

The

# BRAINFLIX

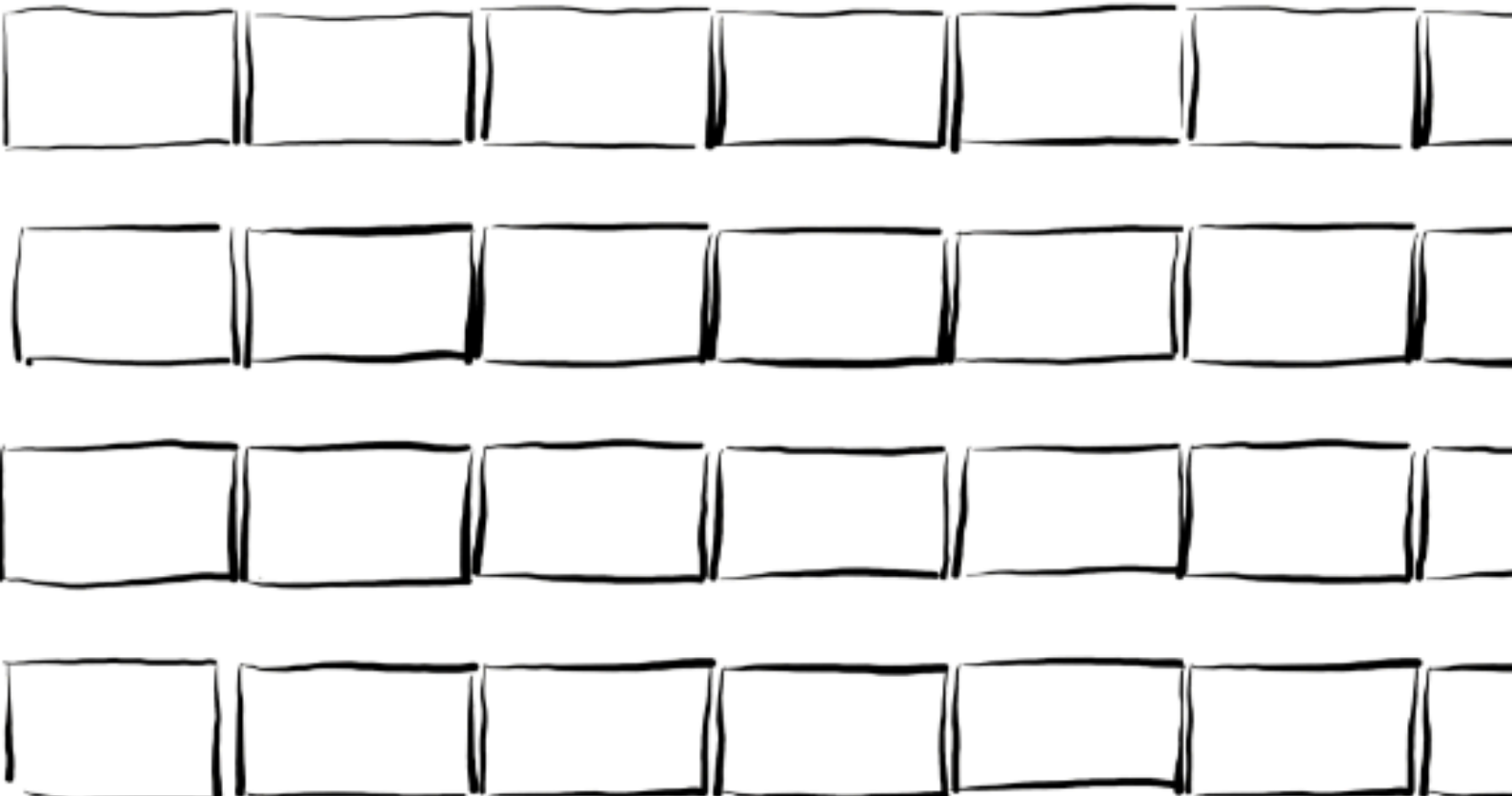
Series

## Making Change Simple

*Discover how simplicity can lead to more success in your change projects*

CYRIELKORTLEVEN.COM

# BRAINFLEX



Episode 0: Pilot - How it all started.

Episode 1: The Inconvenient Truth - 70% of our change projects fail.

Episode 2: Brainflix - Our unconscious decision making machine.

Episode 3: Brainflix - Houston, we have some glitches in our system.

Episode 4: Press the Pause button - And change your behaviour.

Episode 5: Make it Specific - And take a picture.

Episode 6: Make it Smooth - And reduce any resistance.

Episode 7: Make it Small - And go for a lot of experiments.

Episode 8: Bonus tips part 1 - enter via the emotional door | Don't wait for the perfect moment | Trust the locals.

Episode 9: Bonus tips part 2 - Make it fun | Habit stacing | Prepare for the Bad Days | Make use of physical & social environment.

Episode 10: How it all ends.



**Welcome** to the so called 'trailer' of 'The Brainflix series': a very short starting episode to give you an insight and an overview of the purpose and upcoming topics of this newsletter series.

My name is **Cyriel Kortleven**, and I deliver presentations all over the world to make change a little bit more simple. These 'Brainflix series' are an extended version of one of my keynotes "Making Change Simple".

And with Brainflix I mean **the metaphor that represents our unconscious brain**, which plays a very important role in changing our behaviour. Understanding how our unconscious brain takes decisions, is crucial to achieve more success in change projects.

**I see myself here as a curator.** The artists - my target group of this series! - are the change experts and leaders who are involved in change projects everyday, as well as individuals who want to change their personal behaviour. In my role as curator, I have done a lot of research for my 'artists', to select top ideas, methods, and examples that fit into that main goal of my talk:

***I want to create a simple and pragmatic formula to increase the success rate of change.***

However, because many examples, tools and tips had to be cut out of my keynote due to time constraints, I created this 'The Brainflix series' in order to give you **ALL my practical tips and tricks**, as well as inspiring examples and insights to increase the success rate of your own personal and organisational change projects.

And as many change projects fail due to various circumstances - because they are too big, too complex, or too vague - **I also see myself as a simplifier.** I believe that we can already solve a lot of challenges with a few simple basic guidelines.

**So - what's to expect from this Brainflix series?**

**NO scientific studies or elaborated deep dives into the topic.  
YET simple & pragmatic tips and tricks that you can apply immediately.**



## Episode 1

### The inconvenient Truth

#### **Change is always everywhere.**

Just remember the recent pandemic when the whole world suddenly had to deal with 'change'. Everything and everyone had to change, from certain systems to certain habits.

Nowadays we are dealing with a lot of new technologies like artificial intelligence which are also changing the way things work.

#### **Change IS really always everywhere.**

And in this constant changing world recent studies show that about 70% of the projects that try to make changes... fail #theinconvenienttruth

The reasons WHY are numerous:

Lack of a good management, lack of a change mindset, lack of clear communication, lack of organisational talent, ... .

#### **Through all these reasons WHY changes fail, we can draw 3 basis lines.**

Three main issues why change projects are often unsuccessful:

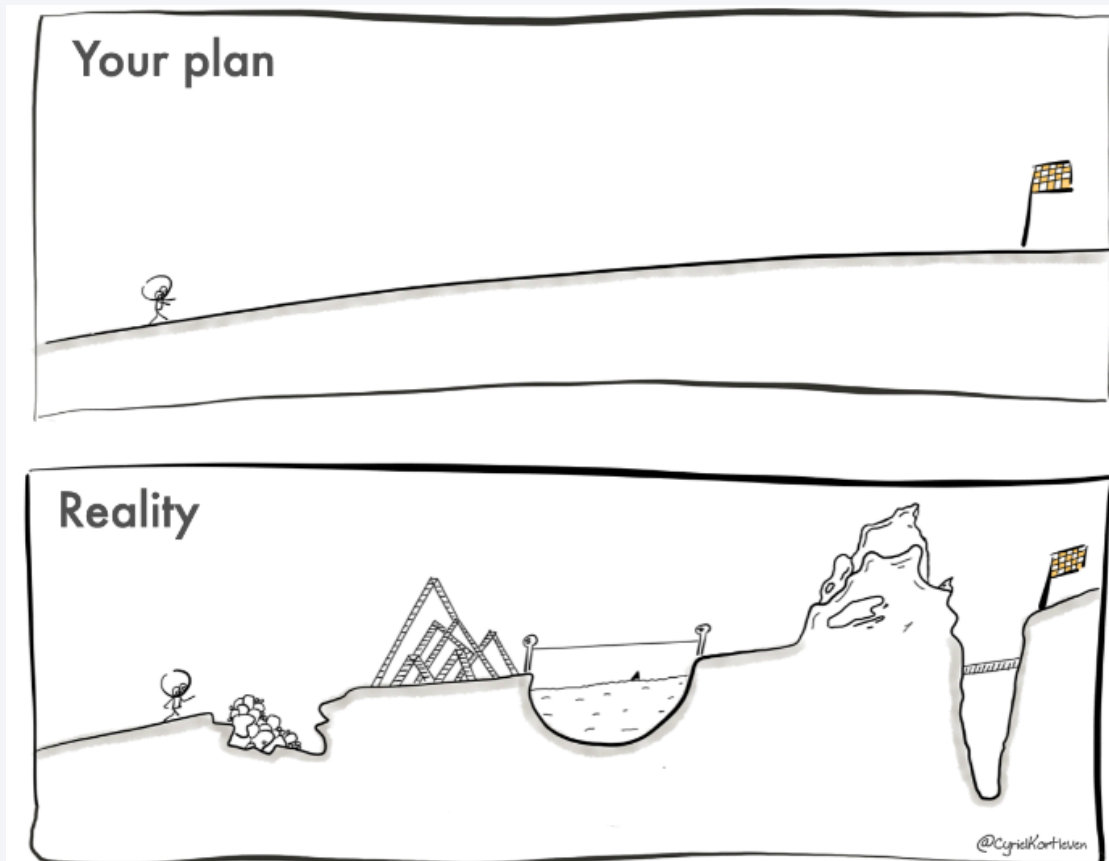
The projects are **too big, too complicated, and/or too vague.**

And this applies not only to big organisations, but also to individuals trying to change their behaviour.

Who doesn't know someone who on the 1st of January wants to get fitter in the new year and decides to aim for a marathon or half marathon. That's just too much and can be overwhelming (it's too big).

Or maybe we want to start meditating every day, but it's hard to find the time and a quiet place when we have a busy family (it's too complex).

We might also want to live a healthier life, but if we don't set specific goals and actions, it's hard to know what to do (it's too vague).



To simplify change projects and make them more successful, whether it's for a big organisation or for ourselves, we need to remember three important things: **make it small, make it smooth, and make it specific**. By breaking change into smaller steps, making the process easier, and setting clear goals that we can measure, we can avoid the problems of trying to do too much, making things too complicated, or not being clear enough.

Let's look at a few examples of projects that failed because they were too big, too complicated, or not clear enough...

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“SUCCESS IS THE SUM OF SMALL EFFORTS REPEATED  
DAY IN AND DAY OUT”

~ ROBERT COLLIER

## Why don't we have an idea box?

It started with this phrase: "Why don't we have an idea box where our colleagues can send in suggestions to improve our projects?" A very simple, pragmatic idea that became quite big, complex and vague in a few months time.

This happened in a larger government organisation in the Netherlands with 9,000 employees. They wanted to encourage innovation within the whole community. They came up with the idea of having an idea box where employees could submit their ideas. **However, things quickly became more complicated.**

They decided to roll out this idea box to the entire organisation, involving all 9,000 employees. This made the project very big. Additionally, they wanted to provide feedback on the ideas quickly, so they decided to collect the ideas digitally and respond within a month. This added complexity to the project.

To support the employees, they also introduced the concept of an innovation coach. If an employee had a new idea, they could reach out to the innovation coach, who would help refine the suggestion and make it more specific and feasible. However, by implementing all these elements - the organisation-wide rollout, digital collection of ideas & quick feedback, and the innovation coach - **the project became very big, complex, and unclear.**

As a result, people didn't know how to effectively engage with the innovation coach or what their role was in the process. The project lost clarity and became vague. After 4 months, the whole project was cancelled. **It failed.**

This example highlights the challenges that arise when a project becomes too big, too complex, and lacks clear direction. **Simplifying and clarifying the process can greatly increase the chances of success.**

## Stimulating **innovation** in government



- Roll out in the whole organisation
- Collect everything in a digital way & give feedback within a week
- Conversation with an Innovation coach



### But Cyriel, you should sell online training to individuals.

This is an anecdote from my experience attempting to sell products online to individual consumers, a venture that has seen repeated failure in my life. In my professional career, I deliver keynote speeches to organisations worldwide, typically reaching out to them through professionals in HR, Marketing, or Event Management. This demographic target is clear and well-defined, and I've gained extensive experience in working with them.

However, I've been tempted on a few occasions by fellow speakers to explore **the idea of generating passive income** by selling my content directly to individuals online.

I've made three or four attempts at this project, all of which ended in failure. I've come to understand that targeting individual consumers requires a different approach. It involves focusing on smaller transactions and generating a high volume of sales. It entails utilising platforms like Facebook and LinkedIn for advertising, appearing on various podcasts, and increasing visibility through YouTube videos. Additionally, the platform used for selling must be efficient and user-friendly. While it all sounds straightforward, executing it in reality presents significant challenges.

Reaching the individual consumer market demands a considerable investment of time, effort, and money. While I can create the online product itself competently, navigating the communication strategy and logistical operations is unfamiliar territory for me. I haven't dedicated enough time to understanding the specific needs of this demographic. **It's too big, too complicated, and too vague for me** to turn it into a success.

Therefore, I've decided to abandon the notion of generating passive income through online product sales and instead focus on my existing strengths. This decision has brought me much greater satisfaction and contentment.

# Sss ... A moment to reflect



I encourage you to think about the power of simplicity in achieving success.

Reflect on the stories shared and identify parallels in your own life or work.

Are there projects or goals that have felt overwhelming due to their size, complexity, or lack of clarity?

Take a moment to envision how simplifying these initiatives could lead to greater success.

In the upcoming episodes, we will provide you with practical tips and tricks to help you navigate these challenges effectively.

These strategies will equip you with the necessary tools to ensure that you are well-prepared and ready to tackle any change project, regardless of its size or complexity.

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## Episode 2

### Our unconscious decision making machine

Brainflix is like an app that starts running from birth. Comparing the program in our unconscious mind to Netflix is fitting.

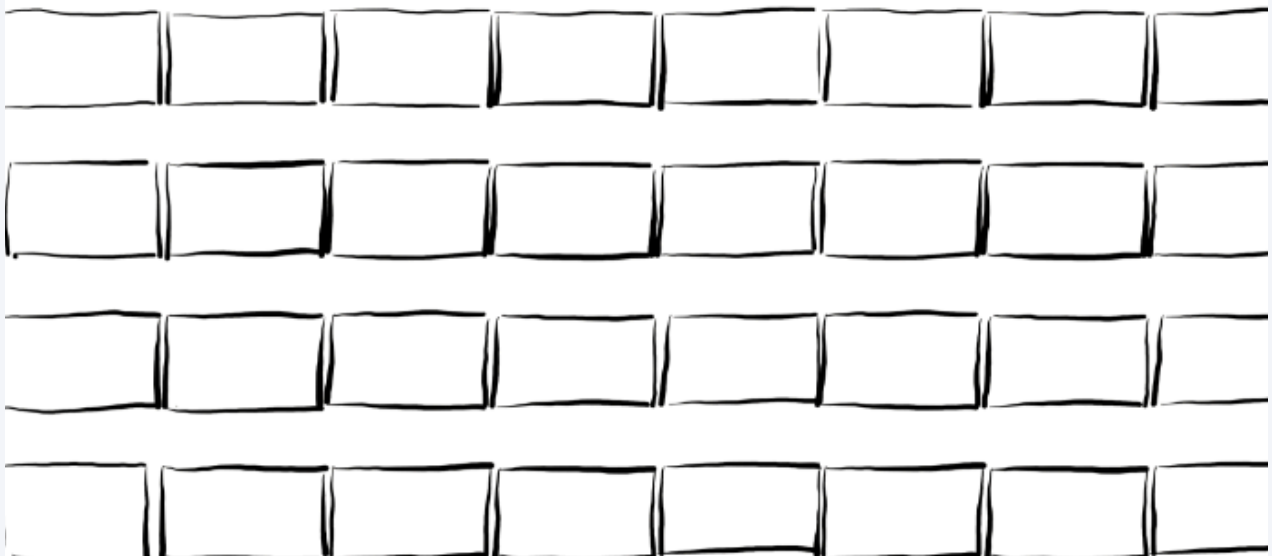
Just as Netflix offers a vast array of movies and series, Brainflix is a platform of habits, routines and actions controlled by our unconscious mind.

#### **Our mind runs numerous programs simultaneously.**

For instance, right now, it's managing your heartbeat, overseeing the environment, regulating emotions, and carrying out cognitive tasks without us even realising it.

The capabilities of our brain are truly remarkable.

# BRAINFlix



## Our brain consists of a very large database of Brainflix series

One of the **popular programs on Brainflix is the morning ritual.**

It all starts with the alarm clock going off, triggering the next action.

For me, it is hitting the snooze button, then getting out of bed, grabbing a cup of coffee or tea, heading to the shower, and having breakfast.

This morning ritual will probably differ from person to person but chances are quite big that the flow will be the same on most days, although there might be a difference between weekdays and weekend days.

This daily ritual is interesting, because **each action triggers the next one.**

In the app Netflix, you have a few seconds to stop watching before the next episode starts, but in Brainflix, the activities are intertwined much faster.

Many psychologists and neuroscientists believe that a significant portion of human behaviour and decision-making is influenced by unconscious processes. While it's hard to measure, some sources suggest it could be as high as 95-98%.

### Popular on Brainflix: The morning ritual



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“I FEAR NOT THE MAN WHO HAS PRACTICED 10,000 KICKS, BUT I DO FEAR THE MAN WHO HAS PRACTICED ONE KICK 10,000 TIMES”

~ BRUCE LEE

## Driving: A Tale of Unconscious Mastery

A nice example to explain the **difference between our conscious and unconscious mind is** the activity of driving a car.

For somebody who's just starting to learn this process, it's an enormous complex activity which initially demands a lot of energy and brain capacity.

Driving a car involves coordinating multiple tasks simultaneously.

You must steer, accelerate, brake, and check mirrors all at once while learning and reacting to traffic rules. It also requires risk assessment, decision-making, and staying calm to reduce anxiety.

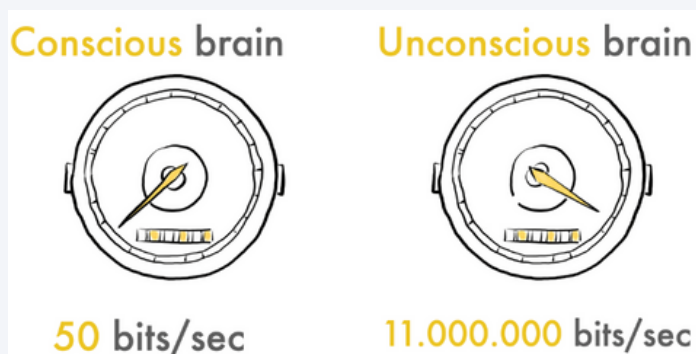
With repetition, these **tasks become habits**, making driving easier.

Some drivers can even multitask, like doing makeup or having meals, relying on their unconscious brain to control the actions.

We don't support this kind of behaviour, but it's a great example that repetition will lead to a habit and the task will be easier to perform.

Our **unconscious brain plays a dominant role** due to its efficiency in processing information.

The brain prioritises energy conservation, allowing the unconscious mind to make decisions effortlessly.



According to Tör Nørretranders book "The User", our conscious awareness is just the tip of the iceberg, with the **unconscious mind handling the bulk of cognitive processing**.

Studies suggest that the conscious brain processes 40 to 50 bits per second, while the unconscious mind can process 11 million bits per second.

This vast difference in processing speed explains why the brain relies on the unconscious mind for decision-making.

Repeated use of a program strengthens the connection between neurons, making habits harder to change.

For instance, try to brush your teeth with your non-dominant hand. It might be quite a challenge!

## Let's welcome Nic, our personal assistant of the unconscious brain

To make things a bit more visual, imagine that we have a person walking around in our brain who's responsible for all the different 'programs'.

Let's call him Nic. His main purpose is to ensure our survival and keep us alive. This translates in conserving energy where possible. If we can make a shortcut to save energy he follows that path. He has become very good at running numerous brainflix shows without the need for conscious decision-making.

I consider him as the film technician or the unconscious brain, and he performs this role exceptionally well. You could even call him your personal assistant when it comes to harnessing the power of the unconscious brain.

Our friend Nic will be one of **the main characters to explain how we can increase the success rate of our change projects**. While our unconscious brain efficiently preserves energy by automating tasks, outdated programs can lead to unhealthy habits. In the next episode, we will focus on the glitches of our unconscious brain that can lead to cognitive biases and stereotypes.



# Sss ... A moment to reflect



Take a moment to step back and reflect on the concept of Brainflix.

Consider how your unconscious mind, like a well-programmed streaming service, influences your daily habits and decision-making.

Think about your own "morning ritual" or other routines.

How much of your behaviour is guided by unconscious processes?

By understanding the power of your Brainflix, you can begin to unlock new possibilities for personal and professional growth.

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## Episode 3

### Houston, we have some glitches in our system

Our unconscious brain can be considered as a dominant decision taking machine.

It does an amazing job but...

... **it also runs outdated programs** that can lead to unhealthy habits. Our evolutionary brain's preference for high-calorie foods no longer serves us well in societies with abundant processed foods, contributing to issues like obesity. Additionally, impulsive behaviours driven by immediate rewards can lead to financial recklessness, risky actions, or addictions.

Do you remember Nic - our Personal Assistant (the film technician of our unconscious brain)? He does an amazing job in running many brainflix shows at the same time but in some cases he panics. At that moment, he reacts by 'fight, flight or freeze'. He doesn't know how to adapt to the desired change and in most cases - after a little panic attack - he **returns to the old behaviour** because that's the one he knows best.

## And sometimes, it's P.A. Nic!



## Close Encounter: When Oubaas the Giraffe Stole the Show

A few years ago, I attended a conference in Namibia and stayed at a resort offering safari tours. After dinner on the first evening, I walked back to my room along a small path when I suddenly heard a noise. Just two meters ahead was Oubaas, a full-grown giraffe enjoying some leaves. My primal brain took over, and I froze.

Realizing the potential danger, I remembered the advice to hide behind a tree, but there were none around. My flight mode kicked in, and I sprinted back to the restaurant. Although Oubaas was used to humans and not dangerous, my instinctive reaction took over.

This experience highlights **how our primal brain reacts in unexpected situations**. In our daily lives, though we face no giraffes, we encounter demanding bosses and clients. In such scenarios, the **'fight, flight, or freeze' response isn't always the best solution for changing behavior**.



“

“EVERYONE HAS A PLAN,  
UNTIL THEY GET PUNCHED IN THE FACE”

~ MIKE TYSON

## Navigating the Maze of Human Bias

We all have biases. A study of over 80,000 professionals showed that 70% believed they were in the top 10% of their peer group, 82% thought they were in the top 20%, and 98.5% placed themselves in the top half—clearly impossible.

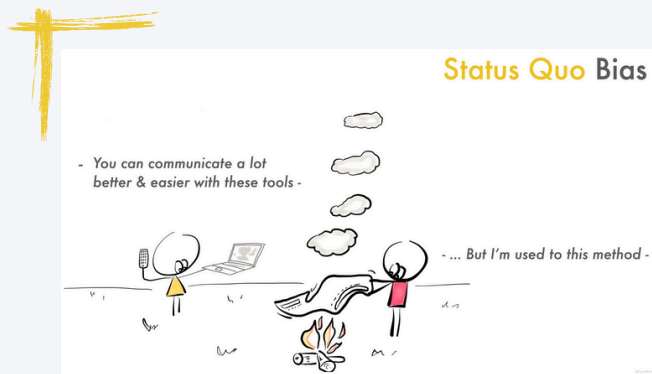
Cognitive biases and stereotypes, formed especially in childhood, affect our perceptions and interactions, leading to unfair treatment and decisions.

Beliefs like "I'm not good enough" or "Change is too difficult" often stem from early years and still influence us unknowingly.

For more on biases, visit [decisionlab.com](http://decisionlab.com), which describes nearly 100 biases with examples. Here are a few notable ones:

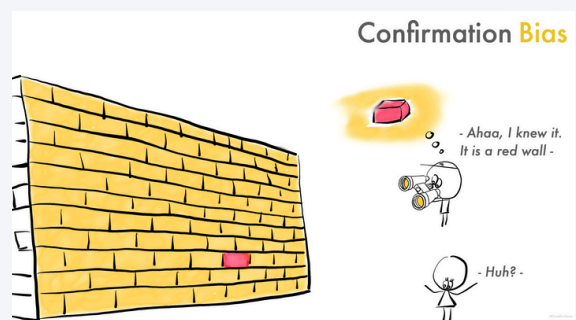
### The status quo bias

... is a cognitive bias where individuals prefer maintaining the current situation over change, even when change offers greater benefits. This bias stems from familiarity and comfort with existing conditions, leading to resistance to altering routines or beliefs. It results in inertia and resistance to innovation, as change is seen as risky or disruptive. For example, employees at a company using outdated software resist switching to more efficient software due to their comfort with the old system, despite the potential productivity gains a new system could provide.



### Confirmation bias

... is when people tend to only believe information that supports what they already think, and they ignore anything that goes against it. It means they seek out and pay attention to things that agree with their beliefs, even if they might be wrong. For instance, if someone believes that a certain political candidate is the best choice, they might only pay attention to news stories that praise that candidate and ignore any negative reports, even if they provide valid criticism.



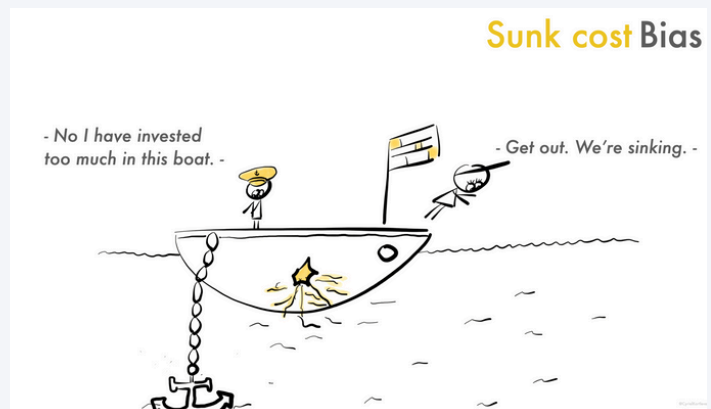
## Loss aversion bias

... is the tendency to prefer avoiding losses over acquiring equivalent gains, making individuals more motivated to avoid losing something than to gain something of equal value. For example, an investor might refuse to sell a consistently losing stock to avoid realizing the loss, hoping its value will rebound, even when it might be more rational to sell and cut losses. This bias significantly impacts decision-making in economics and finance.



## Sunk cost bias

... or the sunk cost fallacy, is the tendency to continue investing resources into a project or decision even when the costs outweigh the benefits, due to considering past investments. For example, someone might attend a concert they no longer want to go to because they've already paid for the tickets. Although the money spent is unrecoverable, they feel compelled to go to justify the sunk cost.



## The "IKEA bias"

... refers to the tendency to value self-assembled products more highly than equivalent pre-assembled ones. This stems from the "endowment effect," where people overvalue items they own or have invested effort into. For example, individuals often feel more attached to IKEA furniture they've assembled themselves, despite its similar quality to pre-assembled pieces.



# Sss ... A moment to reflect



Take a moment to ponder the stories and insights shared in this chapter. How do they resonate with your own experiences and challenges?

Consider the unconscious biases and primal reactions that may be influencing your decisions.

Now, challenge yourself to break free from the status quo and embrace change with a fresh perspective.

Let's navigate the maze of human bias together and pave the way for successful change projects.

Are you ready to rethink your approach?

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## Episode 4

### Press the Pause button & change your behaviour

As we now explored how Brainflix works, we also noticed that our personal assistant Nic is doing a great job in creating and running automatic programs to preserve energy.

And we discovered that **our unconscious brain takes a lot of shortcuts to cope with the complexity of the world.** We have a lot of biases that lead to misjudgement of certain situations and behaviour that we're maybe not really happy with (like eating too much high-calorie food or sticking to the status quo because that feels more safe).

Maybe you also recognise this series in your own Brainflix.

You arrive at work, open your laptop, and start answering emails. It seems like a normal routine, but before you know it, you've lost control of your day because most emails are requests from other people which you try to solve. During that same day, you have to attend 1 or 2 meetings (or more - for some people, attending meetings is their day-job) while your to-do list is growing. And by the end of the day, you feel frustrated and stressed out about all the things you haven't been able to finish.

#### Your favorite serie: The Office



That might be a program you're not fond of and wish to alter.

The initial step in any change you seek in life is to **become aware of the habit.** Without this awareness, changing it is of course impossible, because you don't know that it happens.

Once you recognize a habit leading to undesirable outcomes, you gain the power to make adjustments.

**Taking a short break can be an effective approach.**

## PRESS THE PAUSE BUTTON

This pause grants us the opportunity to consciously step back when we notice ourselves trapped in an unwanted routine, empowering us to actively change our behaviour.

For instance, rather than reflexively diving into emails upon reaching the office, pause for a moment. Ask yourself: Is this truly the best use of my time right now?

**Consciously distance yourself from the task and determine your objectives.**

Perhaps you aim to make progress on a specific project. Allocate 10 minutes to create a prioritised list of tasks for the day and dedicate the first two hours to that project. By making these mindful choices, you'll notice a shift in your day. Less stress, heightened focus on essential tasks, and a gratifying sense of control over your actions by day's end.

Of course, unexpected distractions may arise, such as phones ringing or colleague interruptions. However, each small step toward seizing control of your day diminishes stress.

P.S.: A technique that has proven effective for me is to allocate 5 minutes - setting a timer - at the beginning of the day to quickly skim through emails.

Without this, I tend to feel restless, fearing I might miss an urgent email or speaking request. However, in 90% of cases, the emails are not urgent nor important. Allowing myself 5 minutes to check my emails lets me postpone responding until later in the day.

Press **Pause** button



And take a **conscious** decision.

## How to avoid P.A. Nic?

If taking a pause is so easy, why don't we do it more often?  
And why do we still have so many habits that we're not happy with?  
It all comes down to the action we take after taking such a break.

Sure, we can become aware and momentarily distance ourselves from the behaviours we no longer want. But what do we do next?  
More often than not, we take an action that is either too vague, too complex, or too big.

**We want to change everything all at once, and we go about it in a difficult and often nonspecific manner.**

What happens then?

Our personal assistant Nic will get into P.A.Nic - he freaks out because the new action or habit that we want to activate is too vague, too complex or too big. He doesn't know what to do, so he quickly reverts back to familiar behaviour, to automatic patterns.

The next episodes will delve into precisely those themes.  
How can we ensure that Nic doesn't panic?

**Can we make things more specific?**

**Can we make things smoother?**

**And can we break it down into super small steps?**

“

“IN ESSENCE, IF WE WANT TO DIRECT OUR LIVES,  
WE MUST TAKE CONTROL OF OUR CONSISTENT  
ACTIONS.

IT'S NOT WHAT WE DO ONCE IN A WHILE THAT SHAPES  
OUR LIVES, BUT WHAT WE DO CONSISTENTLY”

~ TONY ROBBINS

## The physiological sigh

To become more conscious of the moments when you need to take a break, I would like to introduce you to **neuroscientist Dan Huberman** who has a simple breathing method to reduce our stress.

Dan has extensively studied **the impact of breathing** on our physiology and mental well-being. He introduced the concept of the physiological sigh, which is a natural, deep breath that helps regulate our respiratory system and reduce stress.

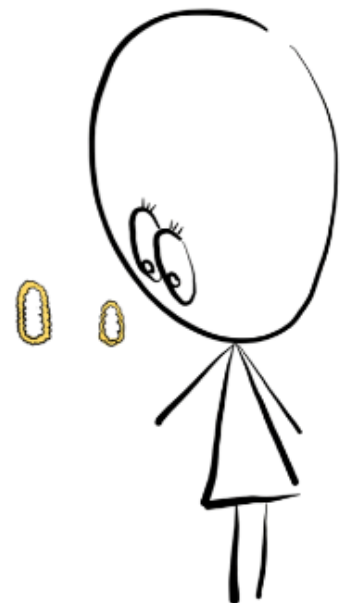
The physiological sigh typically involves taking a deep breath in through the nose - immediately followed by another short inhale- allowing the lungs to fully expand. And then exhaling slowly and completely through the mouth.

This double inhalation followed by a prolonged exhalation **triggers a relaxation response in the body**, helping to lower heart rate, reduce muscle tension, and promote a sense of calmness and relaxation.



## The physiological sigh

The fastest way to reduce stress



[\* Stanford Neuroscientist Andrew Huberman - 'the Psychological Sigh']

Ssssss.....

The beauty of the physiological sigh lies in its **simplicity and accessibility** – it can be performed anytime, anywhere, and requires no special equipment or training. For these reasons, it's an excellent tool to support our conscious breaks when aiming to change a certain habit.

To tailor it for the Brainflix series, I suggest a small adjustment: instead of simply exhaling through the mouth, try exhaling while **making the 'sss' sound**.

This simple tweak can help you recall the three key elements to make change a little easier.

The 'sss' represents **Specific, Smooth, and Small**.

By incorporating these principles into your life when attempting to **change a habit or improve the success rate of your change project**, you may find the process more manageable and effective.



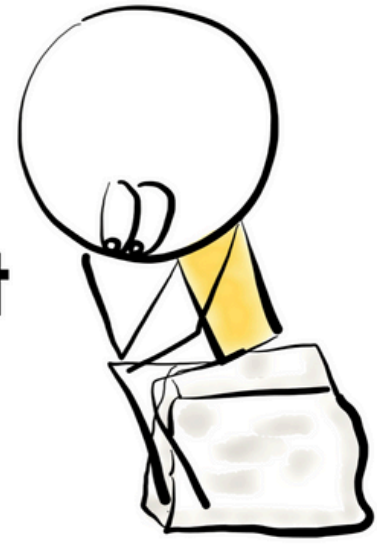
**S**pecific      **S**mooth      **S**mall

“

“SOMETIMES LITTLE THINGS MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE”

~ NINO VARSIMASHVILI

# Sss ... A moment to reflect



So...

Discover your specific, smooth and small changes today:

Choose one small habit you want to adjust and make a plan to achieve it.

Remind yourself that every small step forward can make a difference in the success of your changes.

And don't forget to breath...sssss.....!

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## Episode 5

### Make it specific & take a picture

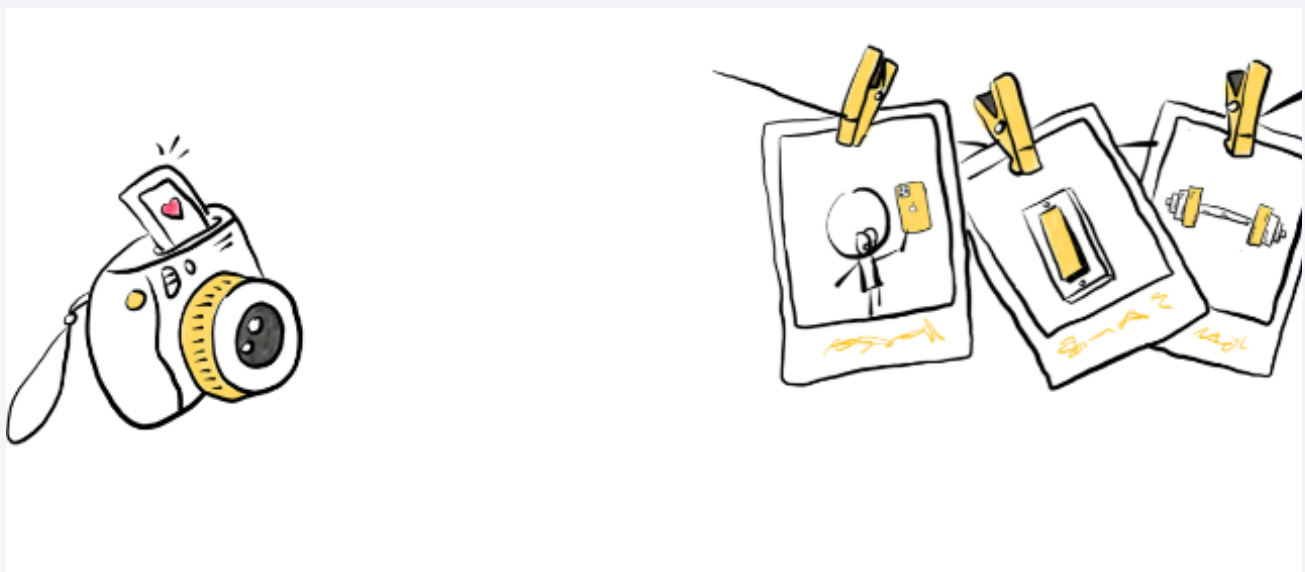
Many organisations have high ambitions, but formulating clear objectives often remains a challenge.

They aim for sustainability, customer-centricity, or innovation without making these goals tangible. This **vagueness can be paralyzing** for employees like our good old Nic, who don't know where to start and end up sticking to old behaviours. But there's a solution.

A practical way to kickstart change is by asking yourself: **Can I make a picture of the desired behaviour?**

If the answer is yes, it suggests that the change goal is clear enough.

For instance, if your organisation aims to prioritise sustainability, outlining specific actions is crucial. Simply expressing a desire for sustainability lacks clarity. Detailing actions like "reducing energy consumption" remains vague. However, setting a clear expectation, such as "every employee turning off lights & computers in the evening," can be easily imagined, enhancing clarity and facilitating implementation.



**Take a picture of the desired behaviour.**

## From Goals to Actions: Personalizing Change for Impact

To truly effect change, it's **crucial to translate these grand goals into specific actions** at various levels within the organisation.

Departments can identify their own contributions that align with their expertise and capabilities.

For example, the accounting department may focus on reducing paper usage, while the sales team may choose to conduct more virtual meetings rather than spending an hour driving to attend in-person meetings.

By pinpointing these specific actions, employees know exactly what is expected of them, thereby increasing the likelihood of success.

But let's delve even deeper. What if we were to translate big goals, such as sustainability or customer focus, down to the personal level? Could we create a personalised commitment list? How would this work in practice?

### From vague ambition to personal **Commitment**



- I take once a week the bike or public transport to the office.
- I check every evening if the lights are out.
- I ask myself the question 'Do I need to print this document (or print double-sided).'
- I use my standing desk at least once a day.
- ...

Imagine compiling a list of 10 to 15 highly specific actions individuals can take to promote sustainability. These actions could include commitments like biking to work once a week, opting for public transportation, ensuring lights are turned off in the evening, or considering double-sided printing before hitting "print" on a document.

**The key is to make these actions tangible and manageable**, so they become part of daily routines.

Once the list is created, individuals can be asked to select a subset, say 3 to 5 actions, that resonate most with them.

By actively choosing their commitments, individuals are more likely to follow through because they've made a personal investment in the process.

This approach not only translates vague goals into concrete actions, but also increases the likelihood of behavioural change.

In essence, by encouraging personalised commitments, **organisations can bridge the gap between overarching goals and individual behaviours, ultimately driving meaningful change from within.**

## Attic Tales: The Curious Case of Clutter and Insulation

It's essential not only to be precise in our actions but also in our analysis of situations. Sometimes, we quickly decide to go in a certain direction without really checking if we're working on the right problem.

**The importance of thorough analysis** is often overlooked. A situation that perfectly illustrates this, occurred in the United Kingdom. There, efforts were made to encourage homeowners to insulate their attics. Despite subsidies being provided and the environmental benefits being emphasised, the desired behaviour did not materialise.

The intriguing aspect was that the initiatives did not yield the desired results, even though the benefits seemed obvious. However, then the "Nudge unit" stepped in. This specialised unit decided to thoroughly analyse the problem by engaging in conversations with the stakeholders.

What they found was surprising: people were indeed aware of the benefits of insulating their attic, but it wasn't the financial savings or the environmental aspect that deterred them. It was the clutter in their attic that they were reluctant to deal with.



Thanks to this in-depth analysis of the problem, new insights were gained. Instead of clinging to the assumption that cost savings and environmental friendliness would be sufficient to motivate people, they discovered the real barrier: the clutter.

In response, the initiatives were adjusted. Instead of offering subsidies for insulation, they offered subsidies to declutter attics. This turned out to be a resounding success. People were now motivated to take action.

**By avoiding assumptions and identifying the real pain points, we can find more effective solutions and better achieve our goals.**

## The Art of Specificity: Elevating Hand Washing Protocols Across Roles

In a hospital, hand washing by nursing staff is a crucial hygiene measure to keep diseases at bay. At first glance, this action may seem very specific, but when we look at different roles, it turns out that there can be even more specific tasks.

The nursing staff themselves can take specific actions by providing feedback to each other. If they notice a colleague forgetting to wash their hands, they can address this constructively and provide immediate feedback, without being accusatory.

For the manager, specific action, for example, may involve spending fifteen minutes weekly observing the nursing staff. This allows them to identify patterns, such as forgetfulness during emergencies, and learn from these observations.



For the maintenance staff, specific action may mean responding within five minutes to refill the soap dispenser if they receive a notification that it's empty. These are examples of how hand washing can be made even more specific across different job roles within an organisation.

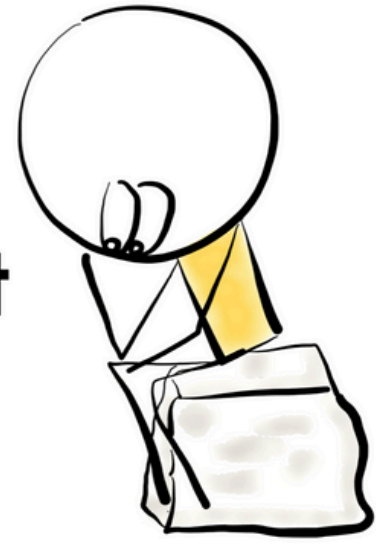
This illustrates **the importance of making actions specific**, even for tasks that may seem very concrete at first glance. It shows **how a small adjustment in tasks can make a difference in achieving organisational goals** and ensuring quality and safety.

“

**“ALL MY LIFE, I ALWAYS WANTED TO BE SOMEBODY.  
NOW I SEE THAT I SHOULD HAVE BEEN  
MORE SPECIFIC”**

**~ JANE WAGNER**

# Sss ... A moment to reflect



How do you think you can apply the concepts of specificity and personalized commitments to enhance your change initiatives?

Identify specific actions that align with your goals and drive meaningful change within your organization.

Start small but think big.

And watch the impact grow!

▶ Next Episode



## Episode 6

### Make it smooth & reduce any resistance

Our unconscious brain tends to shy away from complexity, struggling to find a starting point and often succumbing to resistance.

In psychological studies, they discovered that there are three bigger resistances to change:

reactance, scepticism and inertia.

If we can reduce these resistances, acceptance of change will be easier.



**Reduce resistance.**



**Reactance** refers to the psychological phenomenon where individuals react defensively or resist attempts to restrict their freedom or autonomy. It arises when people perceive that their freedom of choice is threatened, leading them to assert their independence by resisting or rejecting the change. You can diminish this resistance by giving people more autonomy.

**Scepticism** involves a questioning or doubting attitude toward change initiatives. It arises from a healthy degree of critical thinking and evaluation of the proposed changes, as individuals may have concerns about the rationale, feasibility, or potential consequences of the change. You can reduce this resistance by giving people security or addressing concerns already proactively.

**Inertia** refers to the tendency of individuals or systems to resist changes to their current state or condition. It arises from a combination of factors, including habit, routine, and a reluctance to expend the effort required to adapt to something new. Inertia can manifest as a preference for maintaining the status quo, even in the face of compelling reasons or incentives to change. To overcome inertia, you need to motivate and empower people to get into action.

By acknowledging these resistances upfront, we can develop strategies to address them effectively, paving the way for smoother transitions. Here are some examples of how you can diminish the change in resistance:

## Need for autonomy

For instance, to enhance customer and employee satisfaction, empowering frontline employees with a client budget allows them autonomy in addressing client needs.

**The Ritz Carlton exemplifies this** by allocating a "Wow" budget of \$2000 per client, enabling employees to decide how to address client challenges independently. This approach not only increases employee satisfaction by giving them autonomy but also enhances customer experiences as employees can respond to individual needs promptly and creatively.

### Another great example to give people more autonomy is the revolutionising Expense Policy of Netflix.

Traditional expense policies can be a lot of work for both employees and organisations, requiring meticulous documentation and extensive approval processes. However, Netflix took a bold step to streamline this administrative burden. Instead of intricate rules and tedious paperwork, Netflix adopted a single What does this mean in practice? It empowers employees to make autonomous decisions regarding expenses, trusting them to act in the company's best interest.

For example, if an employee believes that treating a potential collaborator to a lavish dinner at a Michelin-starred restaurant is necessary to seal a deal, they have the freedom to do so. However, they must be prepared to justify their decision if questioned. This level of autonomy fosters trust and empowers employees to make responsible choices.



By eliminating the need for receipts and paperwork, Netflix not only saves time but also promotes a culture of accountability and autonomy.

While some may argue that this approach opens the door to potential abuse, the benefits of trusting employees to act in the company's best interest far outweigh the risks.

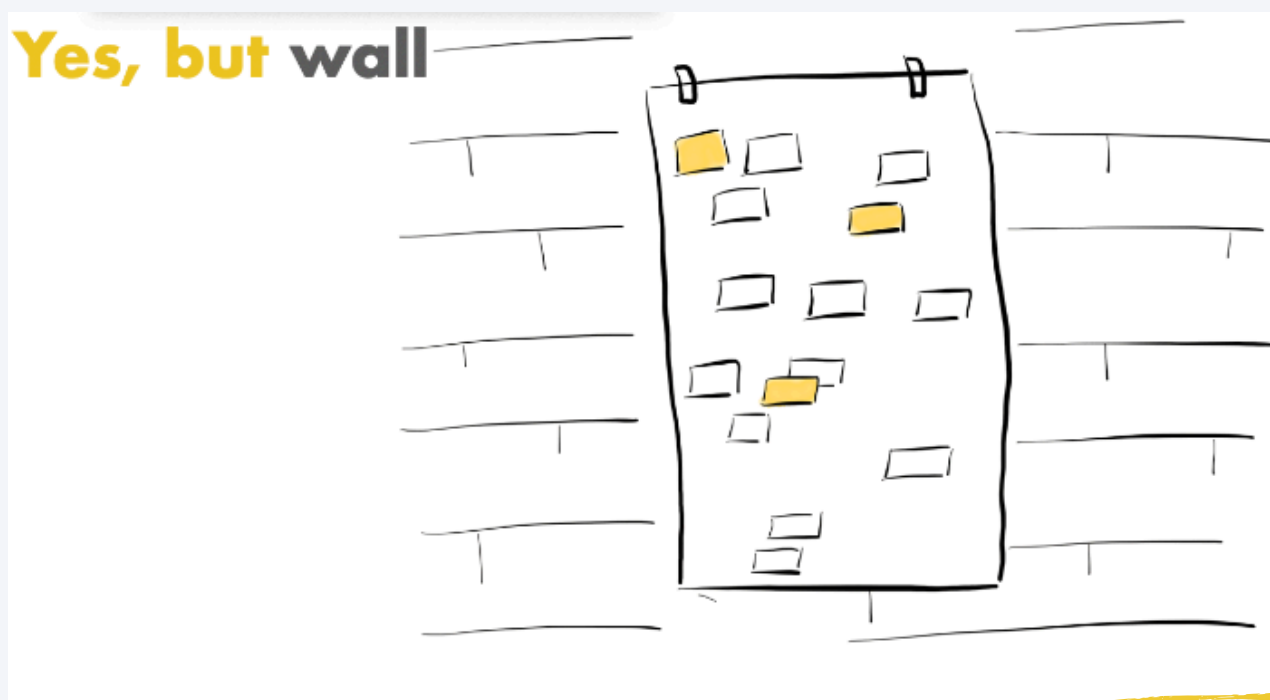
## Need for security

While providing employees with increased security may not always be feasible due to rapid changes, embracing humility as a leader and involving employees in decision-making can be an effective strategy.

Creating a platform for employees to express concerns and focusing collectively on solutions rather than problems fosters a culture of engagement and empowerment. **By acknowledging that leaders don't have all the answers and encouraging open dialogue, organisations can tap into the collective intelligence of their teams to navigate uncertainty and drive positive change.**

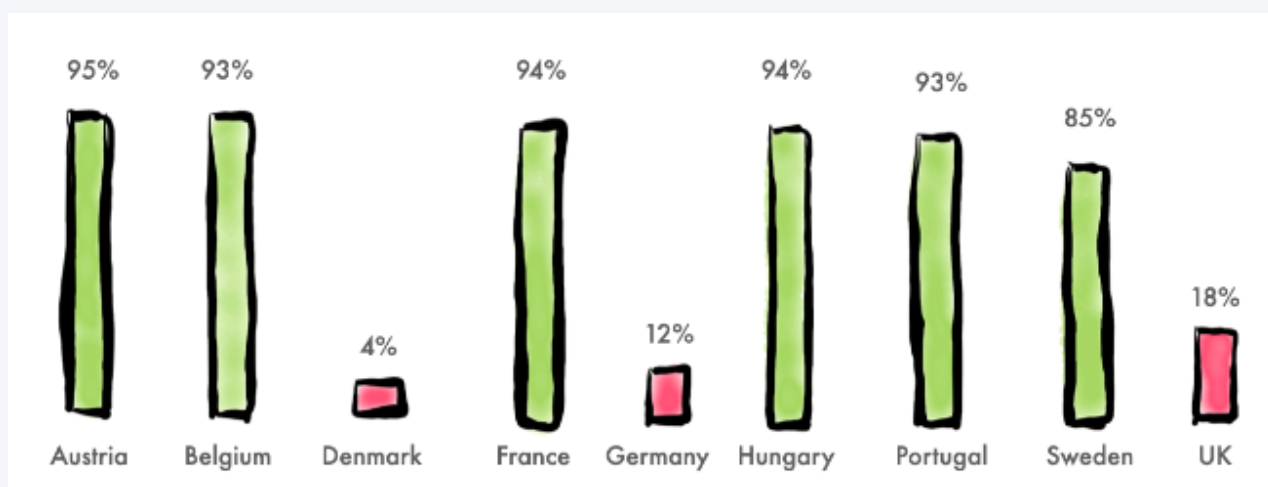
Another example that I have applied several times is the creation of a 'Yes but' wall. In fostering innovation within organisations, combating the "yes, but" mentality is crucial. Here's how it works:

First, participants write down all their ideakillers on sticky notes for 5 or 6 minutes. These are then clustered together to visualise the obstacles. Next, the focus shifts to brainstorming opportunities and ideas, encouraging a positive outlook. Instead of looking on what can go wrong, we focus on opportunities. Any remaining objections are noted, but quickly redirected towards constructive discussion, enabling teams to embrace creativity and collaboration in pursuit of innovative solutions.



## Need for energy

We human beings follow the path of the least resistance - certainly if there isn't a conscious decision to go in a different direction. That's also the reason why it's hard to change a habit - certainly in the beginning. Because we know the 'old' path - our unconscious brain doesn't have to do a lot of effort to stick to old patterns because it has done it so many times. If we want to change a habit, we have to change the pathway of the connections between neurons in our brain and that takes energy & time. So this is **an extra reason to make the new pathway as smooth as possible to conquer less resistance.**



## Nudging

Moreover, when individuals understand their tasks and have no concerns yet fail to act, nudging them in the right direction can be beneficial. Nudging involves **subtly influencing behaviour or decision-making without impeding freedom of choice.** A nice way to do this is 'playing' with the default option. The default or standard option is in a lot of cases the easiest one to follow because we don't have to make a decision.

This is the reason why there are huge differences between different countries when it comes down to organ donations. In the following graph you see how big those differences are. How is it possible that people in Denmark, Germany and the UK have so much resistance to donating their organs while the statistics of other countries exceed 90% positive results?

The reason is very simple. And because this topic is so complex, **we just accept the default option, because it takes too much brainpower to make a conscious decision.** Of course, a small percentage of the population will make a very conscious choice but the majority of us, just follow the easy, standard option.

## Rethinking Default Settings

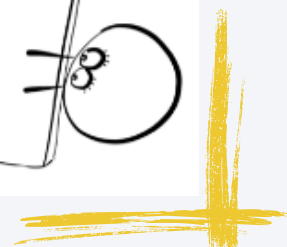
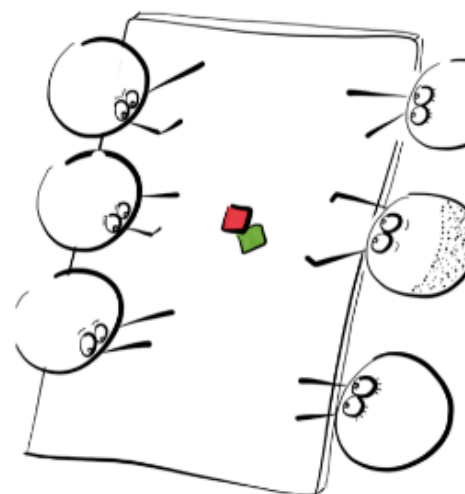
In another compelling scenario, an organisation struggling with an overflow of meetings found itself in a state of fatigue. With schedules packed tight, there was little room for genuine connection or relief.

Upon closer examination, they realised that the default meeting duration of one hour, simply dictated by room reservation settings, was worsening the issue. So, they approached the IT department with a straightforward request: Could they adjust the default meeting duration to three-quarters of an hour?

The impact was remarkable. Within a mere two months, the organisation experienced a shift in energy and ambiance. By reallocating 80% of meetings to three-quarters of an hour, individuals gained invaluable breathing space. Whether it was a brief chat, an extra cup of coffee, or simply a moment of tranquillity, this small adjustment fostered a more conducive environment for collaboration and well-being.

This serves as a great example of **how altering default settings in a straightforward manner can yield significant behavioural changes and cultivate a more positive work culture.**

## Change the meeting reservation system



## Motivation Through Aversion: How [Stickk.com](https://stickk.com) stimulates change

Stickk.com offers a unique approach to habit formation and goal achievement by allowing users to set stakes on causes they strongly dislike, such as a particular political party or association.

By attaching financial penalties or forfeits to failing to meet their goals, individuals are motivated to stay committed and avoid supporting causes they oppose. This aspect taps into **the power of negative reinforcement, leveraging aversion to certain outcomes as a driving force for behaviour change.**

Additionally, users can still benefit from social accountability by involving friends or appointing a referee to monitor their progress, ensuring they stay on track towards their desired habits or objectives.

This innovative approach not only encourages personal growth and self-improvement but also provides a platform for individuals to **align their actions with their values and beliefs.**

The screenshot displays the Stickk.com website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'HOW IT WORKS', 'ABOUT US', 'HELP CENTER', 'SIGN IN', and 'REGISTER'. Below the navigation, the main heading reads 'Ready to finally stickK to your Goals?'. A user is prompted to 'I commit to' followed by a dropdown menu labeled 'Select your Goal...' and a 'GO' button. Below this, a form titled 'Put money on the line - people who do one up to 3 times as successful!' asks 'Where does my money go if I don't succeed?'. The 'Recipient of stakes:' section includes radio buttons for 'Anti-Charity', 'Charity', 'Friend or foe', 'I hate it', and 'No money at stake'. The 'Anti-Charity' option is selected and circled in red. A dropdown menu is open, showing a list of organizations to choose from, including 'Political: America First Action (Trump Super PAC)', 'Political: Unite the Country (Biden Super PAC)', 'Abortion: NARAL Pro-Choice America Foundation', 'Abortion: Americans United for Life', 'Gun Control: NRA Foundation', 'Gun Control: Educational Fund to Stop Gun Violence', 'Environmental: Nature Conservancy', 'Environmental: The National Center for Public Policy Research', 'Gay Marriage: Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD)', 'Gay Marriage: National Organization for Marriage', 'Animal Rights: People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)', and 'Animal Rights: Sportsman's Alliance'. The 'Please choose' option is highlighted. Below the dropdown, the 'Amount of Stake' field is visible, followed by a warning: 'You will be billed \$0.00 for any reporting period'. A list of reporting conditions is provided: '1) You report that you were unsuccessful; or 2) Your Referee reports that you were unsuccessful; or 3) You fail to make a required report by the deadline'. At the bottom, a note states: 'All Forfeited Stakes will be sent to your designated recipient (e.g. Charity, friend or foe)'. The Stickk.com logo is visible in the top right corner of the screenshot.

“

“LIFE IS REALLY SIMPLE, BUT WE INSIST ON MAKING IT  
COMPLICATED”  
~ CONFUCIUS

# Sss ... A moment to reflect



Take a moment to reflect on the insights shared in this episode.

What resonated with you the most?

How can you apply these concepts to your personal or professional life?

Have you encountered similar challenges in change management?

What strategies have worked best for you?

Why not start taking small actions today to pave the way for meaningful change?!

▶ Next Episode



## EPISODE 7

### MAKE IT SMALL & GO FOR A LOT OF PROJECTS

In our previous episode, we explored the challenges of change projects being too large, complex, or vague.

Today, **our focus is on making it small**. When a change project looms large, individuals, like our personal assistant Nic, often feel overwhelmed, resorting to familiar habits to avoid the stress of where to begin.

This pattern is mirrored in organisations, where grand ideas lead to extensive planning, meetings, reports, and expanding initiatives.

The antidote? **Embrace small experiments**.

Why experiments? Because, in experimenting, the focus is on the process, not the outcome. The goal is to discover which processes best foster lasting habits.



**Experiment fast, often, and forward.**

## Actions should be small. Super small.

Conditions for small actions?:

**Cost less than one euro + completed within five minutes + started within 24 hours.**

If these conditions aren't met, it's likely still too ambitious.

While having big dreams is commendable, the key is to take small, manageable steps. The journey toward a goal is composed of numerous small steps, sometimes with ups and downs.

Celebrate small successes along the way. Enjoy the process and acknowledge your achievements, even those from the past, as a source of energy for current endeavours.

Consistency in small daily actions trumps sporadic intensity.

James Clear's quote, "Every action you take is a vote for the person you wish to be," underscores **the power of identity in habit formation. Small steps connect you to a desired identity, reinforcing habits.**

And I love this practical advice from James:

*"In theory, consistency is about being disciplined, determined, and unwavering. In practice, consistency is about being adaptable. Don't have much time? Scale it down. Don't have much energy? Do the easy version. Find different ways to show up depending on the circumstances. Let your habits change shape to meet the demands of the day. Adaptability is the way of consistency."*



**Consistency in small actions aligns with the brain's programming, creating a chain reaction of positive habits.**

For instance, incorporating a daily five-minute walk may influence healthier lunch choices, illustrating how one small experiment can trigger a cascade of positive changes.

Embrace the power of small experiments for lasting transformation.

## Start a complain quarter.

In a care organisation, the atmosphere underwent a transformation under the leadership of a new team leader.

The team, previously known as 'difficult to manage' and 'the complainers,' experienced frustrations with suppliers, an overcrowded closet and other issues.

The team leader opted for an innovative approach. She instituted a weekly 'complaint quarter,' where all frustrations were documented.

Following this quarter, the team selected three complaints to address within a specified period.

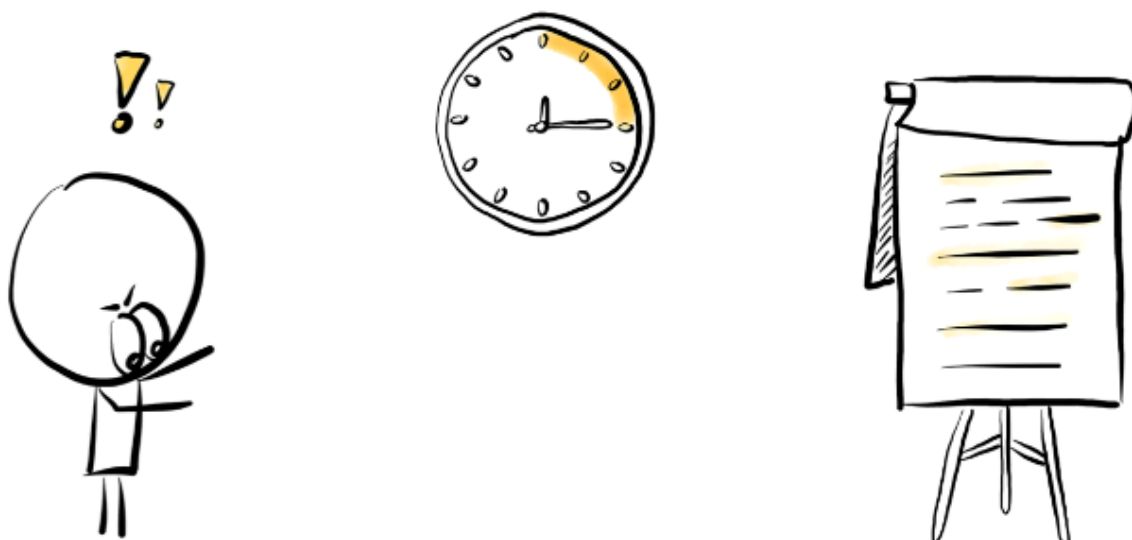
Initially sceptical, the team actively engaged in finding solutions.

Strangely enough, after eight weeks, **there was nothing left to complain about.**

The complaint quarter evolved into a chat quarter, **fostering a positive atmosphere on the work floor. This resulted in increased attention to residents, cosiness in common areas, and creative initiatives** previously overlooked due to time constraints.

Venting frustrations serves a purpose and isn't inherently negative. It signifies engagement and indicates that there is energy, although misdirected. Make clever use of this energy.

## The **complaint** quarter



## Welcome to our clubhouse.

The Dutch Driessen Groep consists of a group of 14 companies and approximately 800 employees operating in the healthcare, education and government sectors. Their mission is to enhance work happiness for their clients.

**To foster a sense of community and engagement** within the Driessen Group, a unique initiative called Clubhouse was introduced during the pandemic. Rather than implementing a certain structure and themes from headquarters, they envisioned a platform where employees can form clubs based on shared interests.

The only conditions were to have a minimum of eight members; organise at least 2 activities a year and every club receives a budget of €500 a year. This approach encourages employees to take small steps towards building connections and engaging in activities they enjoy.

**The Clubhouse initiative has been a remarkable success**, with over 21 clubs formed in just two years - going from several sport clubs to a motorbike club and there is even a closet-sale club. It has facilitated social events, networking opportunities and collaboration between different companies within the group.

**Because people are now not only connected within one certain company (vertical), but horizontally over different companies by their shared interest.** The initiative has significantly contributed to a more positive work environment, fostering new friendships and collaboration across departments and companies.

**Join our clubhouse**

**Clubhuis spelregels**

- Een club bestaat uit minimaal 8 collega's.
- Iedere club heeft een clubleider die zorgt voor de organisatie van 1 tot 2 en aanspreekpunt is.
- Er worden minimaal 2 activiteiten op jaarbasis georganiseerd.
- De agenda wordt op OnDriessen en de clubpagina's gecommuniceerd.
- Er is geen deadline voor het inschrijven bij een club. Collega's kunnen door middel van een try-out proefjes meedelen/medebron met een club. Daarnaast kan een deelnemer zich inschrijven bij de clubleider.
- Er mag je voor meerdere clubs inschrijven.
- Er wordt een budget van €500,- per club per jaar beschikbaar gesteld. Dit wordt voor de helft door Driessen Groep en de helft beschikbaar gesteld door via OnDriessen, tegen bij grotere bedragen contact op met de clubleider.

ag nieuwe club, algemene thema's en vragen etc.) kunnen aan de Clubbaan gevraagd worden. Zo de Clubbaan, of het je gebruik maken van het facilitaire team, stuur dan een berichtje naar de clubleider.

**Terug naar overzicht**

**Gezelschapsspellen club**

**Clubhuis DeBand**

**Clubhuis spelontspanning motorclub**

**Schaakclub**

**driessen groep**

**CLUB HUIS**  
LINDA 2022

## Unlocking creativity in three minutes.

Many companies today recognize the importance of fostering creativity and innovation within their organisations.

They invest significant effort in organising meetings, trainings, and other initiatives to stimulate creativity among their teams.

However, there is a simple and effective step that can make this process much easier: **the Three Minute Rule**.

**The Three Minute Rule** is a method that can be implemented in your next meeting to encourage creative thinking.

Suppose you have an agenda with ten points.

I would suggest that for nine of those points, you stick to logical thinking and problem-solving approaches.

However, for one agenda point, you can introduce the Three Minute Rule to stimulate creativity.

### Here's how it works:

Allocate three minutes to this specific agenda point and create an environment where there is no judgement.

During these three minutes, participants can freely generate ideas without any restrictions.

This means that common idea killers such as "yes, but we don't have any money" or "yes, but we've already tried it" are temporarily suspended.

People are encouraged to think without limitations, imagining unlimited resources and possibilities to solve the challenge at hand.

“

“100% OF THE SHOTS YOU DON'T TAKE DON'T GO IN”

~ WAYNE GRETZKY

If someone does express an idea killer during these three minutes, such as saying "yes, but we've already tried it," you can hand them the "RED ideakillers" card(\*1). This card symbolises that the person has killed one idea and as a consequence, they are required to come up with two new ideas.

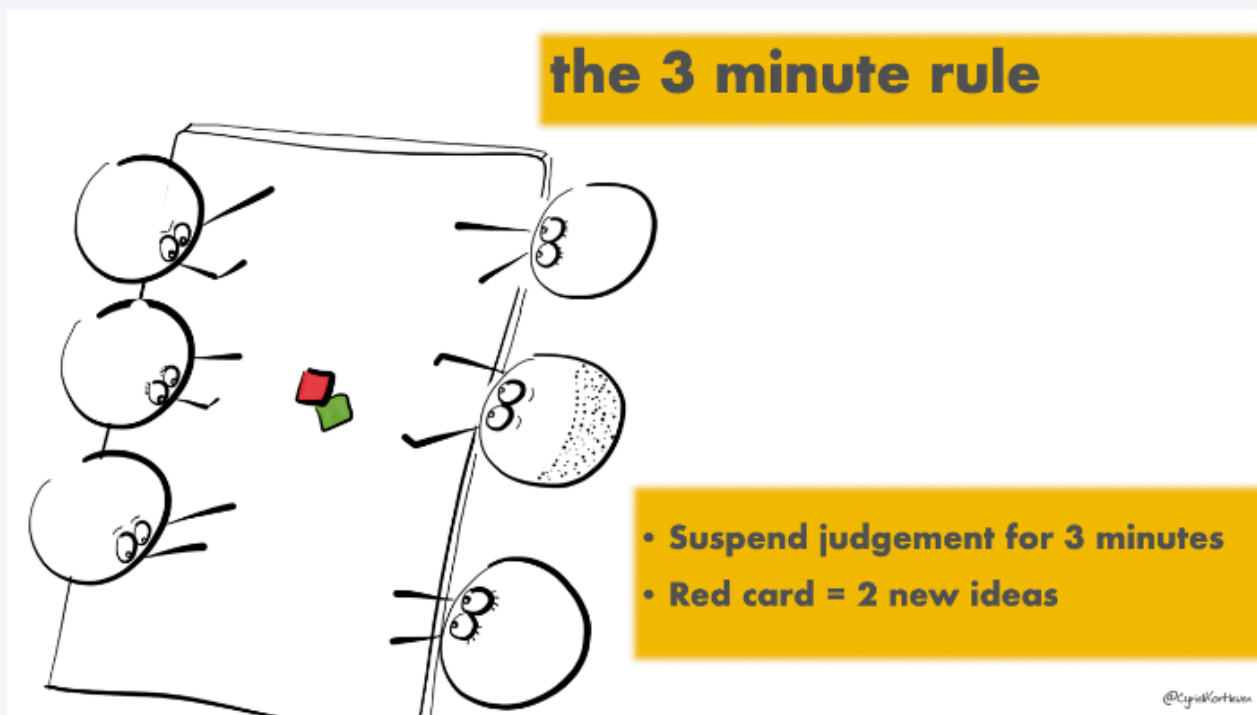
After the three minutes have elapsed, you can review all the ideas generated, both the conventional ones and the more unconventional or "crazy" ones. From a more rational viewpoint, you can evaluate and select the ideas that have potential. Sometimes, combining different ideas can lead to innovative solutions.

**You'll be surprised by the possibilities that can emerge when you allow yourself and your team just three minutes of open space for creativity.**

The Three Minute Rule is a small yet powerful method to stimulate new ideas and foster creativity in your work.

By implementing this rule, you can unlock the creative potential within your team and discover innovative solutions to challenges.

(\*1) You can download the idea killers card in 10 different languages via [ideakillers.net](http://ideakillers.net)



## My first assignment at the other side of the world

When I first embarked on my career as a speaker, I had a great ambition of becoming an international keynote speaker.

Although it may have seemed a bit naive, my ambition was undeniably ... ambitious. I devised a strategic plan to achieve my goal: if I could secure a speaking engagement in New Zealand, a country situated on the other side of the world from Belgium, it would serve as a stepping stone to securing opportunities in the countries in between.

However, **I faced a significant challenge**: I had no connections in New Zealand. Despite not having any contacts, this speaker was determined to get a speaking assignment there.

I utilised LinkedIn to find people involved in creativity and innovation in New Zealand. Then I've sent personalised emails to the first 10 individuals on the list expressing interest in connecting with like-minded people.

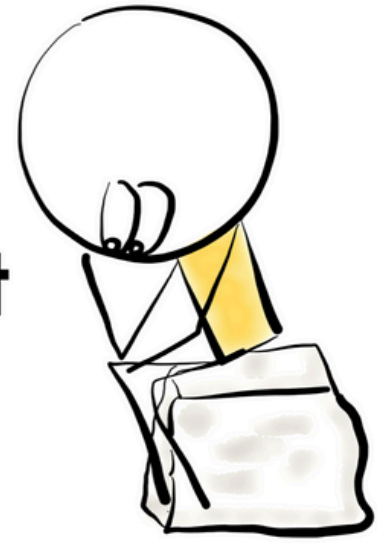
Out of the 10 emails sent, four received responses, two of which were serious enough to lead to the speaker's first assignment in New Zealand, nine months after initial contact.

I think this is a great example of **how very small steps could lead to a speaking assignment** on the other side of the world, kicking-off my international career.

## My first assignment in **New Zealand**



# Sss ... A moment to reflect



What could your experiments be?

Has the principle of small steps helped you already achieve some successful changes?

Why not considering the Three Minute Rule in your next meeting or brainstorming session?

Or introducing a Clubhouse initiative in your organization or team?

Curious to know which interesting ideas will emerge from these creative exercises!

▶ Next Episode



## EPISODE 8

### BONUS TIPS - part 1

In the previous episodes we have learned that we can increase the success rate of change projects by focussing on SSS - make it specific, make it smooth and make it small. But there are of course more ways to achieve this goal. In episode 8 and 9 you get **some extra bonus tips** to make sure that the new behaviour will stick longer.

Let's dive in!

### BONUS TIP 1: ENTER VIA THE EMOTIONAL DOOR

In the business world, when we seek to change someone's behaviour, whether it's our employees, colleagues, or customers, we often rely heavily on rational arguments. We present facts, figures, and logical reasoning, believing that this approach will convince people to adopt new practices or ideas.

However, **what if I told you that our unconscious brain is far more influenced by emotions than rational facts?**

Research in neuroscience has shown that emotions play a significant role in decision-making and behaviour. Our brains are wired to respond to emotional cues, often more strongly than to logical arguments.

**By appealing to their emotions, you create a deeper connection and engagement.** Emotions tap into our subconscious desires, fears, and aspirations, making the message more compelling and memorable.

This emotional resonance is what drives real behaviour change.

**So why do we often overlook the power of emotions in business?**

Perhaps it's because we've been conditioned to prioritise rationality and objectivity in decision-making.

We believe that emotions have no place in the boardroom or the workplace.



**Enter via the emotional door.**

However, **ignoring emotions can be a costly mistake**. Studies have shown that emotionally engaged employees are more productive, loyal, and innovative. Likewise, customers are more likely to make purchasing decisions based on how they feel about a product or brand rather than its features alone.

Instead of shouting louder with rational arguments, **let's focus on creating emotional connections**. Let's tell stories that inspire, motivate, and resonate with our audience. Let's acknowledge the power of emotions in driving real change, both in business and in life.

A nice example happened in Mexico where the bus company put their bus drivers on bicycles to demonstrate the risks for cyclists riding past them.

I'm quite sure most bus drivers will be more careful in passing a cyclist on the street - after their experience.

This had a lot more impact than giving the bus drivers rational arguments why they should be more careful.

[Link to the video.](#) [16 seconds video].



**“THE FIRST MINUTE OF ACTION IS WORTH MORE THAN A YEAR OF PERFECT PLANNING”**

**~ JAMES CLEAR**



## BONUS TIP 2: THE POWER OF EMOTIONAL APPEALS IN TRAFFIC SAFETY

In the fight against speeding and reckless driving, some police zones are using innovative tactics to create awareness and change behaviour.

One such approach involves sending speeding fines with drawings of children, aiming to touch drivers on an emotional level.

These drawings humanise the consequences of speeding, evoking feelings of guilt, empathy, and responsibility.

**By personalising the consequences and emphasising the dangers around schools and residential areas, these initiatives go beyond punishment to educate and raise awareness.**

They foster a sense of shared responsibility for road safety and encourage drivers to reflect on their actions.

Ultimately, these emotional appeals prove to be effective in promoting safer driving habits and creating a more conscientious environment on the road.

## BONUS TIP 3: DON'T WAIT FOR THE PERFECT MOMENT

It's easy to fall into the trap of waiting for the perfect moment to take action. We want everything to be just right before we dive in, analysing every detail and planning every step meticulously.

However, **this approach can often lead to paralysis by analysis.**

The truth is, you don't have to have everything figured out before you start. In fact, sometimes, **over-analyzing can hold you back from making any progress at all.**

Consider the concept of analysing a problem thoroughly before taking action. While it's important to understand the challenges and potential pitfalls, there comes a point where further analysis becomes counterproductive. You can get so caught up in planning that you never actually take the first step.

This is where the importance of not over-analyzing comes in.

Take, for example, the idea of tackling items on your bucket list. Many people have a long list of things they want to do, but they never seem to get started. One reason for this might be that the list feels overwhelming, with each item seeming like a monumental task.

However, **the key is to start small.** Pick one item and take the first step, no matter how small it may seem.

**Don't wait for the perfect moment.**







## BONUS TIP 4: TRUST THE LOCALS

In the realm of organisational change, there's **a common misconception that management must control every aspect** to ensure success.

However, sometimes the most effective approach is to trust the locals - your employees - to make more specific decisions and drive valuable actions. Many companies aim to be more client-centric, but instead of dictating what employees should do, it may be more beneficial to let them decide how to make this a reality.

Client-centricity can vary significantly from one department to another. What's valuable for the sales team may not align with the needs of the accounting department. Just as when we travel to a different country and trust locals for recommendations, **businesses should trust their employees - the "locals"** of their respective departments - to make informed decisions.

An employee understands the nuances and intricacies of their department better than anyone else, even more so than management. They are the ones interacting directly with clients, dealing with day-to-day operations, and understanding the specific challenges and opportunities within their domain. Therefore, **empowering them to take ownership of decisions can lead to more tailored and effective solutions.**

By fostering a culture of trust and autonomy, organisations can tap into the expertise and creativity of their employees. Instead of top-down directives, encourage bottom-up innovation and problem-solving. Provide guidance and support, but allow employees the flexibility to adapt strategies to suit their unique circumstances.

## BONUS TIP 5: BRIDGING THE GAP: LESSONS FROM AN HR DIRECTOR'S JOURNEY

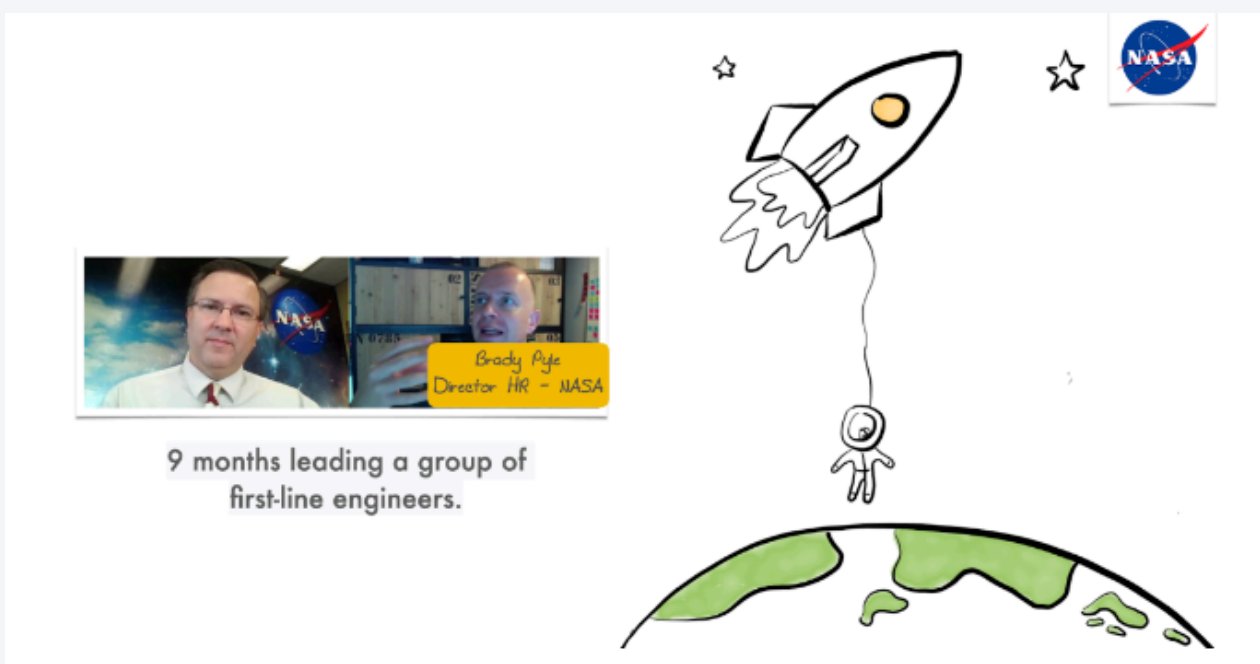
I had the chance to interview an HR director from NASA who shared a valuable lesson from his career. After years in his role, he felt a growing disconnect and decided to take action. **As an experiment, he left his position to lead a small team of first-line engineers facing various challenges.**

During this time, he discovered **two key insights**. Firstly, he realised that many decisions made by top management never reached the employees on the ground. Instructions were given without context, leaving workers in the dark about the reasons behind certain directives. This **lack of communication** stemmed from the layers of hierarchy within the organisation.

Secondly, he observed that the people on the workforce possessed a wealth of experience and valuable insights that were often overlooked by management. They faced challenges daily and had practical solutions to offer, but these **ideas rarely made it to the top.**

Now back in a director position, **he prioritises communication and consultation** with the workforce for most decisions. By involving employees in the process, decisions are more informed and better received. Additionally, he actively listens to frontline workers, recognizing their expertise and incorporating their ideas into decision-making.

This shift has strengthened communication, collaboration, and problem-solving within the organisation. It serves as a reminder of the importance of **staying connected to the workforce and valuing their insights for meaningful change.**





## EPISODE 9

### BONUS TIPS - part 2

In the first 7 episodes we have learned that we can increase the success rate of change projects by focussing on SSS - make it Specific, make it Smooth and make it Small. But there are of course many more ways to achieve this goal. In the previous episode we already gave some extra bonus tips and with this 9th episode we'll list some more to make sure that the new behaviour will stick longer. Let's dive in!

#### BONUS TIP 1: MAKE IT MORE FUN

When it comes to adopting new behaviours, the road to change can often feel mundane and uninspiring. Whether it's prioritising tasks, working more efficiently, or any other habit we want to cultivate in the workplace, the steps to success may seem straightforward but sticking to them can be challenging.

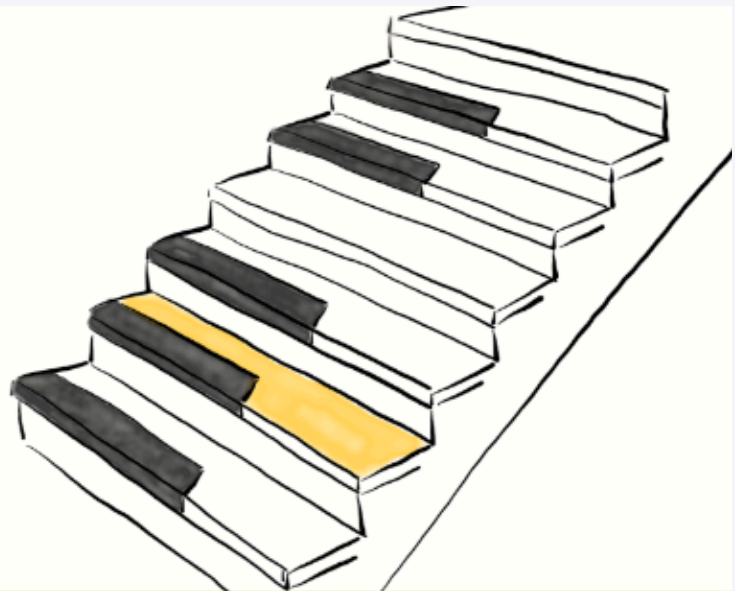
The solution? **Injecting some fun into the process.**

Take, for example, the habit of attending meetings on time and actively participating. We know that being punctual and engaged can lead to better collaboration and productivity, but sitting through meetings can sometimes feel like a chore. However, by adding an element of fun, such as setting a timer for each agenda item and rewarding yourself with a short break or a small treat after each successful meeting, you can turn it into a game and make it more enjoyable.

Or let's zoom in on the habit of being more innovative. It could be very simple by putting a flipchart with a certain challenge next to the coffee corner.

Maybe we could decorate the area with colourful and inspiring visuals and provide tools and resources for brainstorming.

By creating a fun and inviting environment for innovation, **you can inspire your team to think creatively.**



**Most new behaviour is boring. Make it fun.**

**The key is to find ways to make the desired behaviour more enjoyable and rewarding.**

By tapping into the power of small rewards, such as the satisfaction of completing a task or the joy of engaging with colleagues, you can train your unconscious brain to associate the behaviour with positive feelings.

Over time, this can make it easier to stick to your habits and achieve your goals.

🎹 A great example is the **Piano Stairs Experiment** that they have done in Sweden. It was part of "The Fun Theory" campaign launched by Volkswagen and aimed to encourage people to take the stairs instead of the escalator by making the stairs more enjoyable.

The concept was simple yet innovative: the steps of a staircase were transformed into piano keys, with each step producing a musical note when stepped on.

This concept has been copied at different other locations in the world.

🎰 Another example - also in Sweden - is the **Speed Camera Lottery**.

This was introduced to encourage drivers to obey the speed limit.

Instead of receiving fines for speeding, drivers who obeyed the speed limit were entered into a lottery to win a cash prize. This fun twist on enforcement led to a significant reduction in speeding and improved road safety!

## BONUS TIP 2: HABIT STACKING

In the quest for self-improvement and personal growth, **developing positive habits is key.**

However, forming new habits can be challenging, especially when trying to tackle multiple changes at once.

This is where the concept of **habit stacking** comes in - a simple yet powerful strategy for building new habits and making them stick.

Habit stacking is the practice of **linking new habits to existing ones to create a chain of behaviours.** By piggybacking on habits that are already established, we can leverage our existing routines to make it easier to adopt new ones. This approach takes advantage of the brain's natural inclination towards routine and helps to reinforce positive behaviours over time.

The key to habit stacking is **identifying anchor habits** - those actions that we already do consistently - and adding new habits before or after them.

For example, if you already brush your teeth every morning, you could stack a new habit like doing 10 minutes of stretching immediately afterwards.

By connecting the new behaviour to an existing routine, you **create a seamless transition** that makes it easier to incorporate the new habit into your daily life.

To implement habit stacking, start by identifying your anchor habits and selecting one or two new habits to incorporate. Then, determine where the new habits can fit into your existing routine and gradually build on them over time.

Focus on one habit stack at a time and **remember that consistency is key.**

“

—————  
”MOTIVATION IS WHAT GETS YOU STARTED.  
HABIT IS WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING”

~ JIM ROHN

Here are **two examples** of habit stacking in a business.

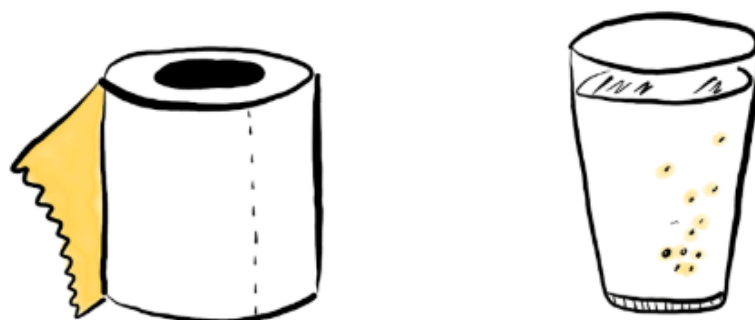
### **Meeting Preparation:**

Stack the habit of preparing for meetings with the **habit of reviewing agendas**. Before each meeting, take a few minutes to review the agenda and jot down any questions or talking points you want to address. This can help you stay focused and engaged during the meeting.

### **Networking:**

Stack the habit of networking with the **habit of attending industry events**. Whenever you attend an industry event or conference, make it a habit to introduce yourself to at least three new people. This can help you expand your professional network and build valuable connections.

In the picture underneath, you see an example of habit stacking for a person who wants to drink more water during the day. Create a habit of drinking a glass of water every time you go to the toilet.



**Habit stacking: Linking new habits to old routines.**

## BONUS TIP 3: PREPARE FOR THE BAD DAYS

Changing behaviour is hard, especially when faced with unexpected challenges.

That's why thinking ahead and planning for those inevitable bad days can significantly **increase your chances of success**.

On a good day, willpower might be enough to keep you on track with your new goals, but what about when things go wrong?

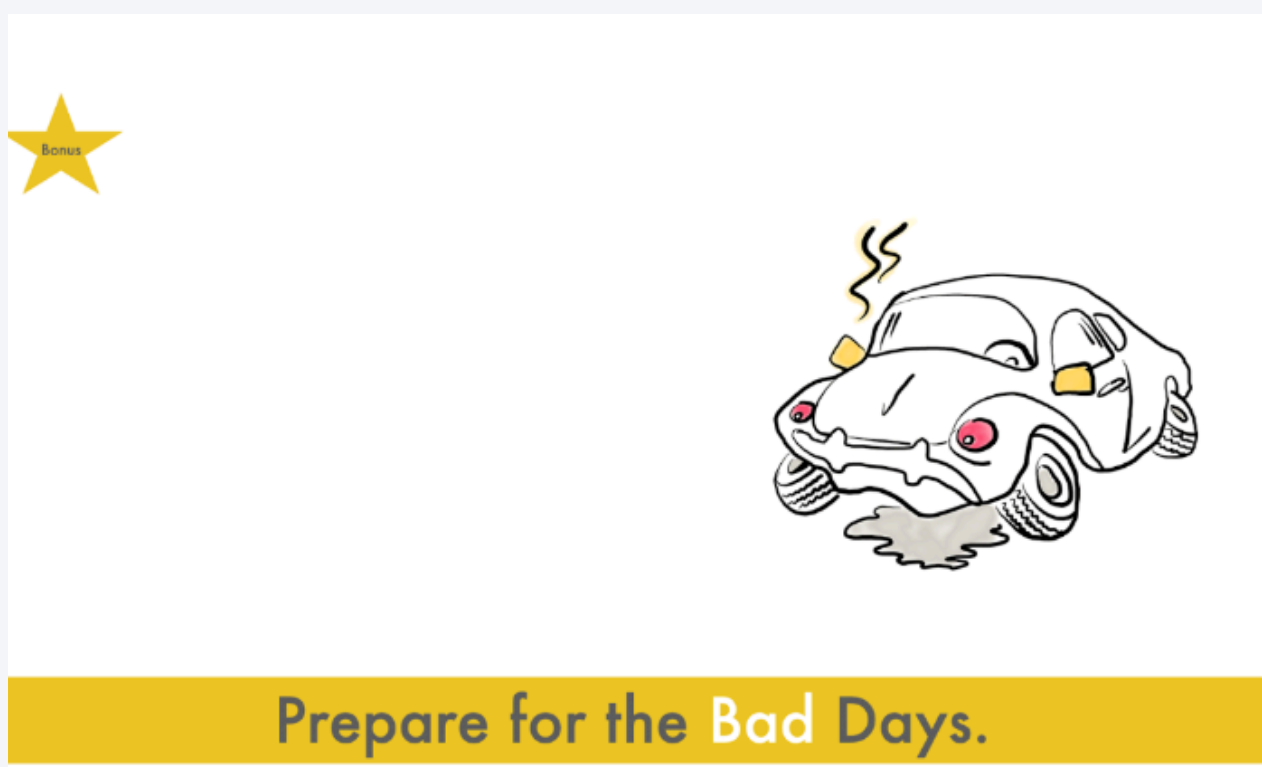
Consider this scenario: You've committed to go for a run every morning to improve your fitness. On a sunny day, it's easy to lace up your sneakers and hit the pavement. But when it's pouring rain outside, your motivation wanes, and relying solely on willpower becomes a struggle.

This is where having an alternative scenario ready can make all the difference.

By anticipating potential obstacles and devising backup plans, you empower yourself to stay on course even when conditions aren't ideal.

For example, if it's raining, you could have a backup plan to do a workout at home or hit the gym instead.

This proactive approach not only **keeps you accountable but also ensures that you're prepared for whatever life throws your way**.



**The key is to think about different scenarios in advance** and come up with practical solutions for each.

Whether it's finding alternative activities, adjusting your schedule, or seeking support from others, having a contingency plan can help you navigate setbacks with greater ease and resilience.

So, the next time you're embarking on a behaviour change journey, don't just rely on willpower alone.

Prepare for the inevitable bad days by anticipating challenges. Think in advance of three scenarios where your plan might go in a different direction and have a plan B, C and D in place.

With **foresight and flexibility**, you'll be better equipped to overcome obstacles and achieve your goals in the long run.

“

—  
"YOU'LL NEVER CHANGE YOUR LIFE UNTIL YOU  
CHANGE SOMETHING YOU DO DAILY."

THE SECRET OF YOUR SUCCESS IS FOUND IN YOUR  
DAILY ROUTINE"

~ JOHN C. MAXWELL

## BONUS TIP 4: MAKE USE OF YOUR PHYSICAL & SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

And to conclude this episode, I want to share one of the most important tips to stick to your habits.

**Sometimes the solution isn't just about willpower or self-discipline - it's about leveraging the environment around you.**

Both the physical and social aspects of your environment can play a crucial role in making your habits stick.

Let's explore how you can use your surroundings to your advantage.

### The Physical Environment

Your physical surroundings can either support or hinder your habits. By optimising your environment, you can set yourself up for success and make it easier to stay on track with your goals.

#### 1. Design Your Space:

Arrange your environment in a way that makes your desired habits more accessible. For example, if you want to exercise more, keep your workout clothes and equipment visible and easily accessible. If you're trying to eat healthier, stock your kitchen with nutritious foods and place them at eye level in the pantry and fridge.

#### 2. Eliminate Temptations:

Remove or minimise distractions and temptations that may derail your habits. This could mean keeping unhealthy snacks out of sight, turning off notifications on your phone during work hours, or creating a designated workspace free from clutter and distractions.

#### 3. Create Triggers:

Use visual cues or triggers to remind yourself to perform your habits. For instance, if you want to drink more water, place a water bottle on your desk or set reminders on your phone to take regular hydration breaks throughout the day.

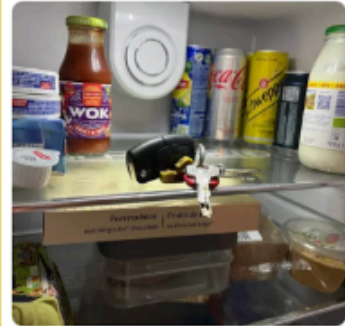
I keep my little weights next to my toothbrush to remind me to do a quick workout during my morning/ evening routine. - Elke



Are you sure you need another shot of caffeine? - Liane



When I prepare my lunch in advance, I tuck my car keys into the refrigerator so I won't forget to bring them to the office the next day. - Julie



## The Social Environment

The people around you can also influence your habits, either positively or negatively. By surrounding yourself with supportive individuals and fostering a culture of accountability, you can increase your chances of sticking to your habits.

### 1. Find an Accountability Partner:

Partnering with a friend, coworker, or family member who shares your goals can provide motivation and accountability. Schedule regular check-ins or workouts together to keep each other on track and celebrate each other's progress.

### 2. Join a Community:

Engage with communities or groups that align with your habits and goals. Whether it's a fitness class, a book club, or an online support group, surrounding yourself with like-minded individuals can provide encouragement, inspiration, and accountability.

### 3. Share Your Goals:

Make your goals public by sharing them with friends, family, or colleagues. By vocalising your intentions, you create a sense of accountability and may even inspire others to join you on your journey.

So take a look around you: how can you tweak your environment to better support your habits and propel you towards your desired outcomes?

With a little strategic planning and the right support system in place, you'll be well on your way to making your habits stick for the long haul.



## EPIISODE 10 HOW IT ALL ENDS

I hope you have enjoyed the Brainflix Series and that you've learned some good tips & enjoyed the examples.

We have covered a lot of stories and insights, but if you want more, no worries! That's possible.

=== I give keynotes that make change simpler:

My presentation '**The Change Mindset**' focuses on attitude and skills. The whole Brainflix series you've read is summed up in my latest presentation, '**Making Change Simple**'.

As a professional speaker, I always tailor every talk to fit your audience perfectly. Watch my 3-minute showreel here.

Feel free to **email me** with details about your event, and I'll get back to you quickly with a proposal.

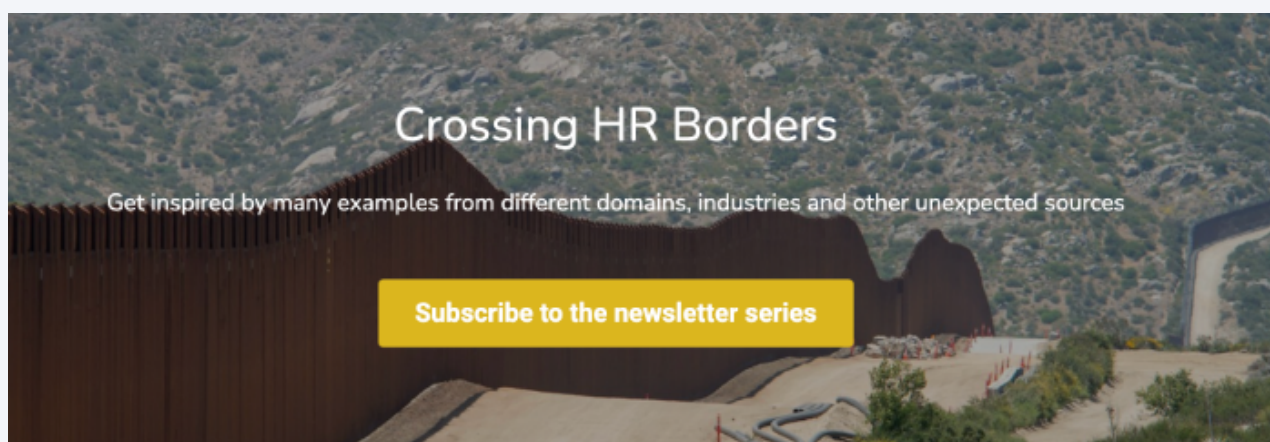


### === You can follow a training

If you want to dive deeper in the exciting world of behavioural change (and if you speak Dutch), I can recommend the great team of BCG - **Behavior Change Group** based in Nijmegen who organise all kind of trainings around this topic. Please mention my name if you're going to follow a training with them.

### === You can read a whole newsletter series

If you are an HR professional and you want to get inspired by 50+ examples to discover what HR can learn from other industries, domains and other inspiring resources, then you can subscribe to my dedicated newsletter series.



### === You can follow an online course

If you would like to get a Change Mindset boost, have a look at this online training and use the code 'SPECIALFORYOU' to get 33% discount.

A YouTube video player interface. The video title is "'Boost your Change Mindset'". Below the title is the subtitle "Dive deep and get access to this online platform". The video content shows a man in a blue jacket speaking, with a whiteboard behind him displaying diagrams and text. Another frame shows the man holding a banana. A third frame shows the man with a whiteboard that says "Everything is a Remix". At the bottom of the video player, there is a yellow banner with the text "3+ educating movies with tips &amp; tricks". The video player controls are visible at the bottom.

# Sss ... A moment to reflect



The shortest motivational speech ever.

**"You gonna die."**

- Gary V(aynerchuk)



**"Live a happy life."**

- Cyriel K(ortleven)

