use your notes app, a journal, whatever works for you!
- Positively reinforce self for the small wins
- Learn to live by: Actions First, Emotions Follow
 - Lead with actions regardless of feeling, feeling will catch up



Changing a narrative

- What's the story your mind is telling you about yourself / yourself in this situation
- Identify the narrative: Attempt to separate objective facts from subjective
- Exercise to Practice - Think of your life like a book and you are the author - identify a previous chapter that has already been written. Now, try to rewrite that chapter without changing any of the facts, but see how you can create a new narrative.
- Now apply to current challenge: you are the author - without changing any facts, try to write a different story / narrative about yourself / yourself in that situation
- Can be about your ability, your ability to manage stress, your ability to overcome. See how different it can be.



Mindfulness

Awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally - Jon Kabat-Zinn

- It is not clearing your mind
- "Rep" during mindfulness practice
- Observation - how does it relate to self-regulation - to thoughts and feelings.
- That is what we want to pay attention to - along with physical sensations.
- Difference between "going with a thought" versus noticing and letting go and pulling attention back to what you were focusing on



Mindfulness

- How to Practice
- Breathing meditation
- Use apps
- Walking, doing the dishes, having your morning coffee...



Values

- Values guided actions
- We feel good when we act in consistency with our values
- Identify your values - on a regular basis check in to see how you are doing with acting in consistency with your values
- Make a list for yourself - identify actions that are an example of how you can live in consistency with each value
- Driving force of your behavior - your guiding light



Resilience

- Definition: Bouncing back, learning from the experience
- Not 'I have it' or 'I don''
- Can be strengthened and developed or weakened
- Think of as a tool - you can take out and apply when you need it
- Flexibility is an important component



Resilience

- Become a resilient thinker
- Locus of Control: Internal versus External
- Global versus specific explanatory style
- Cognitive skills that underpin resilience can be learned over time
- Growth Mindset - power of yet
- Part of being resilient is being ok with the temporary stress/discomfort that a situation might produce



Healthy Habits

- Creating a schedule
- Purposeful relaxation - "Emptying our cup"
- Productive breaks
- Physical activity
- Get outside
- Social engagement
- Hobbies



Habit Formation

Habit: an automatic response to a specific situation

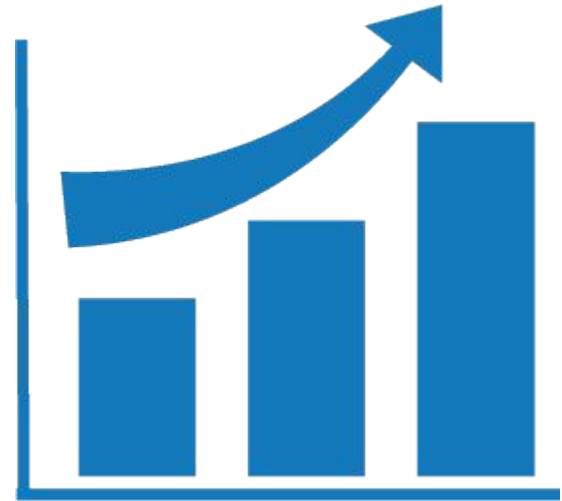
*Habits will form whether you want them to or not.
Whatever you repeat, you reinforce.*

Every habit has an ultimate purpose of solving a problem with as little energy and effort as possible



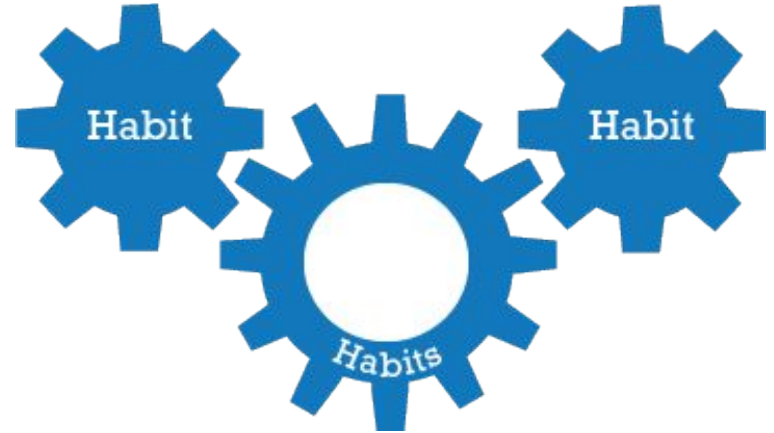
Results Compound

- Small changes often appear to make no difference until you cross a threshold.
- Results typically compound, and the most powerful outcomes of any compounding process are delayed so you need to be patient



Habits not Goals

- Goals are the results you want to achieve. Systems are about the processes that lead to those results.
- Your habits are your system
- You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems.



Who are you?

- 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 from your habits. Improvements are only temporary until they become part of you are
- 3 layers of behavior change: Outcome - Process - Identity
- Old identity can sabotage new plans for change
- Progress requires unlearning - unlearning some previously held beliefs about yourself



Who do you want to become?

The goal is not to read a book, the goal is to become a reader

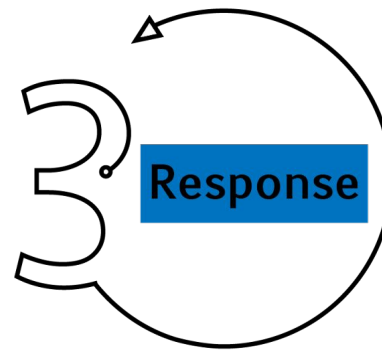
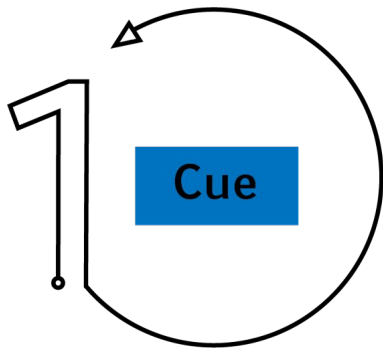
The goal is not to run a marathon, the goal is to become a runner

- 1) Decide who you want to be
- 2) Prove it to yourself with small wins.
(New identity requires new evidence)
- 3) The reason habits matter is they can change your beliefs about yourself
- 4) "I'm going to do this, because this is who I am"



How to Build a Habit

The process of building a habit can be divided into 4 simple steps:



Constant Feedback Loop

- Those 4 steps are a constant feedback loop.
- All behavior is driven by the desire to solve a problem
- Sometimes the problem is you are experiencing discomfort and want to relieve it
- Sometimes the problem is you notice something good and you want to obtain it



4 Laws of Behavior Change

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1. Make it Obvious
 2. Make it Attractive
 3. Make it Easy
 4. Make it Satisfying

Bibliography

Emotion Regulation in Psychotherapy by Robert L. Leahy, Dennis Tirch, and Lisa A. Napolitano. Copyright 2012 by The Guilford Press.

Clear, J. (2018). *Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones*. New York, NY: Avery.