

Notes from:

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OVERVIEW

Two key components can bring about change.

First, identify the *vital behaviors* that brings the change you want. Watch people who behave in desired ways. They will be sources to identifying the vital behaviors you want to make your change.

As Christians, discipleship practices are *vital behaviors* to our faith development. (Part of our job has been done for us.) The question is how to get people to actually participate in the practices--those are the specific behaviors we need to look for. Once vital behaviors are determined, use some of the sources of influence to encourage the behaviors. There are six sources of influence: personal motivation, personal ability, social motivation, social ability, structural motivation, and structural ability.

Don't try to do everything at one time. Figure out what is most likely to succeed or what is the biggest issue and start there. Then build on your starting point. Different points of influence address different issues.

INFLUENCES

PERSONAL INFLUENCES: (Motivation and Ability)

- People need personal MOTIVATION to enact *vital behaviors*. Find a way to change the feeling associated with the vital behavior from negative to positive. You must get people to try the behavior. People literally can't imagine pleasure in an experience they have never had. The assumption for behavior never tried is always negative.
 - Personal motivation strategies:
 - Get people to experience the behavior. (Inviting them to do it with you may be the easiest way to accomplish this.)
 - Use models--let people see others do the behavior. Really good storytelling is a form of modeling.
 - Make doing the behavior a game. Games have reasonably challenging goals and clear frequent feedback.
 - Connect the vital behavior to the person's sense of self--explain and enact how the vital behavior meets the personal standards of the person.
 - Engage in moral thinking--in conversation with people discover how the vital behaviors reflect a person's values, morals, and/or personal standards.
 - Connect the vital behaviors to the person's moral values--the behavior becomes part of a broader, more important *moral* mission (but you have to let go of control and let the person choose to do the behavior). Questions that get to the connections might include "What do *you* want?" "What is most important to you?" "What changes might be required for you to live according to your values?" (Basically, help people determine their own moral values, then help them connect the vital behavior as a way to get there.)
 - Spotlight the human consequences of the behaviors.

- People also need personal ABILITY to enact vital behaviors. If someone is not doing the vital behaviors, do not automatically assume they are not motivated. They may not possess the skill set required.
 - There's hope for everyone to change (but at the beginning of the process, you might not want to judge success on the most difficult cases).
 - "Much of will is skill." People do not want to do something they do not have the skill to do.
 - "Much of prowess is practice."
 - You need *deliberate practice* for short times with strong feedback and support.
 - Complex skills are accomplished using deliberate practice. (We often assume we've reached our highest levels and don't think to move forward because we can't imagine being better.) To practice *deliberately*:
 - Give the skill full attention for brief intervals (the strength of mission trips or spiritual retreats).
 - Provide immediate feedback against a clear standard.
 - Break difficult or complex tasks into "mini-goals"--long tasks become a series of short ones, vague tasks become specific, complex tasks become simple.
 - Expect and prepare for setbacks. Teach that effort, persistence, and resiliency are eventually rewarded with success.
 - Teach emotional skills enabling people to respond to frustration without the "fight or flight" reaction. (Re: stewardship...when people begin to struggle they either get mad at the preacher or they throw up their hands and quit.)
 - Use short term goals to deal with long term struggles (a day at a time).
 - Use your brain's ability to short circuit the "fight or flight" syndrome by using active thinking strategies like classifying, debating, deliberating, and delaying until your emotional system cooperates.

SOCIAL INFLUENCES: (Motivation and ability)

- The SOCIAL MOTIVATION is understanding how to harness peer pressure.
 - Social pressure is an enormous influence. Ensure that people feel praised, emotionally supported, and encouraged by those around them--every time they enact vital behaviors--and be sure they are discouraged or socially sanctioned when they choose unhealthy behaviors.
 - ONE person can make a difference in influencing people's behaviors, positively or negatively.
 - find the right "one person" for the most immediate success...someone respected and connected. 85% of the population will not adopt a practice until opinion leaders do. (You can find opinion leaders by asking people who they believe are the most influential and the most respected people in the group. The names that come up most often are your opinion leaders.)
 - Use social support to influence and support *yourself*.

- share your goals with people who agree to support your choice and hold you accountable
- Team up with someone attempting to make the same changes you are. We crave the acceptance and admiration of those we admire.
- Become an opinion leader yourself. Become knowledgeable about the issue. Have other people's best interest in mind. Be generous with your time and relationships. Get connected to the people you want to influence.
- It is peer pressure, social influence, that will change long-held and widely shared norms. Changes in group behavior *must* be preceded by changes in the public discourse.
 - Make un-discussables discussable. Norms that mandate silence also prevent change. Openly discussing issues helps embrace the power of social influence.
 - Create a village...create an environment where formal and informal leaders relentlessly encourage vital behaviors and skillfully confront negative behaviors. It is ultimately the desire to be accepted, respected, and connected that pulls at human heart strings. The ability to do that harnesses the tremendous power of social pressure.
- The SOCIAL ABILITY is finding strength in numbers.
 - We succeed when we make use of the “profound enabling power of an essential network of relationships.” Groups, made up of people at all levels often perform better than any one individual.
 - When an entire group causes the problem, the entire group must be involved in the solution
 - When people can't succeed on their own, social capital can help.
 - people may need to work as a team to accomplish a goal.
 - people may need to solve problems that require different perspectives, different knowledge, and different skills.
 - when risk is high, everyone needs to be involved in supporting each other.
 - we need each other to identify and address blind spots.
 - group solidarity can change behaviors...solidarity rules.

STRUCTURAL INFLUENCES

- To motivate people using structure, design rewards and demand accountability.
 - Use rewards/incentives carefully; don't use them to compensate for failure to engage personal and social motivation.
 - rewards need to come quickly, be gratifying, and reward the BEHAVIORS, not the outcomes.
 - it doesn't take much reward if you are doing it right.
 - be careful of rewards that can be divisive.
 - Punishment is a last resort. Start with a “shot across the bow” as a warning.

•Recognize that environmental structure may stop the ability to change or encourage it. (This may include the structure of meetings, worship services, money decisions, who knows giving patterns, how churches accept money, etc.)

- Learn to notice your physical environment and its effects on behaviors.

- When you identify environmental elements that drive behaviors, make them visible to others so their impact can be understood.

- Be sure the appropriate data is available.

- Understand the effects of physical space on the behaviors. Physical proximity plays a role in behaviors. Use it to your advantage.

- Make change as easy as you can.

- Make the change unavoidable...good behaviors are not just desirable, they are inevitable.