



GROWTH·U

TRANSFORMING BEHAVIOR THROUGH AUTOMATED CONDITIONING AND INTEGRATION PROGRAMS

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TRANSFORMING BEHAVIOR



We've all been there. It's December 31st and you're taking stock of your life. How much money is in the bank after the holidays? How do your clothes fit after parties and indulgences? Is there someone to kiss at midnight as the ball drops? And if so, is it the person you want it to be?

We look at our lives and decide that changes need to be made, so we make a New Year's Resolution to find a new job, work out more, go out to eat less, or join a new club or activity to meet new people. This time, it's going to work.

Then February rolls around, or maybe you even make it to March this year, and you realize you're exactly where you were on December 31st or in an even less desirable situation.

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WHY IS IT SO HARD TO MAKE CHANGES WHEN YOU KNOW YOU REALLY WANT SOMETHING DIFFERENT FOR YOURSELF?

FROM NEW HABITS TO NEW IDENTITY TO SUSTAINED BEHAVIOR CHANGE

Ultimately, making real changes all comes down to your identity. The strongest force in human nature is the need to stay true to the identity you hold of yourself, and that identity has been many years in the making. Your identity is formed and transformed unconsciously day in and day out through your self-talk, your conscious or unconscious beliefs about your abilities, how you internalize feedback you've received from people around you, what you consume in the media, and countless other avenues that contribute to how you see yourself.

You may not always be aware of your identity, but the choices you make — your behaviors, patterns, and habits — will continually reinforce it. It's possible to make changes in the short term without changing your identity, but it requires a lot of cognitive effort and willpower to sustain them. You have to intentionally make the new choice time after time. When challenges arise, unexpected stresses show up, or frustrations develop because it takes time to see results, making the intentional choice to change your behavior can seem daunting. And then you find yourself back in your old habits and patterns.



THE STRONGEST FORCE IN HUMAN NATURE IS THE NEED TO STAY TRUE TO THE IDENTITY YOU HOLD OF YOURSELF.

Because people tend to behave in a manner that matches their past decisions and behaviors — a term social psychologists call behavioral consistency — old habits are very resistant to change. It is easier to make a decision and stay consistent with it over time than it is to make a new decision every single time you are presented with an option to do so. In fact, people tend to feel very positively about their consistent decisions even when they encounter evidence that those decisions lead to mistakes or errors (Cialdini, 1984).

Accomplishing New Year's Resolutions, for example, is even more difficult because some habits or patterns of behavior were not formed with a specific outcome in mind. They simply arose because "this is who you are." But once you have established behavioral consistency, your unconscious mind has created habits and patterns of behavior, and the conscious mind has an uphill battle in trying to change them.

BEHAVIORAL CONSISTENCY IS THE TENDENCY TO BEHAVE IN A MANNER THAT MATCHES PAST DECISIONS AND BEHAVIORS.

In order to create sustained and lasting behavior change, you need to intentionally develop the identity that intrinsically exhibits the behaviors you want to have. Through daily conditioning programs, weekly integration programs, groundbreaking events, and supportive communities, Growth-U allows you to create intentional behavior change and lasting results by helping you develop a new identity in the specific areas of your life where you want to change.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO BUILD A NEW HABIT? THE MYTH OF THE 21-DAY HABIT CHANGE

In 1960, U.S. plastic surgeon Maxwell Maltz published his self-help book *Psycho-Cybernetics*, in which he presented observations of his patients' and his own adjustments to changes, including reactions to plastic surgery, amputations, and behavior changes. He concluded, "commonly observed phenomena tend to show that it requires a minimum of about 21 days for an old mental image to dissolve and a new one to jell."

Dr. Maltz's book was a bestseller, and over time this oft-repeated conclusion has become accepted as fact among the general public. Regardless of how major a change you may be seeking in your life, there is likely some resource or guru who is happy to sell you a program and tell you it can be achieved in only 21 days.

Belief in the 21-day habit change has remarkable appeal. It's long enough to feel like you are investing effort in changing your life and short enough to feel inspiring and achievable. Of course, it is also rarely accurate. Even Dr. Maltz initially noted that habit change tended to require a *minimum* of 21 days.

Research published in 2009 from Philippa Lally and her team at University College London explored the length of time it took almost 100 participants to form new behaviors. By measuring the automaticity — the psychological concept of acting without thinking — of the new desired behaviors, Lally and her colleagues concluded that the ability to form new habits varies widely based on the individual and the desired behavior change.

THE ABILITY TO FORM NEW HABITS VARIES WIDELY BASED ON THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE DESIRED BEHAVIOR CHANGE.

Some simple behaviors such as drinking water after breakfast were automatic and ingrained in as few as 20 days, while other behaviors such as eating fruit with lunch were habitual in about 40 days. Adding simple exercise habits like walking for 10 minutes each day took almost two months to become habitual, while other participants found that doing 50 sit-ups each day was not automatic even at the end of the study. Their analyses indicated that, on average, a new behavior would become habitual after 66 days, but the range varied from 18 to 256 days.

Admittedly, “it depends” or “probably at least two months” are not great marketing slogans to encourage the formation of new habits and promote behavior change. However, this knowledge about effective behavior design allows for the creation of more impactful and powerful programs to help support individuals and organizations in creating the changes they desire.

WHAT MAKES AUTOMATED PROGRAMS EFFECTIVE IN SUPPORTING BEHAVIOR CHANGE?

While the successful formation of new habits varies based on the desired habit itself and personal characteristics of the individual seeking to make a change, there is an additional challenge to consider. Because behavior change efforts are often focused on either starting a new behavior or ending a specific undesired behavior, they can neglect the importance of *replacing* unwanted behaviors with a new, desired behavior. There are countless programs to help stop smoking, stop gambling, or address other addictions, and the programs that are most successful in “breaking” a habit tend to be those that introduce a new, more desirable habit to replace it.

Growth-U's automated daily conditioning and weekly integration programs combine cognitive and social psychology with technology to create effective behavior design. We utilize analytical and narrative methods to help you understand your own unconscious drivers as you intentionally make the changes needed to achieve your goals. We draw from psychological research, not only in the way we create and deliver the programs, but also in how we teach the content and help you focus on your intrapersonal and interpersonal beliefs and behaviors to achieve your ultimate outcomes.

Our daily conditioning and weekly integration programs utilize reinforcements and rewards to support commitment and behavioral consistency. Using our proprietary, psychology-based models, such as the Six Steps to Lasting Change, the Communication Hierarchy, and the IC-4® model, we provide support through cycles of growth and performance.

Ultimately, our programs guide you through the challenges of long-term behavior transformation, habit change, and identity development with support and insight.

WHAT CHANGE CAN I EXPECT IN 30, 45, OR 60 DAYS?

Growth-U's behavioral transformation programs are designed to be effective in 30, 45, or 60 days, depending on the level of behavior change and identity formation needed in different areas of focus. Our daily conditioning programs are designed to create the behavioral consistency you need to see real changes in specific areas of your life through reinforcement, commitment, and transforming the neural pathways that led to the patterns of behavior and beliefs that you want to change.

Rather than simply encourage you to "stick with it" for a magic number of days until the behavior change is automatic for you, we take a realistic approach by developing programs with a range of lengths and expected outcomes. The different program lengths promote intentional behavior change with different levels of intensity and specific primary outcomes in each program length. Please see the table below for a high-level summary of the features that programs of different lengths offer.

30-DAY CONDITIONING PROGRAM

In a 30-day conditioning program, you can expect support in creating and reinforcing new habits that tend to have little risk for your current identity, and which support where you want to grow. For example, a 30-day program may include building a vision for your health that includes creating new habits such as intentional self-care, adding in regular movement and exercise, and daily flossing. While it is possible to have a more dramatic change in this area over 30 days, it is unlikely and unrealistic that you will undergo transformational behavior change, such as eliminating a lifelong pattern of turning to food for emotional comfort or becoming a devoted gym rat in only 30 days.

Our 30-day programs are designed to kickstart changes and provide high-level skills, tips, and tools that can be implemented right away to help you build momentum in transforming specific areas of your life. These programs are based on and utilize specific psychology-based models, but the models themselves are not discussed in great detail. Additionally, while expected challenges in the growth process — part of the growth cycle known as Deception — are addressed, a 30-day program will not include as much reflection on the pre-existing beliefs that lead to these challenges.

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45-DAY CONDITIONING PROGRAM

In a 45-day conditioning program, there is more focus on interrupting patterns of behavior, replacing "accidental" habits with new ones, and more intentionally creating a new identity to support your desired growth. A 45-day program may support your behavioral changes by drawing attention to those beliefs and behaviors that are automatic, but which do not lead you where you want to go.

For example, at one point in your life, you may have found emotional comfort in the consistency of a sweet treat before bedtime. The late-night opening of the fridge or rummaging of the pantry may have supported the belief that you had a hard day and deserved a reward. In the 45-day conditioning program, you will be able to reflect on the often unconscious beliefs behind your behaviors and replace those behaviors with new ones. For example, rather than meeting your emotional needs through a late-night sweet treat, you may choose to reward yourself for a hard day with an extra chapter of your favorite podcast, a relaxing meditation before bed, or 20 minutes of a mindless video game; these activities will serve both your healthy identity and your emotional need for a reward.

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Our 45-day programs are designed to provide daily interaction in defined areas of focus specific to the program topic, and to reinforce consistent action. In addition to high-level skills, tips, and tools to build momentum, regular reflection on progress and digging into unconscious belief patterns support new identity formation.

In a 45-day program, the models utilized in transforming behavior are described and the patterns of behavior typically encountered during Deception are intentionally addressed. With knowledge of these psychology-based models and processes, these programs support you in being able to identify and address some of your personal patterns of behavior.

60-DAY CONDITIONING PROGRAM

Growth-U's 60-day conditioning programs guide you in intentionally building and supporting a new identity in a specific area of focus. These longer daily conditioning programs enable you to not only build new habits or replace "accidental" habits, but also to replace those habits that were formed intentionally but which no longer serve your desired growth.

For example, people rarely become smokers by accident. There is a conscious decision to try smoking, to regularly purchase cigarettes and nicotine products, and to allow the habit to become part of who you are. You may not intentionally embrace the identity of a smoker, but the behaviors that support and reinforce that identity are intentional. The smoker identity may have served more than one mental or emotional need throughout different stages of your life.

A 60-day conditioning program is designed to build on daily impact and to support you in living in the area of focus every day to build a new identity and achieve your desired behavior change. The psychology-based models used to transform your behavior are described in detail, and this knowledge is used to support you through the challenges of Deception.

Support systems are more focused and address these patterns of behavior, such as seeking certainty or wearing a mask to pretend that growth isn't desired or challenging. There is more practice in implementing the skills and tips introduced in the program on a daily basis, and more reflection to monitor your progress and overcome your stumbling blocks.

A 60-DAY CONDITIONING PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO BUILD ON DAILY IMPACT AND TO SUPPORT YOU IN LIVING IN THE AREA OF FOCUS EVERY DAY TO BUILD A NEW IDENTITY AND ACHIEVE YOUR DESIRED BEHAVIOR CHANGE.

SUMMARY OF CONDITIONING PROGRAMS

	30-Day	45-Day	60-Day
Overview	High level programs, kickstart changes	Daily interaction in the area of focus, working towards consistent action	Live in the focus (e.g., energy, health) of the program every day, build on daily impact
Primary Outcome	Convey high-level skills, tips, tools	Break old habits and build new ones, identify limiting beliefs	Support building new identity in the area of focus
Behavior Change	Create easy new habits, such as flossing teeth, drinking water	Interrupt patterns, replace "accidental" habits with new ones, identify desired new identity	Interrupt patterns, replace "accidental" and intentional-but-no-longer-useful habits with new ones, establish new goal identity
Use of Models	Introduce models, not much detail on why or how they work	Introduce models, some understanding of the basic principles	Build understanding around major program model(s) and their principles
Ability to Implement	Implement tips and tools right away, build momentum	Deeper implementation and reflection on progress	Practice implementation and reflection on progress
Deception	Not addressed in detail	Address high-level Deception patterns	Address specific Deception patterns

WHAT HAPPENS BEYOND 60 DAYS?

While Growth-U's 30, 45, and 60-day automated daily conditioning programs are designed to support a wide range of behavior transformation, identity formation, and habit creation, we also create weekly integration programs that range from 6 weeks to 12 months. These programs build on the commitment and consistency of daily conditioning to support and reinforce new habits and identities.

Our weekly programs continue to utilize the same psychology-based models and approach for reinforcement as the daily conditioning programs, but they may also involve live or recorded coaching calls, a weekly check-in to address new challenges in the growth process, and a supportive community of other leaders or individuals implementing similar behavior change and identity development.



CREATING MOMENTUM FOR LONG-TERM CHANGE, NEW HABITS, AND NEW IDENTITIES

Ultimately, Growth-U's technology and methods — daily conditioning programs, weekly integration programs, groundbreaking events, and supportive communities — are designed to result in effective behavior change and create momentum to achieve the goals you have set for yourself. Through powerful psychology-based models and intentional behavior design, these programs support the creation of new habits, new patterns of behavior, and new identities to achieve the growth and transformation you desire.

Whether you want to add new habits to your daily routine, extinguish habits that served you at one point but will not get you to your next level of growth, or replace patterns of behavior that you never intended to pick up, our unique conditioning and integration programs help you create the identity and behavioral consistency to achieve the goals that are uniquely yours.

Don't give up on making New Year's Resolutions. Don't dread starting something because you fear not finishing it. Know that the changes you want for your life are possible with the resources and support of the Growth-U automated conditioning programs. A New Year's Eve resolution, a milestone birthday, a major life event, a health scare, or just taking stock of your life and where you want to go — these are all fantastic reasons for taking the first step towards behavioral change.

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ABOUT GROWTH-U

Growth-U is changing the world by helping people become the best version of themselves.

We do this with proven coaching systems, a supportive online community, and events to break through the resistance that comes with growth. Our cutting-edge, world-class programs and events support thousands of individuals and teams worldwide in learning, changing, and growing in key areas of their lives — finances, career, relationships, health and energy, mindset, influence, and communication.

Our impactful and effective programs use a powerful combination of psychology, accountability systems, mindset and behavior conditioning, and technology to support participants in creating their visions and establishing the habits and identity needed for sustainable and lasting change.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Benah Parker is the Vice President of Research and Development for Growth-U. Utilizing applied psychology, she contributes to the ongoing development, implementation, and evaluation of our programs, assessments, and content. She earned her Ph.D. in Social Psychology from Arizona State University and her undergraduate degree from the University of Texas at Austin. Benah rhymes with Dana.