

A Psychological Trick To Boost Your Willpower

"Willpower is the key to success. Successful people strive no matter what they feel by applying their will to overcome apathy, doubt or fear." - Dan Millman

Willpower is a tough subject. There are many factors that you need to understand if you want to master it.

I don't want to bother you with all the psychological stuff behind it, but it's important to know how certain things work in order to make it more effective.

The experiment that I want to share with you today is one that works pretty well for me: It's called **"Pre-commitment"**.

Tim Ferris once said in a conference that if he had to launch a new Gym, he would certainly ask a high fee in advance, something like \$600 for a month, and every time the client went to the Gym this fee would be deducted by £18. This would probably end up in 2 ways: People would either drop out after the first month or go to the Gym at least 3 times a week.

Let's not waste our time analyzing if this idea could work or not, but what really matters here is that this model would take advantage of two key human motivators:

Coherence and Loss Aversion.

Spending \$600 and not going to a Gym is not a coherent behaviour. If you pay \$50 and don't go, you could still tell other people that it's not a big deal and that next month you will redeem yourself. But when the amount is \$600, most people will not sound coherent if they use the same argument.

The second factor, loss aversion, is an obvious one. Loss aversion is so powerful, that most people prefer avoiding losses to acquiring gains.

So how can you use both to work in your favour?

Pre-commitment:

- > Pick 1 thing that's important to you but you've been struggling to get done.
- > Write down on a paper exactly how you are going to approach it. Be specific.
- > Now think about 2 people who you care about. Write their name down.
- > Think about something that you'd rather avoid losing. It doesn't need to be money. It can be a book you love, a habit you can't live without or deleting your favourite game from your Smartphone.
- > Call those people and make a pre-commitment. Let them know that you will keep them updated.

"Hey John, I decided that from tomorrow on I'll go to the Gym at least 3 times a week. I need some motivation to make this happen, so would you mind if I send you a text/email every time I go to the Gym? Ah, and every time I fail to accomplish that, I'll leave my Playstation with you for 2 weeks."

- > Follow your plan.

Sounds like a hard experiment? Maybe it looks like at first. But this experiment works extremely well because it puts you in movement. And once you are in movement, you will notice that you won't need this anymore to keep going.

Now it's your time to experiment with it. Remember that knowledge has only value if you can take action upon it.

Next week I'll share with you how to use a counter-intuitive concept in your favour:
How the feeling of progress can make you work less and what to do about it.