



Fit For Sisters

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Columnist

Behavioral change tips

As many reading this may know, bad habits persist, regardless of our best intentions. As January fades, so do many resolutions.

What makes behavioral change so difficult? Are people stuck in their ways? Do they lack will-power? Or is it the social/environmental landscape controlling us all?

Consider a study that tracked subjects' exercise habits:

Over 230 participants were recommended to go to a fitness center twice per week for 30-60 minutes. More was an option; they could go as often as they wanted to. The researchers kept track of how often and how long they exercised. Only 30 percent completed twice a week

for 30 minutes. The average session length for exercise was the bare-minimum 32 minutes.

The subjects crossed the multitudes of socioeconomic and age ranges, filtering out any social or age-related effects.

This study illustrates just how hard it might be to self-direct behavior change. There were some key factors in the study that paint a portrait of how to have better success. When asked to associate exercise with a word, the individuals who associated a positive word had much more success. An example, exercise makes me feel vibrant and healthy vs. tired and sore.

If a person believes others around them support their change, or align with the change they desire, they're much more likely to stick with the change. This is important to remember, as the company you keep will inevitably influence your behavior.

Control is important as well. If you empower yourself with the keys to life's outcomes you are much more likely to follow better habits. People often struggle with the belief that their medical condition, lack of fitness, age, economic status won't allow them to be successful. It is important to remember that the only

person who has control over emotions, reactions, and action is you.

The emotional appraisal of people prior to their exercise sessions also made a difference. For example, researchers asked subjects how they felt about their upcoming session. They used a six-point sliding scale for adjectives describing feelings about exercise. The subjects who were more emotionally invigorated, or looking positively at the exercise session, were much more likely to follow through with the exercise.

What does this all mean? It is apparent that the process of change is going to be much harder than just willing it to be. Enlisting help from others, framing the change around the proper mindset, and looking for professional help will all be essential if someone is truly committing to change.

It is going to be a struggle, but habits aren't going to die easily. Take these lessons and proactively apply them. Above all, make sure the habits that are being changed are simple, and straightforward. The more complex things are, the harder it will be to follow through. Make one change at a time, and build from those successes. Keep a positive outlook, and enjoy the activity.

Suspected killer of trooper arrested in Mexico

SALEM (AP) — The Oregon State Police says a man accused of killing a Marion County deputy and another man in a 2007 car crash has been arrested in Mexico.

Police say Alfredo De Jesus Ascencio, now 29, was indicted in 2007 for two counts of criminally negligent homicide in the death of Deputy Kelly Fredinburg and Oscar Ascencio Amaya. They say he fled to Mexico to avoid prosecution around the time of his indictment.

Police say the 33-year-old deputy was responding to an emergency call in June 2007 when his patrol car was struck by a car driven by De Jesus Ascencio. He died at the scene. Amaya, one of De Jesus Ascencio's passengers, later died in the hospital.

State police said in 2010 Oregon prosecutors sought to have Mexican authorities prosecute De Jesus Ascencio in that country because it was unlikely that he would be extradited to the U.S.

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