

THE SCIENCE OF CHANGE AND SELF-CONTROL

Lesson 13 Guided Notes

The desire to change requires the PFC and anterior cingulate to be healthy:

- The anterior cingulate lets you know when something is wrong and when there's a temptation since it is everywhere.
- The dorsal lateral PFC is necessary for making good decisions but can become depleted when challenged too many times.

Motivation Exercises for Patients

The One Page Miracle

This exercise gives patients an ongoing reminder of what their goals are in multiple areas of life: "What do I want, and is my behavior getting me what I want for myself in these domains?"

- Relationships (intimate, children, family, and friends)
- Work
- Financial
- Self (emotional, physical, and spiritual health)

Fork in the Road Exercise

- What will my life be like in one, five, ten, and thirty years from now if I continue the unhealthy track I am on? For example, decreased mental capacity, poorer health, fatigue, lower-income and strained relationships.
- What will my life be like in one, five, ten, and thirty years on a brain-smart path if I start now? For example, increased mental capacity, optimal health, vitality and longevity, more youthful appearance, better income, etc.



Then What?

- To help patients improve and gain insight into their decisions, have them regularly ask themselves, “If I choose *this*, Then What?” What are the consequences of this choice?

It’s important for patients to turn accomplices into friends who will support their goals rather than sabotage them - or patients can choose to spend less time with those who are unwilling to make healthy changes.

When to Make Quality Decisions

Improving the quality of decisions can determine how healthy patients are. Patients also make better decisions when:

- Blood sugar is stable
- They have gotten 7-8 hours of sleep at night
- Consume little to no alcohol
- Know their motivation
- Eliminate lies that drive failure



The lies patients tell themselves are among the most significant factors that drive failure, i.e., they fear being deprived; they travel too much or can’t afford to eat healthy food; obesity is in their genes; they don’t have time to exercise, etc. Challenging patients on these erroneous beliefs can improve the quality of their decisions and their health.

Ask questions that help patients observe toxic patterns within their generational histories that have perpetuated bad decision-making and begin breaking those patterns.

“HALT”

“HALT” to prevent relapse of bad habits.

Don’t get too:

- **Hungry** – Eat frequent small, high-quality meals and take nutritional supplements to balance blood sugar.
- **Angry** – Maintain control over emotions and automatic negative thoughts.
- **Lonely** – Practice social skills and engage in a positive social network.
- **Tired** – Make sleep a priority to boost brain function and improve judgment and self-control.

Sugar (and fat) act on the nucleus accumbens (addiction centers in the brain). The dangers of sugar are numerous, including:

- Chronic hyperglycemia leads to diabetes, which causes diabetic skin ulcerations, neuropathy amputation, and blindness.
- Diabetes is associated with Alzheimer's disease and depression.
- Sugar feeds cancer cells.
- Sugar and trans fats lead to elevated cholesterol, coronary artery disease, vascular disease, and strokes.
- Sugar causes rapid aging and wrinkles.

Excessive fructose can lead to non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, hypertension, and gout.

Reduce Cravings

Help reduce cravings with:

- Stress management
- Hypnosis
- Meditation
- Planning to avoid food triggers
- Identifying hidden food allergies (i.e., gluten and dairy)

