

Building Habits: AI Podcast

Woman: Hey everyone and welcome back! Ready to dive into some seriously juicy insights on building habits that last?

Man: I am. I always love getting into the nitty-gritty of behavior change.

Woman: Me too. And this time we're taking cues from the best Stanford behavior expert, BJ Fogg. We're dissecting his interview on the Think Fast Talk Smart podcast. And let me tell you, this one's a game changer. Ever feel like you're drowning in self-improving info but still stuck in the same old ruts?

Man: Oh, absolutely. It's like that saying "information overload" except it's more like "information without action."

Woman: Totally. And Fogg calls this out perfectly. He calls it the "information action fallacy." We consume tons of advice but don't always change our behavior. So why is that?

Man: Well, for a long time we bought into this idea that knowledge equals transformation. That if we just had the right info, boom, instant change. But it's rarely that simple, is it?

Woman: Right. It's like those stacks of self-help books judging us from the shelf. So what's the missing piece?

Man: Fogg points to a crucial element that often gets overlooked: emotions. See, the traditional view was all about information leading to a change in attitude, which then leads to behavior change. But what that misses is the sheer power of how we feel. It's not just about knowing what to do. It's about making it feel good, about tapping into those emotions.

Woman: That makes so much sense. So it's not just about willpower. It's about making the change feel good. How do we actually do that?

Man: Well, that's where Fogg's model comes in. And it's a simple yet powerful one. He calls it BMAP.

Woman: B-M-E. Catchy. So how does this BMAP work?

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Man: It stands for Behavior Equals Motivation, Ability, and Prompt. Fogg emphasizes that all three of these must be present for any behavior to occur, not just the ones we want to turn into habits.

Woman: Okay, so all three are important, not just one or the other.

Man: Exactly. And that prompt element, that's a biggie. It's that trigger, the nudge that says, "Do this now." Think of it like your phone ringing. That's a prompt. You have the ability to answer it. But if you're in a meeting and your motivation to stay present is high, you probably won't. Same with any habit. We need all three elements to be in sync.

Woman: So it's like becoming a detective of our own habits. We have to figure out our motivations, make the behavior easier, and identify the prompts that work for us. And Fogg has a great example of this in the interview, talking about reading. Like, lots of us want to read more. But instead of just setting this vague goal, he suggests picking a specific book that genuinely excites you.

Man: Yes. That's tapping into that motivation factor.

Woman: And then to up the ability factor. Make sure the book is super accessible, like on your bedside table. So seeing the book becomes a visual prompt.

Man: Exactly. It's like we're setting ourselves up for success, making the behavior, in this case, reading easier by just having the book within reach.

Woman: Removing the friction.

Man: Absolutely. And that's where the magic of tiny habits comes in. We'll delve into that a bit later.

Woman: Speaking of tiny habits, it feels like everyone's looking for that magic shortcut these days. But before we get into that, can you break down what actually makes something a habit?

Man: Yeah, it's more than just doing something over and over. A habit is something so automatic, so ingrained, you do it without even thinking. Like brushing your teeth or driving to work. Those are habits. And our brains love them because they save us energy.

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Woman: Like putting our brain on autopilot for the stuff we do on repeat.

Man: Exactly. And here's the cool thing about Fogg's approach. He says, "Instead of forcing ourselves to do things we hate, even if they're good for us, we should focus on what we want to do. Make those positive actions even easier and more rewarding till they're our default."

Woman: So ditching the no pain, no gain mentality then.

Man: Totally. Forcing ourselves to do stuff we hate just sets us up for failure. Remember how we were talking about emotions being so key? It's about tapping into that feeling of success no matter how small it is. That's what makes a habit stick, not just going through the motions.

Woman: It's not just what we do, but how it makes us feel that matters. And speaking of feeling good, this whole idea of celebrating small wins, I love that. Even if it's just me telling myself, "Good job for getting stuff done."

Man: Oh, I love that you bring up celebrating because it looks right back to [the eye](#). (?) That feeling of success. It pumps up your motivation to keep going, making it way more likely you'll stick with the habit. And it doesn't have to be anything big. A mental high five, marking it on your calendar. Or heck, having some chocolate after a workout, whatever, feels celebratory to you.

Woman: It's like we're hacking our own reward system.

Man: Exactly. We're wired to seek out pleasure, avoid pain. So we might as well use that to our advantage. And don't underestimate how powerful positive feedback from others can be too.

Woman: Oh, right. Like when we were talking about prompts earlier.

Man: Those positive responses, they can be like social prompts, encouraging us to repeat the behavior. Like imagine someone paraphrases what you said and you're like, "Yes, exactly." That feeling of being heard and understood, it's crazy reinforcing.

Woman: It's like this little dopamine boost from those interactions that makes us want to do more of what got us there.

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Man: Exactly. The trick is to really notice and enjoy those small wins, those positive responses. Might feel silly at first, but it can make all the difference.

Woman: It's about finding the fun in the process, right? Speaking of fun, [dot \(?\)](#) confession time, exercise and I, not exactly best friends. The gym fills me with dread. But Fogg, talking about positive emotions, that really hit home. It's not about forcing myself to do something I hate. It's about finding ways to move that bring me joy.

Man: So many people feel that way. It's easy to think we have to do certain things for our health, even if we secretly hate them. But forcing ourselves just makes it harder to keep going.

Woman: Like trying to fit a square peg in a round hole, it just doesn't work. So if it's about finding that joy, not the dread, how do we actually make that happen? Because I think a lot of us get stuck thinking we have to do certain types of exercise, even if secretly we're like, "Oh, not this again."

Man: You're so right. And that's where that experimentation comes in. There are just so many ways to move our bodies. What feels amazing to one person might be a total drag for someone else.

Woman: Totally.

Man: Some people, they love that energy of a group fitness class. Others, they find their happy place hiking on a quiet trail. It's all about finding what clicks with you.

Woman: It's like we have to become scientists of our own bodies, experimenting to see what feels good, not just physically, but mentally too. So instead of dreading that gym session, it's like, "Ooh, maybe I'll try that new dance class," or "I'm going to go for a bike ride with friends."

Man: Exactly. And that brings us back to Fogg and his whole thing about tiny habits. Instead of overhauling your entire life, you just start with one small, ridiculously easy change. It can be five minutes yoga in the morning or a quick walk after lunch.

Woman: Okay.

Man: The key is to make it so small that it almost feels silly not doing it.

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Woman: I love that. It takes the pressure off, right? It's not, "I need to be a marathon runner tomorrow." It's, "What tiny step can I take today?"

Man: Exactly. And then celebrating those wins, however tiny they are, that's huge. Reinforce that feeling of, "I did it."

Woman: Yeah.

Man: So you did five minutes of yoga. High five. You walked around the block. Treat yourself to a healthy snack.

Woman: I like it.

Man: It's all about making it fun so it becomes something you want to do, not something you have to do.

Woman: This has been so eye-opening. We talked about the information action fallacy, that BME thing, and how important emotions are. Oh, and celebrating those little wins.

Man: Don't forget about being specific. Remember Fogg's example? Picking a specific book instead of just saying, "Read more."

Woman: Right, right.

Man: The same goes for any habit. The more specific you are about what you want to do, the easier it is to stick with it.

Woman: So, to wrap it all up, if you're looking to make a change, ditch the overwhelm, celebrate those little victories, and find ways to actually enjoy the process.

Man: Have fun with it.

Woman: Exactly. And that brings us to something to think about as you go about your day. What tiny habit, something so small it almost seems insignificant, will you start building today? And how can you make it something you actually look forward to, something that adds a little bit of joy to your day? Thanks for joining us on this deep dive. Until next time, happy habit building.