

Developing Soft Skills and Personality
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Lecture – 18
Habits: Forming Habits of Success

Hello and welcome back to NPTEL MOOC course and developing soft skills and personality. I am Ravichandran giving you the course from IIT, Kanpur.

I am from the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences. This is the third week of this course and we are on module-6 of this third week and totally we are going to complete the 18th lecture and this week this is the last lecture and completely it has been devoted to habits, what are habits, forming good habits, bad habits and then things associated with habits like dopamine and all that.

Now, in this lecture particularly I am just going to focus more on overcoming the bad habits and focusing particularly on forming success habits. What are those habits which you need to develop your personality and then develop them as growth habits. As usual before I start I just want to give a brief highlight of what we did in the last lecture. So, that you have a quick recapturing of what we did and then continue with the current one.

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Highlights

Using the Zeigarnik Effect for productivity and personal growth. Since unfinished activity gives anxiety, it is important to focus on an activity and stick to it till its completion.

If you start it, finish it. Don't leave it in between. This is an important growth habit you need to inculcate in your personality!

This knowledge also helps in beating procrastination: you realize that it is just the starting trouble, once you start somehow, you will finish it anyhow!

Unfinished tasks use large amount of mental resources by occupying and blocking premium space but refusing to go away until you finish it. That's why you should stop watching television-serials or any serialised programme.

Video games use the same principle to give addiction to its players. Internalisation of the Zeigarnik Effect can give you the much needed intrinsic motivation to achieve or excel in any activity. You can rewire your brain to seek completions, as it takes you to resolution of tension and adds to the feel-good factor.

Highlights of the Last Lecture

So, I was focusing on using the Zeigarnik effect for productivity and personal growth in

particular in the last one, and I emphasized on this fact because since unfinished activity gives anxiety. It can even cause you depression, it is important to focus on an activity and stick to it till its completion. So, I said that you keep this golden rule in your mind if you start it finish it do not leave it in between and this is an important growth habit you need to inculcate in your personality. And this knowledge alone helps you in beating procrastination that you realize that it is just the starting trouble and once you start somehow you will finish it anyhow.

Unfinished tasks again are to be finished because they use large amount of mental resources by occupying and blocking premium space in your brain, but they refuse to go away until you finish it. That is why you should stop watching television serials or any serialized program because they keep nagging in your brain, they keep hanging there, occupy maximum resources, but till you get to know who did what, what happened to that person till the brain understands the story is completed its going to make you go back to that in a very addictive manner again and again and then use most of your time and you know that the serial is reaching a pointless time, but you are so enslaved to it you are not able to come out of it. Just the habit that makes you watch it its nothing more.

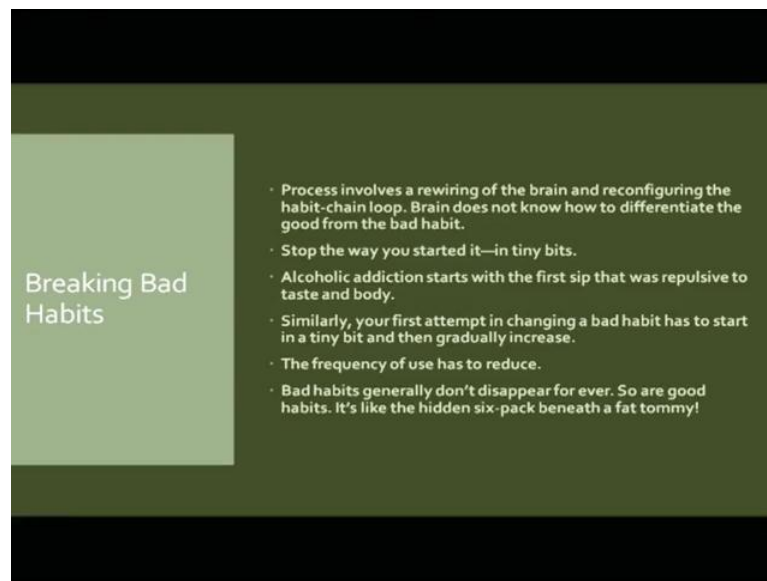
Zeigarnik effect is on the back drop, it is ensuring that you watch it till it getting completed and the television producers are using to maximize their gain because they know that this is the psychology of the audience and they can run it for years together till they finish it. Once they are enslaved it this thing in their mind they want to solve the unpuzzled things which are there, so it is going to all the time make you watch it again and again and they en-cash on this.

Now, the same way video games are also using the same principle to give addiction to its players it will allow them to reach a level of closure, but it will not allow them to complete it. So, internalization of the Zeigarnik effect can give you the much needed intrinsic motivation to achieve or excel in any activity, I have been telling you that you need to develop your inner core. So, keep this in mind the inside of you internalize that using this effect to gain productivity in terms of completing activity is going to make you excel in any chosen endeavors. You cannot rewire your brain to see completions as it takes you to resolution of tension and acts to the feel good factor, you do one activity you feel good about it do another one you feel much better, you want to much more. Instead

of leaving one incomplete activity after another see how you feel, how your confidence develops once you finish one and go to another one. So, keep this as the kind of mantra as far as you want to develop your personality, if you start it you finish it.

Now, this week the last lecture let us look at first breaking bad habits before we take a look at how we can form this good habits and good habits in terms of success.

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Now, breaking bad habits - the process involves a rewiring of the brain and reconfiguring the habit chain loop. The brain does not know how to differentiate the good from the bad habit this is very interesting, whether you develop a good habit or a bad habit the brain functions in the same manner and then it releases dopamine as long as it seeks to get back the same kind of thing to release the pleasure plot injure.

Now, how do you stop a bad habit? The answer is - stop the way you started it in tiny bits. Remember how you started any bad habit, you did not start overnight and then you did not start the entire thing the day you started it. Remember if you are a smoker how you started the first smoking somebody gave you the just the first puff and then you are able to cough and you are not able to even tolerate the smell and then you threw it. The second day again you slightly took more you reached up to half cigarette, but again more cough, you are not able to bare it. The third day may be the full one. So, the fourth day again full one, after a week you think that you can go to two. You did not become a chain smoker the day you started it, maybe you took years to become a chain smoker, but then

it is now when you realize that it is become a chain that has enslaved you and then you want to come out of it, go in tiny bits the way you started it.

So, instead of just if you smoke one packet a day, decide that instead of 10 I will make it 9 and then 8 and then 5 and then you can come to 2 3 1 and the last one slowly you have to do it in parts and then increase the frequency. I did one tomorrow I am going to give an off and then day after tomorrow another one.

So, increase the gaps and then the gaps again will increase, only once in a week, once in 15 days, once in a month and then once in 6 months, once in a year and then slowly you realize that you can stop it completely. So, stop the way you started it in tiny bits and the same way even if you look at alcoholic addiction it starts with the first sip that was repulsive to taste and even to body I have seen people taking liquor. So, they even close their nose and then close their eyes when they take the first sip and even after sometime they are not able to even tolerate the smell it is so repulsive. But then the company the solace the comfort the social networking, the ability to forget disagreeable things, these are the things which make it an evil trap and then the addiction continues, but the first sip and few more sips were actually the dangerous ones. But though it was repulsive they continued because of the other attractive factors, now you need to change the environment, the circle and then come out of it and then again follow the same thing in tiny bits in increased gaps.

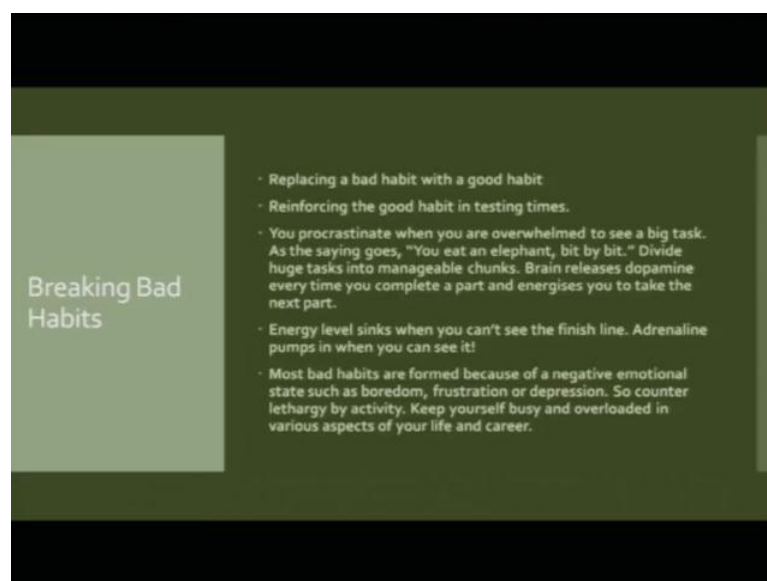
Similarly, your first attempt in changing a bad habit has to start, as I said in tiny bit and then gradually increase the gap. The frequency of use has to reduce, bad habits generally do not disappear forever, this is the another thing that you need to keep it in your mind. If you think that the habits disappear, no they are just somewhere looking in your mind once you started the habit and the brain is not going to leave that. So, easily even as I was saying that after one year you stopped either smoking or drinking, but somebody a very close friend whom you are so fond of, the friend comes and shares a very happy news he says that common let us have this either a drink or a cigarette. It can also happen in a very extreme sad moment, the girl who wanted you to stop taking liquor as well as smoking who married you who left you and in that moment of disappointment and frustration and anger again you go and continue with the same habit which you thought went away for about 10 years.

So, habits still whether you want it or not will be there and bad habits are not going to disappear forever. So, are good habits if you form good habits they are also there, good as well as bad habits they remain it is like the six pack beneath the fat tummy. It is not like six pack is just coming to you completely from some external source, it is there within you have to bring it out you have to reveal by reducing the fat that has been covering it and then by converting the fat into muscle and strengthening it in appropriate places. So, that you just reveal it, its hidden already it is nothing new that you are bringing. And the same way the hidden good habits are to be revealed and then the bad ones are to be covered. So, if you are able to do that you will be able to break the bad habit.

The other thing is try to replace a bad habit with a good habit. So, for instance if you are not able to stop smoking. So, they say that you try with something alternative like chewing a gum. So, your mouth needs something like you try to replace that with this one, if you are not able to give up drinking coffee which has become an addiction to you completely they say that try reducing the frequency at the same time try to replace that with something like a green tea.

So, you get the same kind of energy that you will get from a coffee, but then it is less harmful. So, try to change try to find a substitute which is not as bad as the original one, and slowly you can develop a good habit.

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Breaking Bad Habits

- Replacing a bad habit with a good habit
- Reinforcing the good habit in testing times.
- You procrastinate when you are overwhelmed to see a big task. As the saying goes, "You eat an elephant, bit by bit." Divide huge tasks into manageable chunks. Brain releases dopamine every time you complete a part and energises you to take the next part.
- Energy level sinks when you can't see the finish line. Adrenaline pumps in when you can see it!
- Most bad habits are formed because of a negative emotional state such as boredom, frustration or depression. So counter lethargy by activity. Keep yourself busy and overloaded in various aspects of your life and career.

And then reinforcing the good habit in testing times that is again very important, so there are testing times like you have inculcated this good habit of let us say not drinking. The testing time says you have become depressed, so depressed than before when you started when you were depressed this is a testing time, this is the time you have to tell your brain whatever will happen I am not going to restart that habit.

And then the other thing that you do in terms of procrastination that is another habit that you need to break procrastination that is delaying things unnecessarily for various reasons usually you procrastinate when you are overwhelmed to see a big task. In fact, the task accumulates and then it because you did not attend to it when it was very tiny and easily manageable. But then how do you manage this big task that looks like a kind of herculean task for you to complete, as the saying goes when somebody asked how do you eat an elephant - the answer was given from a saying it says that you eat an elephant bit by bit. So, you do not eat it the entire thing fully, but you eat it bit by bit.

So, what should you do? You should divide huge tasks into manageable chunks, now when you decide that this week normally spreads to one complete week this activity. So, what I will do with the activity instead of thinking that this one week thing I will divide that into 7 items and each day I will decide only that much.

Now, once you do that much the manageable chunk for each day brain keeps releasing the dopamine every time you complete a part and it energizes you to take the next part. Instead of thinking and feeling overwhelmed this is so big I cannot handle it you divide them into parts and then handle them individually and get the dopamine released, so that you get pleasure out of even doing the small part and get a kind of euphoria once you complete the activity. The energy level sinks when you cannot see the finish line that is dopamine will not be released and it will work counted; it will make you feel low when you think that it is going to take so many days, so much time it will take let us say to write a book, it is going to take 3 years. So, I do not see the finish line now, so instead of writing a book. So, I will just write some small article and then get that published I will feel happy about that.

So, some activities take time. So, the example that I gave even book when you divide that into manageable chapters some people decide that they will write at least 10 pages a day some people even decide they will write just one page a day and that itself is enough

you see the finish line each day and then you get both dopamine as well as adrenaline. Adrenaline already I talked to you that come in such close encounters where you are in a fight or flight situation where you need more energy, so that also helps you. But you also understand that most bad habits are formed because of a negative emotional state such as boredom, frustration or depression. Most of the times you yourself took you to that level because you avoided doing something, you let it go incomplete, you let it overwhelm you, and then you reach that stage, so counter lethargy the height of laziness by activity keep yourself busy and overloaded in various aspects of your life and career.

So, you finish something in the morning in your office, evening you have a very interesting pass time or you go and engage with some other activity. So, keep yourself busy be multi furious in terms of completing your activities related to your professional and personal life. So, let you be involved in so many clubs, so many activities apart from the main job that you have been doing for earning your bread and butter.

Now, how it can help you? It can help you make you come out of the lethargy. So, workplace there is problem, but you went to play a game and then you met your friends and then you won the game and people praised you all the work pressure was completely relieved and you felt relaxed after just playing the game for half an hour.

So, keep yourself overloaded and then enjoy the shared joy that comes to you that you can be overloaded and you will know how to handle it and then you will finish all the tasks and then you will enjoy the dopamine rush in you. I just talked about bad habits; now let us look at developing good habits once you are able to handle bad habits.

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The slide features a dark green background with a lighter green rectangular area on the left containing the title 'Developing Good Habits'. To the right of this area, there is a list of bullet points. The first bullet point states: 'You need develop good habits by keep one more Guiding Principle in mind: KEEP YOUR BRIAN LIGHT AND FREE'. The second bullet point says: 'To keep your brain light and free, you need to shed lot of excess fatty content that it might have developed from bad habits.' The third bullet point reads: 'Hence, practice good habits that will free your brain and mind such as:'. This is followed by a numbered list of three items: 1. 'Not leaving any task uncompleted. Any task left unattended will keep interrupting you till you get back to it and finish it.' 2. 'If you refuse to finish it, it will hang heavy in your brain causing you less space for focussing and concentrating on new activities.' 3. 'Reading a serialised novel, or watching a tele-serial is likely to wire you into the habit of becoming serial-addicts.'

Why? Because you need to develop good habits by keeping one more guiding principle in mind, keep your brain light and free always decide to keep your brain light and free. To keep your brain light and free you need to shed lot of excess fatty content that it might have developed from bad habits the brain also accumulates lot of fat because of fatty bad habits that you have developed and then its occupying and then it is not making it energize.

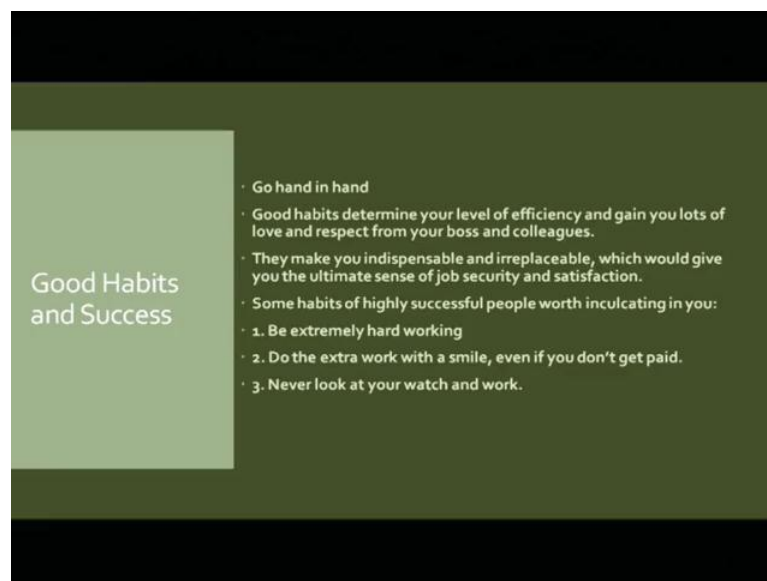
Hence what you should do you should practice good habits that will free your brain and mind. What are some of the good habits that can free your brain and mind? Now brain is actually the physical part that is literally inside your top part of the skull, mind is emanating from brain, but not necessarily from that, but the mind is a kind of holistic enveloping concept. So, that involves so many other things your conscious mind, sub conscious mind, collective mind. So, it goes beyond you, but both if the brain is choked if the brain is suffocating then the mind are also stifled. You need to make your brain free, so that your mind also will be free what are the things that you can do so that you can make the brain and mind free? And then, which will help you to eventually develop good habits and then it will make you go to success.

Point number one, not leaving any task uncompleted unfinished uncompleted, any task left unattended will keep interrupting you till you get back to it and finish it. If you refuse to finish it that is the second point that you keep in mind, if you refuse to finish it

will hang heavy in your brain causing you less space for focusing and concentrating on new activities. So, the first one do not leave anything unfinished.

The second one if you think that you can leave it unfinished you should know that. So, much of heaviness is going to be in your brain and it will not let you focus or concentrate on new activities. The third point reading a serialized novel or watching a TV serial is slightly to wire you into the habit of becoming serial addicts. So, the same thing goes with games which will make you game addict. So, many young intelligent people even in IITs big institutes have just lost their career just because they became game addicts just because they did not realize it is this aspect of brain that has actually got them and enslaved them and then misguided them and then made them regret that they have done something wrong because of one bad habit they developed and then they regret forever in their life.

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How do you develop good habits which will lead you to success? In fact, if you look at good habits and success they go hand in hand. Wherever there are good habits success will come automatically or if you look at a successful person and analyze how he achieved success you will realize that he or she had accumulated so many good habits. So, they go hand in hand. Good habits determine your level of efficiency and gain you lots of love and respect from your boss and colleagues. Any good habit let it be punctuality let it be groaning yourself in a nice pleasant manner. Let it be your

communication skills in terms of talking nicely, politely and using all your soft skills while talking in personal interpersonal communication, let it be your time management skills, let it be your ability to deal with conflicts, let it be your ability to cope up with stress or to handle your habits.

So, the people who are around you will understand that it is those good habits that have been determining your level of efficiency you are highly efficient because you have highly developed good habits and that will make people love you and respect you both from higher level that is your boss as well as your colleagues. The other important thing all these good habits is also going to do one important thing for you that it is going to make you indispensable and irreplaceable in your job. Many great business Guru's like Mr. Kopmeyer and others they keep repeatedly telling one point that if at all you look for job security you should be able to develop those skill sets which will make you indispensable. That is you cannot be replaced certain jobs which you do its only you who are able to do it in a particular way no one else can do it, your role cannot be changed, cannot be modified, cannot be altered, nobody can fulfill that role that is given to you or it cannot be done as perfectly as the way you do, you have to indispensable and irreplaceable.

And then it gives you so much security the ultimate sense of security as well as sense of job satisfaction that you know that you have been doing your job extremely well and nobody wants to throw you out whether you are in a private school or you are in a public school, whether you are in a government office central government or state government whatever you do, whether your pay is a duck or whether it is hourly or it comes to you in time from the central government office whatever it is, everything that is determined by your good habits that will make you indispensable is the only thing that can give you job security not any written bond, not any commitment from the employer.

However good you may be the moment you start developing bad habits you can be thrown out because you become dispensable. So, never become dispensable because of your bad habits try to become indispensable and irreplaceable because of your good habits.

Now, let us look at some habits of highly successful people worth inculcating those habits in you. Now be extremely hardworking now when you are hardworking you need

to do some extra work and do the extra work with a smile even if you do not get paid for that extra work, do not count that, if you can do that extra work do it happily.

The third point - when you are doing that work never look at your watch and work. In fact, you should start the work finish it and then you should look at your watch and then just look at what plans you have and then what you can do about it. Not in between when you are doing a work because that is going to distract you and that is going to divert you, finish the task without looking at the watch and this is another important habit that highly successful people have developed.

The fourth habit that you should develop is that work till you complete, do not leave a task incomplete. So, that your mind stays calm and you can sleep peacefully that night the task that you have taken for that day or so many activities which you had planned to do finish it and go to bed peacefully, sleep well that night with a feeling that the brain thinks - today it is a complete task handled and then completed. So, I can rest, I will not travel this guy with intrusive thoughts about incomplete activities.

And the next point five - about developing good habit that will lead you to success. Focus on the most important goal all the time, if you know that this is a trivial activity do not spend time on that, focus on the most important goal prioritize ask yourself what is the most important thing that I can do today focus on that. And the next one, sixth one ever spend more time on something that can be completely avoided, it is utterly wasteful, useless if you spend more time on something you can even just avoid it. Take for example, a simple thing like sharpening your pencil.

Now, you take a blade and then start sharpening and then you want to look. So, good and then you spend about one hour in sharpening it now, it could be avoided if you use a sharpener, it could be still avoided if you are at a position where you can ask people to get it done for you within that half an hour-one hour you spend in one tiny activity if you could spend more in an important activity that will lead you to growth.

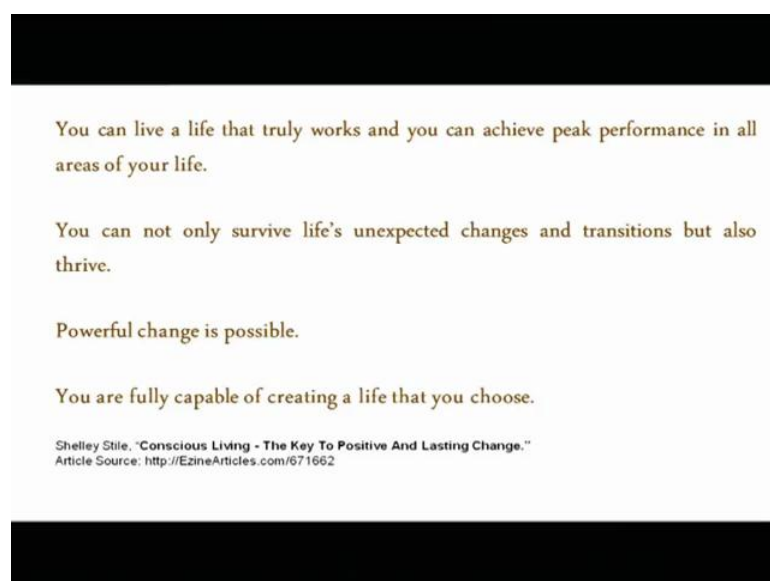
So, never spend more time on something that can be completely avoided and last but not least for this lecture concentrate 100 percent be mindful be fully there in whatever work you do the body, mind and then the spirit the emotion let all be there with you. If you can devote yourself 100 percent concentrate on that and you will finish it faster than the rest, the rest who get distracted very frequently I remember the childhood experiment or the

childhood joy. And even you will remember that when you are given a lens we have been thought by seniors teachers that if you can take the lens and then put it above a paper and then if you let the sun ray pass through, that when the sun rays are just scattered you are not able to tap that, but when you choose a lens and then let that go as a kind of laser being and touch the paper or a matchstick it can fire it can completely burn it.

Now, that is the power of concentration if you are able to focus you can burn things in the sense you can complete with tremendous success and you can do that much faster than the rest of the people because your mind is working in a very laser sharp condition and it cannot be distracted by anything full focus full attention and concentration is there. So, develop that level of concentration, it is really difficult in this world where you are completely distracted.

I will spend another lecture on how you can do that, but at this time remember that concentration 100 percent is fully important to develop your success habit. Now, towards conclusion I just want to complete with an article that I read and the concluding part of that its by one (Refer Time: 30:14) style on conscious living the key to positive and lasting change. The full article is also available on the net you can read that, but this part I liked very much and that is also an appropriate conclusion for our entire discussion on habits this week.

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You can live a life that truly works and you can achieve peak performance in all areas of your life.

You can not only survive life's unexpected changes and transitions but also thrive.

Powerful change is possible.

You are fully capable of creating a life that you choose.

Shelley Stile, "Conscious Living - The Key To Positive And Lasting Change."
Article Source: <http://EzineArticles.com/671662>

You can live a life that truly works and you can achieve peak performance in all areas of

your life, do not have any doubt you can live a life that truly works. Most of the times you are afraid, doubtful, negative thinking, monkey like strategy in the mind that you can do that, but believe that you can live a life that truly works and you can achieve peak performance in all areas of your life not one aspect, but everything. You cannot only survive life's unexpected changes and transitions, but also thrive - if you develop success habits even in testing times you will adapt and then you will thrive you will grow you will prosper. Powerful changes possible you are fully capable of creating a life that you choose, you are fully capable of creating a life that you choose.

Let me also end this with a note that, but be discrete, be utterly careful in the choice that you are going to make. Choose good habits, develop success habits and develop your personality and become highly successful and ultimately to remain happy peaceful and to live a life without any regrets.

Thank you for watching this video. Have a nice day, have a nice weekend and then workout the assignment that we have given. I hope you will enjoy doing the assignment also once again have a nice time with the assignment.