

Medical Weight Management Full/Modified Meal Replacement Program

What you'll need for class today...
Something to write with and paper
and a comfortable place to sit.

Session #12: Habits



Mindful Minute

Getting a
Good
Nights
Sleep Video
Check In

Which skills discussed in
the video did you practice
this past week?

How does practicing good
sleep hygiene help you
with your health goals?

Check-In

- Successes/Wins?
- Challenges/Struggles?
- Questions for the teacher/group?



Quotes of the Week

“You leave old habits behind by starting out with the thought, ‘I release the need for this in my life.’”

Wayne Dyer

“I have learned that champions aren’t just born; champions can be made when they embrace and commit to life-changing positive habits.”

Lewis Howes



Creating New Habits

- Have you ever beat yourself up because you were not able to stop an unhelpful habit or create a new helpful one?
- What are your current feelings about your ability to create new habits?



Why do brains build habits?

- Save energy and time
- Novel experiences create a lot of brain activity, so creating habits reduces brain activity to be able to focus on other things.
- To prevent us from having to re-examine, re-explore, and re-decide everything in our world



Why do brains build habits?

Habits are things that we do or think automatically because they were repeated so many times.

There are probably some habits you'd like to break and new ones you'd like to build. But this can be a challenge. Why? Your brain loves routine!

Why are habits important

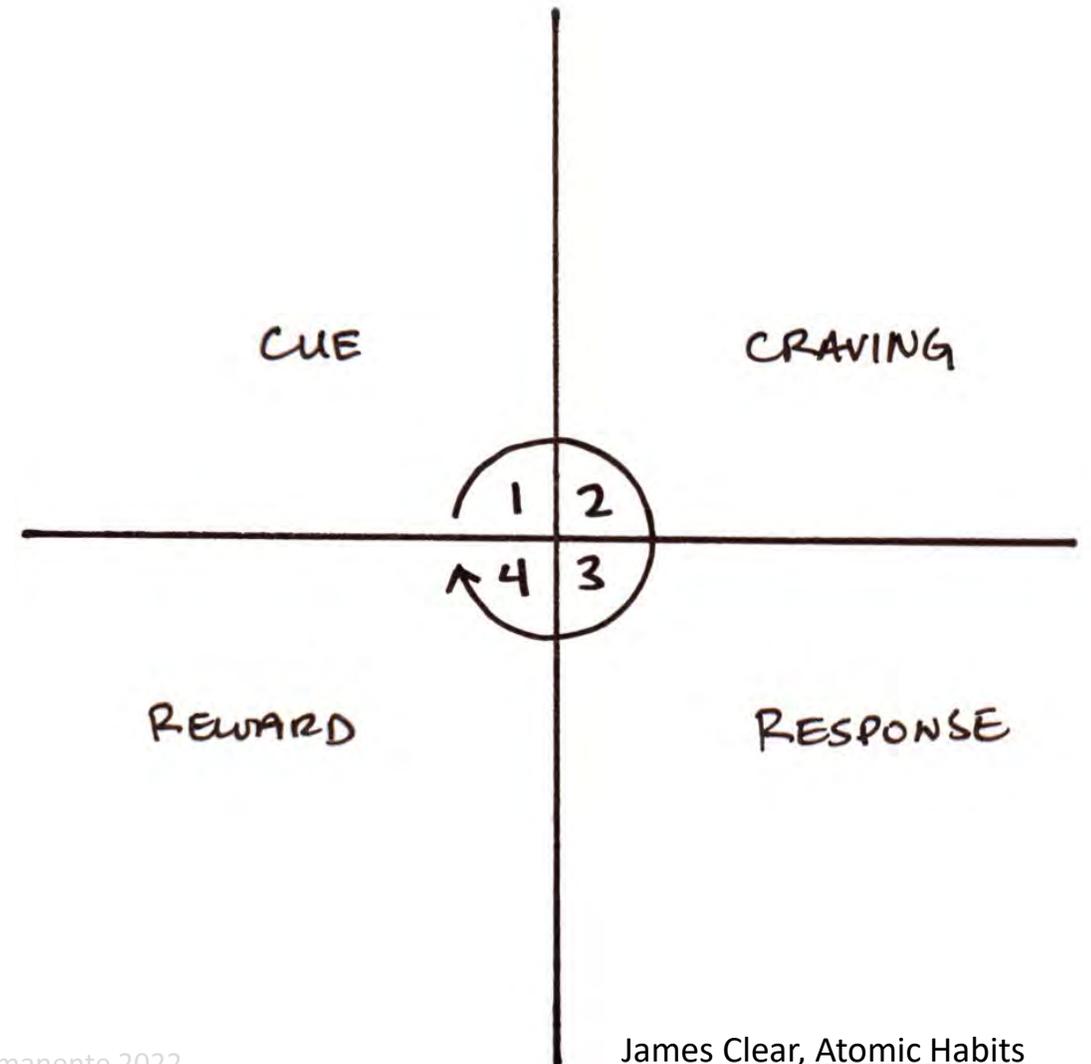
- They play a big role in what you think and do on a regular basis.
- In order to make changes and maintain them, you will need to develop habits that support that change.
- What you do regularly determines the results you are going to get. So...how do you build a habit?



How habits work?

- This habit loop drives motivation to engage in behaviors.
- Each time you go through this cycle, your brain evaluates if the behavior was helpful at solving a problem and will adjust or continue doing the same thing.
- We are going to go through each step in the following slides. We will use an example of the habit of eating a snack while watching tv after work.

THE HABIT LOOP



1st Step - Cue

- Remind brain to initiate behavior
- Can be a memory, feeling, thought, location, or one of your 5 senses (touch, taste, smell, sight, or sound)
- Often paired with a past experience
- Example – Coming home from a long, stressful day at work after the commute home.



2nd Step - Cravings

The reason or motivation to do the behavior:

- It's about the feeling or change that you get from the habit, not the habit itself
- The brain releases dopamine, which is a neurochemical that drives our brain's reward circuit and drives us to seek out a means to give us a sense of pleasure (to feel good or to feel nothing)
- Example – You want to relax and relieve your stress.



RESPONSE
REQUIRED

3rd Step - Response

Actual habit you perform

- Behavior or action is performed based on how motivated you are to perform the behavior and how much friction it causes to engage in the behavior
- Response drives reward
- Example – You eat a bag of chips while watching tv.

4th Step -

Rewards

End goal of the habit loop

- Rewards close the feedback loop
- Can provide a satisfying or pleasant feeling or remove an unwanted feeling.
- There are short and long-term rewards for habits.

Two purposes:

- Satisfy us
- Teach us what is worth remembering for the future

If a behavior is insufficient in any area, then it won't become a habit

- If the first 3 are not present, a behavior will not happen.
- If all 4 are not present, a behavior will not be repeated.

Example – You satisfy your craving to relieve stress and relax. Eating food while watching tv become associated with relieving stress and relaxing.

This feedback loop allows for an individual to create automatic habits that can save time and energy.

Each habit is created to solve a problem.

- For example – wanting to feel less stressed can lead to eating sweets
- Therefore the habit loop can be separated into the **problem phase** and the **solution phase**.



PROBLEM



SOLUTION

Example!

Problem Phase

Cue: You smell a doughnut shop as you walk down the street near your office.

Craving: You begin to crave a doughnut.

Solution Phase

Response: You buy a doughnut and eat it.

Reward: You satisfy your craving to eat a doughnut.
Buying a doughnut becomes associated with walking down the street near your office.

The habit of buying a doughnut as you're walking into work is now created and enforced!

Fill out following problem and solution phase with a habit that you currently do.

PROBLEM PHASE

1. Cue:
2. Craving:

SOLUTION PHASE

3. Response:
4. Reward:

How can habits lead to addiction?

- Addiction is defined as a compulsive psychological need for and continued use of a substance or a certain behavior despite negative consequences to multiple areas of life.
- A behavior changes from occasional use to an addiction by increasing intensity and frequency engaging in the behavior more often and to a greater extent.
- We can have addictions to certain substances (e.g. alcohol, drugs) or process addictions to certain behaviors (e.g. eating, gambling).
- Any behavior done too often can become detrimental to your physical and mental health.

How can habits lead to addiction?

- Certain behaviors (like eating foods that are sweet, salty, and fatty) can trigger a release of dopamine, the “pleasure neurotransmitter” which produces a powerful response in the brain. This response can code your brain as that behavior being the “only way to achieve relief”.
- We offer a 12-week program called Solutions that you can take as a continuing option in this program that specifically deals with the addiction cycle as it relates to food and eating.
- If you are struggling with either type of addiction, please seek out help from a mental health therapist. Call KP Psychiatry/Addiction

- In the next couple of slides, we will discuss the process of creating a helpful habit or breaking an unhelpful habit using tools we've learned.
- Goal is to start with a small habit and build from there.



How to Create a Helpful Habit



- **Cue:** Make it obvious.
- **Craving:** Make it attractive.
- **Response:** Make it easy.
- **Reward:** Make it satisfying.



Example:
I want to
start a
walking
routine....

- **Cue:** Make it obvious.
Putting my shoes by the front door.
- **Craving:** Make it attractive.
New exercise clothes, new route...
- **Response:** Make it easy.
Only commit to 15 minutes to not overwhelm myself.
- **Reward:** Make it satisfying.
Go with my partner or take my dog with me to make it fun.

How to Break an Unhelpful Habit

- **Cue:** Make it invisible.
- **Craving:** Make it unattractive.
- **Response:** Make it difficult.
- **Reward:** Make it unsatisfying.



Example: Stop eating while watching TV....

- Cue: Make it invisible. Not having the tv in line of sight while eating.
- Craving: Make it unattractive. Highlight the benefit of not engaging, I want to be present in my meal and not zone out.
- Response: Make it difficult. Do not buy food items at the store that can easily be eaten on the couch. Have accountability with family or roommates.
- Reward: Make it unsatisfying. Not allowing yourself to lounge on couch after meal (immediately cleaning).

So, what does this Habit Loop mean to you? It gives you a tool to outline a system for developing new habits. Pick a habit that you would like to create or break and complete the habit loop with the tips from the previous slides:

PROBLEM PHASE

1. Cue: make it obvious/invisible
2. Craving: make it attractive/unattractive

SOLUTION PHASE

3. Response: make it easy/difficult
4. Reward: make it satisfying/unsatisfying

If you start to wonder...

Why can I not follow through with what I say I will do?

Why do I say something is important but never make time for it?"

Ask yourself these 4 questions:

- How can I make my new habit obvious?
- How can I make my new habit attractive?
- How can I make my new habit easy?
- How can I make my new habit satisfying?





Questions?