

HABITS

10/1/2023

We're going to look at this topic and spend some time shortly after we begin on the physiological part – how it works chemically in our bodies (so you don't believe the lie that you're just *forever* weak)

We'll explore Scripture pertaining to mindset

We'll look at habit loops in the bible and how Jesus taught us to stop the vicious cycle

We'll consider what several book authors and scientists have to say to help our understanding,

- What the Bible says about breaking habits,
- and introduce a book specifically targeting establishing a habit in 30d written by an AOG pastor

What is a habit, how would you define a habit?

We know there are many different habits. But Are there different.... *classifications* of habits?

These are important foundational habits; the likes of which we either want to develop or dissolve

- Daily – Brushing teeth, tying shoes
 - Behavioral – actions & behaviors that become automatic thru repetition
 - walking, exercising, practicing a musical instrument
- Emotional – reactions to our external world
 - stress → anger
 - stress → eating junk food (comfort foods)
- Cognitive Habits – thought patterns / mental processes that form over time
 - overthinking
 - perfectionism
 - negative self-talk
- Social Habits – involve interactive behaviors
 - Maintain eye contact when talking w/ someone
 - Showing empathy or
 - Listening intently when someone is talking vs (FarvaNotListen.mp4)

(foster discussion only)

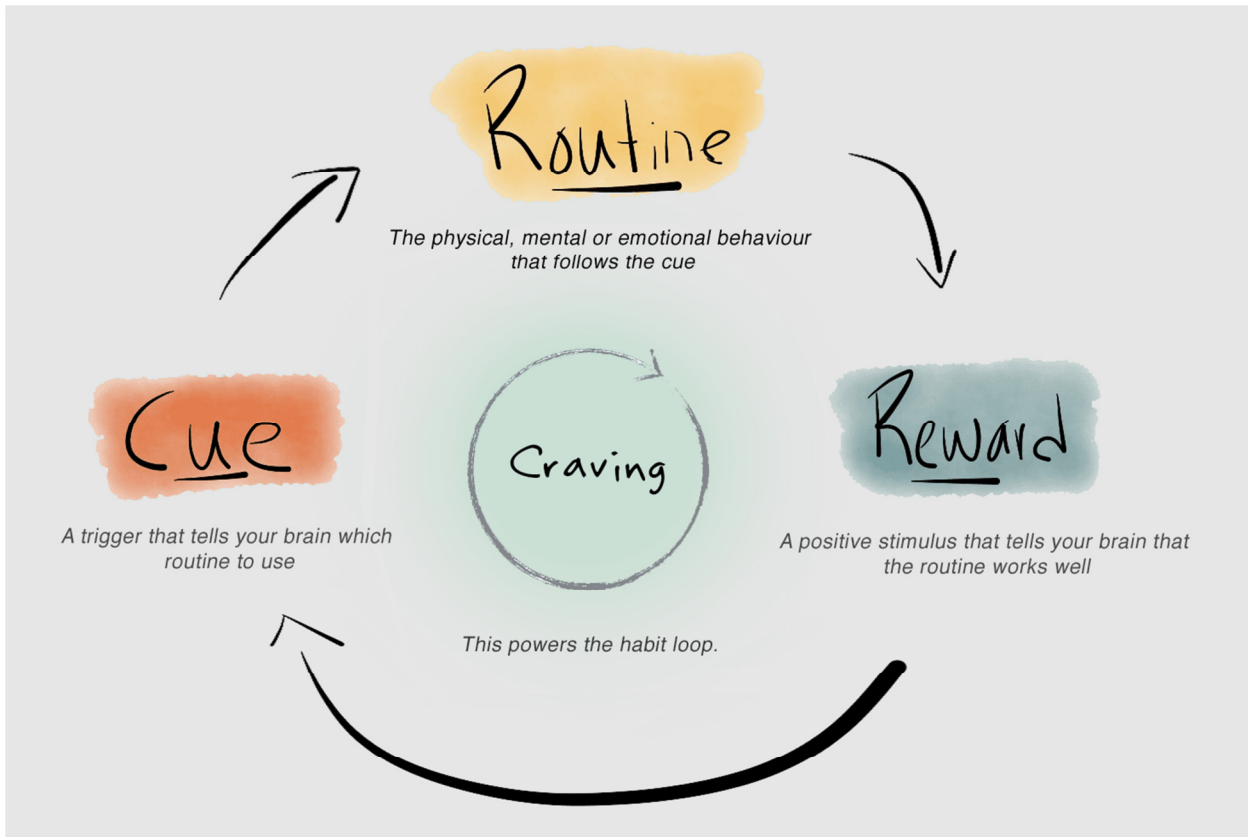
What does the Bible speak to you in the area of habits?

The Psychology of Habits: Building Good Habits and Breaking Bad Ones

by Israel Joshua Chukwubueze

Habits, in their simplest form, are the automatic behaviors we engage in daily without conscious thought. They are deeply ingrained patterns of actions, thoughts, and emotions that shape our lives. Habits have the power to influence every aspect of our existence, from our physical health to our relationships, productivity, and overall well-being.

(read this below instead, while on habit loop slide)



At the core of habit formation lies the intricate workings of our **brain**.

Our brain is composed of billions of neurons, interconnected through neural pathways. **When we perform a habitual action, a neural pathway is activated, creating a connection between a cue or trigger, the routine itself, and the resulting reward. This process is known as the habit loop.**

Explain the habit loop slide

Neuroscientists have discovered that a small structure within our brain called the basal ganglia plays a significant role in habit formation.

The basal ganglia acts as a habit center, responsible for encoding habitual behaviors into our subconscious mind. As we repeat a behavior over time, the basal ganglia strengthens the neural connections associated with that behavior, making it easier and more automatic to perform.

Habit formation also involves the release of neurotransmitters, such as dopamine, in our brain.

Dopamine is a chemical messenger that plays a crucial role in our brain's reward system. It is released when we experience pleasure or a sense of accomplishment, reinforcing the behavior and motivating us to repeat it. This dopamine-driven reward mechanism is vital in solidifying and perpetuating habits.

Here is an example:

Proverbs 23: 29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? 30 Those who linger long over wine, Those who go to taste mixed wine. 31 Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it goes down smoothly; 32 At the last it bites like a serpent And stings like a viper. 33 Your eyes will see strange things And your mind will utter perverse things. 34 And you will be like one who lies down in the middle of the sea, Or like one who lies down on the top of a mast. 35 "They struck me, but I did not become ill; They beat me, but I did not know it. When shall I awake? I will seek another drink."

Neuroscientists have discovered that a small structure within our brain called the basal ganglia plays a significant role in habit formation.

Habit formation also involves the release of neurotransmitters, such as dopamine,

- Chemical released when experience pleasure or sense of accomplishment
- critical in brain's reward system (like when you eat chocolate)
- vital in solidifying & perpetuating habits
- **Where else do you hear of dopamine?**
 - Social Media – the creators designed this into the system to keep you in it, constantly looking, constantly posting
 - Their entire existence is based on steering you via your own brain chemicals

Conspiracy Theory? Yes, because social media companies have your best interests in mind. Why would ANYONE think otherwise?

Chamath Palihapitiya, former Vice President of User Growth at Facebook, (I told you this in 2019)

"I feel tremendous guilt," he said. "The short-term, dopamine-driven feedback loops that we have created are destroying how society works: no civil discourse, no cooperation, misinformation, mistruth. And it's not an American problem. This is not about Russian ads. This is a global problem."

Perhaps this clip was taken out of context.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CPdse_0okag

Start - to 1:37

According to a Harvard University article in 2018 about the battle for your mind, 73% of people have felt “separation anxiety” – **what is that?** (it’s where you misplace your phone and freak out about it)

Remember the movie Jumanji? 4 x young high school kids sit down to play this game, choose avatars and next thing they know they literally find themselves deep in a jungle AS the avatar they chose. Think this would freak you out?

Jack Black’s character is a trendy social-media-ite spoiled prissy blonde teenage girl

(play WheresMyPhone.mp4)