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Cultivating the Mindset for Creative Output

Synthesis of Theory and Practice
Critical and Creative Thinking
University of Massachusetts, Boston

A Common Problem

There is something I want to do, but I am not doing it

OR

There is something I do not want to do, but I am doing it

Not my first rodeo...



THE TRUTH:

I DID NOT ENJOY PAINTING

...but I did *wish* to enjoy it

Can I choose what I enjoy?

Let me dive in

Me, this
semester
(metaphorically)



What I learned

Seeking Truth and Understanding

What I experienced

Experiencing Solutions: A Power Shift

What I believe:

Developing Beliefs

What I learned: The Problem

Procrastination is about



FEELINGS

(negative ones)

What I learned: The Mindset Desired

Intrinsic Motivation / Enjoyment of Process
is about



FEELINGS

(positive ones)

What I learned: Emotions Drive Behavior

People seek positive feelings and avoid negative ones

Both procrastinators AND wildly innovative souls alike are doing this- everyone is

THE DIFFERENCE IS WHAT IS FELT ABOUT TASKS

This difference leads some to be hailed and others to be written off or worse... but all we know is what we know.

“

I HAVE NO
SPECIAL
TALENTS. I
AM ONLY
PASSIONATELY
CURIOUS.

**ALBERT
EINSTEIN**

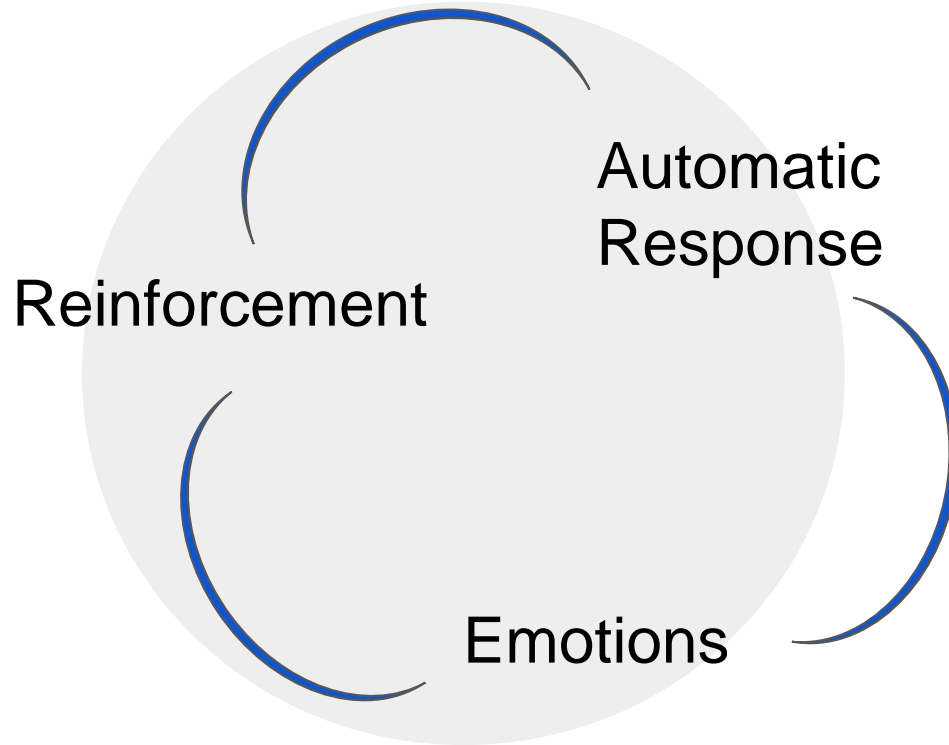
Stable Habit Support

Person likes doing the action
(more positive feelings associated with it than negative)

Action

Person dislikes *not* doing the action
(more negative feelings associated when action is not taken)

What I learned: Existing mindset (feels powerless)



What I learned: Automaticity

We are mostly on autopilot, and that's a good thing...

...but it can make changing difficult.

What I learned: Automaticity and Preference

How my enjoyment preferences came to be:
Reinforcement



What I learned: Reinforcement

Language is Powerful

Words can affect how we feel, for example the word

SHOULD

Is actually quite weighted

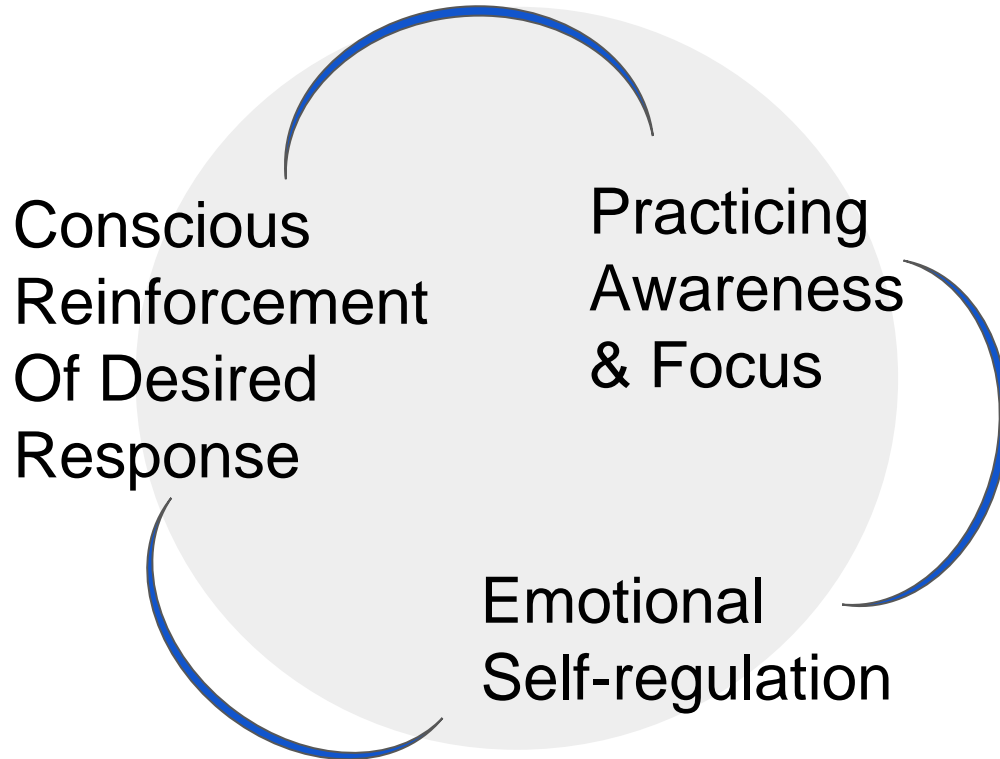
What I learned: Reinforcement

“I’ll be happy when...”

What I learned: Reinforcement

“I don’t enjoy it...”

What I experienced: New mindset (feels powerful)



What I experienced: Awareness of thinking

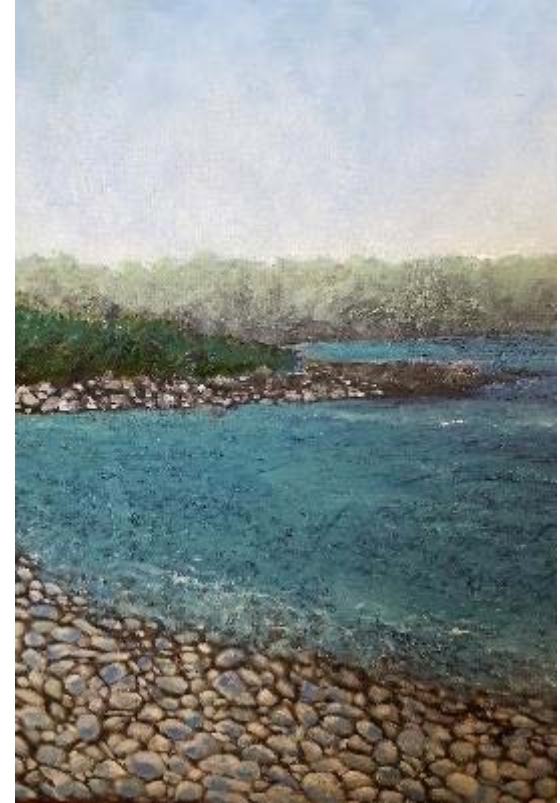


Banksy

What I experienced: A Reflection on Running



What I experienced: Painting



What I experienced: Awareness and Focus

- Shows power of automatic thoughts- hard to focus at first

I knew I needed to *ENJOY* meditation to keep it going

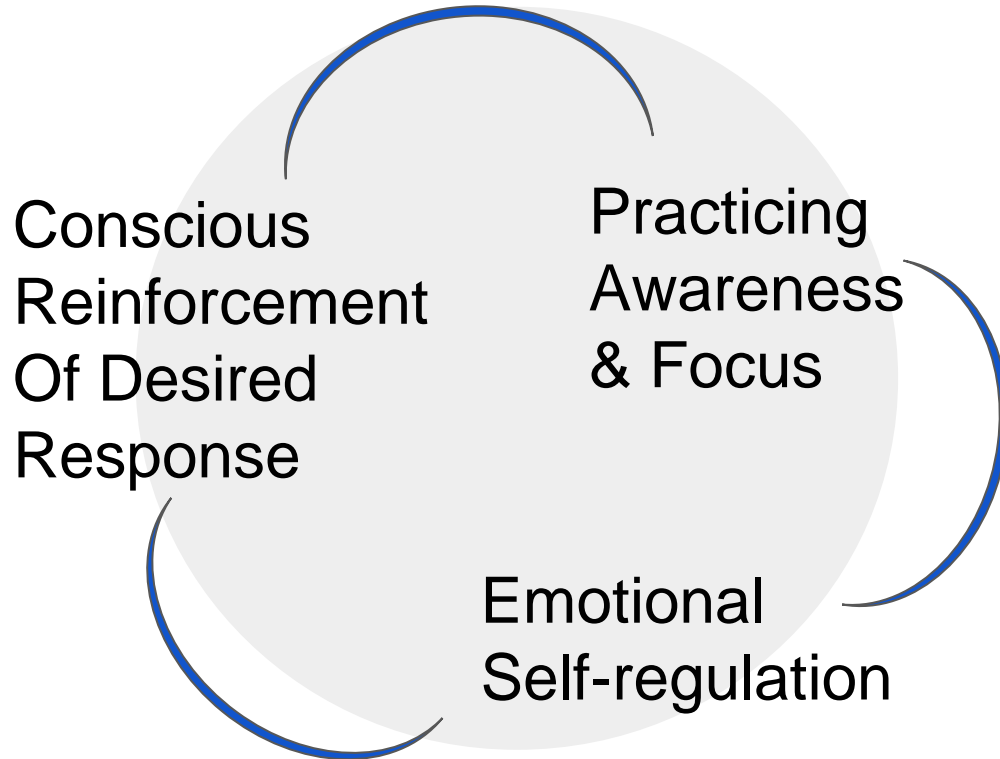
- ★ Shows my power to choose focus, emotion, awareness one moment at a time
- ★ A place to feel free



What About Bob?

- Not just positive thinking
- Must be experienced as real through logic, understanding, and reinforcement
- Learning experience, not a “snap out” experience or “just do it”

What I experienced: New mindset of Personal Power

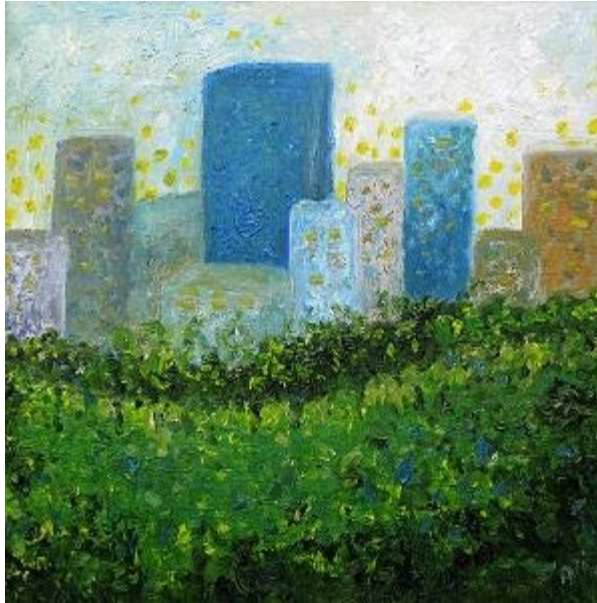


We are all powerful right now.

We each know our power in different situations, but don't always think about how everything we do is affecting others for better or worse. We are leading by example, good or bad.

Power needn't be sought, only experienced

“I really admire the simplicity, serenity, and (sometimes) melancholy in your paintings.”

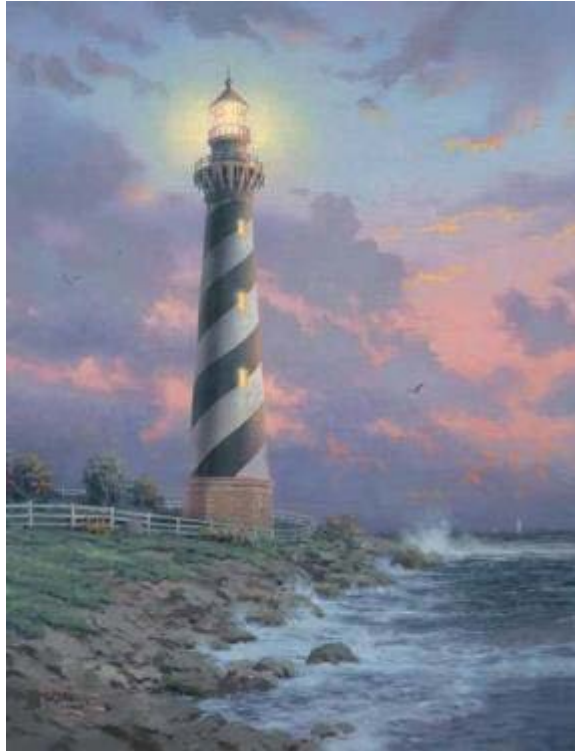


What I Believe

The mindset for creative output is one of knowledge or belief of one's personal power to affect one's own thinking.

If you can experience it, you can know and believe it... and it feels good.

My “happiness” is not dependent on any one thing...



Thomas Kinkade

CCT = Empowerment

The foundation for change is the self

I'm still here, still learning

"I like it down here, actually!"



What's Next

I LOVE WRITING ABOUT THESE IDEAS BECAUSE IT HELPS ME LEARN, SO I AM GOING TO KEEP DOING THAT.

MORE PAINTING :)

CAREER? I'M OPEN--- (instead of "I don't care"- thanks, Bobby!)

Special Thanks! Jeremy Szteiter

Processes of Research and Engagement

Thinking, Learning, and Computers

Action Research for Educational, Professional & Personal Change

Reflective Practice

Creative Thinking, Collaboration, and Organizational Change

Advanced Cognitive Psychology

Thanks also:

Peter Taylor

My trio mates: Bobby Ricketts & Andrew Blom

My CCT Classmates and Instructors :)

Resources:

Gilbert, D. (2004, February). *The Surprising Science of Happiness*. Lecture presented at TED2004 The Pursuit of Happiness, Monterey. Retrieved April 1, 2018, from https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_gilbert_asks_why_are_we_happy.

Oz, F. (Director), Ziskin, L. (Producer), & Schulman, T. (Writer). (1991). *What about Bob?* [Motion picture]. United States: Buena Vista Pictures Distribution, Inc.

Reisberg, D. (2013). *Cognition: Exploring the Science of the Mind* (5th ed.). New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company.