

TRANSCRIPT · EPISODE 50

Atomic Habits Deep Dive 1pct Rule

Full episode script · English

236 lines

Your English Toolbox

have decided to change my life completely.

Oh really?

Starting tomorrow I will wake up at 4 a.m.

Okay.

Then I will read three books.

Three books in one morning?

Yes and then I will run a marathon before breakfast.

Martin please Why?

Because by Wednesday you will be exhausted.

I suppose you're right.

And by Friday you will have quit everything.

This is the problem with ambition isn't it?

It is.

We think we need to make giant changes

to get giant results.

But Today we are going to look at the opposite approach.

We are exploring the book Atomic Habits by James Clear.

This book argues that real change comes from tiny invisible improvements.

It is the science of the 1%.

Welcome to your English toolbox, your slow English podcast where we train your ears step I am Julia and I am Martin.

Today we are decoding the secret of long-term success.

Martin what are we going to

talk about today?

Today we're starting a new series of episodes where we take a deep dive into the ideas from the book Atomic Habits.

After our previous episode on this topic we received many requests asking us to go deeper.

So that's exactly what we're going to do.

In today's episode we'll explore the first two chapters of the book Fundamentals and Identity.

And along the way we're going to break one of the biggest myths about success.

idea of instant results.

We will learn why winners and losers actually have the exact same goals.

We will discover why cleaning your room solves nothing if you don't change your habits.

And we will explain why you are not a person who wants to speak English but a person who is a speaker.

If you listen until the end you will understand the math of success.

You will learn how to build a routine that runs on autopilot.

you will finally understand why you feel stuck just before a big breakthrough.

Part 3.

The math of the 1%.

Let's start with the math of success.

Don't worry it is simple math.

Imagine you improve by just 1% every single day. 1% seems invisible.

It is tiny.

You wouldn't even notice it in the moment.

But if you do that for 365 days the result is shocking.

You don't end up two times better.

You end up 37 times

better. 37 times.

That is the power of compound interest.

Just like money multiplies habits multiply.

But we have to be careful because there is also the math of decline.

If you get 1% worse every day you degrade nearly to 0.

Time is a If you have bad habits time becomes your enemy.

But Martin does this apply to everything?

Absolutely.

Take productivity.

If you automate one small task you free up mental space for the next one.

That

is positive compounding or knowledge.

Learning one new idea doesn't make you a genius.

But a lifetime of learning transforms your worldview.

However stress compounds too.

Traffic jams plus parenting plus work worry equals health issues.

And negative thoughts compound the fastest.

The more you think of yourself as worthless the more you interpret life that way.

So we need to be on the right side of the math.

Part four.

The aggregation of marginal gains.

Martin this theory sounds

nice but does it work in the real world?

Let me tell you the story of British cycling.

For 100 years they were mediocre.

They had Then they hired a man named Dave Brailsford.

He did not try to make one giant change.

He used a strategy called the aggregation of marginal gains.

He looked for 1% improvements everywhere.

They redesigned the bike seats to be more comfortable.

They rubbed alcohol on the tires for better grip.

They bought electrically

heated shorts to keep muscles warm.

They even painted the floor of the truck white to spot dust that could degrade the bikes.

Wait they painted the floor?

Yes.

And they tested different pillows to see which one gave the best sleep.

These sound like tiny silly details.

But when you add them all up the result was explosive.

In the 2008 Olympics they won 60% of the gold medals.

They went from zero to heroes just by aggregating small gains.

Part five.

The valley of disappointment.

So if small steps work why do we give up so easily?

Because of the plateau of latent potential.

That sounds complicated.

It just means we expect progress to be a straight line.

We work hard for a week and we don't see a change.

We expect results instantly.

But reality is curved.

Results show up late.

James Clear calls this gap the valley of disappointment.

It is that painful period where you are working hard but seeing nothing.

He uses the ice cube analogy.

Imagine an ice cube sitting in a cold room at 25 degrees.

You heat the room to 26.

Nothing happens. 27, 28, 29.

The ice is still solid.

Did you waste your time?

You were storing energy.

At 31 degrees nothing happens.

But at 32 degrees the ice begins to melt.

The work done heating it from 25 to 31 was not wasted.

It was just invisible.

This is the bamboo tree metaphor.

Bamboo spends five years building roots underground.

You see nothing.

And then in six weeks it shoots up 90 feet.

So if you are in the valley of disappointment today do not quit.

You are just building your roots.

Part six.

Forget goals.

Focus on systems.

Now we need to talk about goals.

Everybody tells us to set big goals.

But James Clear says forget about goals.

Focus on systems instead.

What is the

difference?

A goal is the result you want.

Like winning a game.

A system is the process you follow.

Like your practice schedule.

Think about it.

Winners and losers have the exact same goals.

Every athlete at the Olympics wants the gold medal.

So the goal cannot be the thing that makes the This is survivorship bias.

We only look at the winners and say they had a goal.

But the losers had the same goal.

The difference was their

system.

Also goals have a clean room problem.

If your room is messy and you clean it you have a clean room for now.

But if you don't change your sloppy habits the room gets messy again.

You treated the symptom not the cause.

Goals also create a yo-yo effect.

Once you run the marathon you stop training.

The motivation is gone because the goal is finished.

And finally goals restrict your happiness.

You tell yourself I will only be

happy if I reach the It is binary success.

But systems allow you to be satisfied any time the system is running.

There is a quote I love.

You do not rise to the level of your goals.

You fall to the level of your systems.

Part seven.

The onion of We have to look at the onion of change.

Imagine an onion with three layers.

The outer layer is outcomes.

What you get.

The middle layer is processes.

What

you do.

The center core is identity.

Who you are.

Most people try to change from the outside in.

They focus on the outcome.

I want to be thin.

But the strongest habits start from the center.

Identity based habits.

Imagine two people resisting a cigarette.

Person A says no thanks I'm trying to quit.

They still believe they are a smoker who is trying to stop.

Person B says no thanks I'm not a smoker.

That is a shift

in identity.

Behavior is evidence.

If you believe I am bad at math you will not study math.

That is a negative identity.

It creates cognitive dissonance to act against your beliefs.

It is mentally painful to do something that contradicts who you think you are.

True behavior change is identity change.

You might start a habit because of motivation.

But you stick with it because of identity.

You become a runner whenever you put on shoes.

You become a

writer whenever you write.

The goal is not to write a book but to become a writer.

Pride is the fuel here.

The more pride you have in an identity the harder you fight to keep it.

But first you might need to do some unlearning.

You have to unlearn the old identities that don't serve you.

Part 8 the voting machine.

So how do we change our identity?

It is a two-step process.

First decide who you want to

Second prove it to yourself with small wins.

Think of your life as a voting machine.

Every action you take is a vote for the type of person you want to become.

Every time you practice English you cast a vote for I am a linguist.

Every time you choose a you cast a vote for I am healthy.

You don't need a unanimous vote to win the election.

You just need the majority.

You don't need to be

perfect.

You just need to be consistent.

As the votes mount up the evidence changes.

And you start to trust yourself.

There is a feedback loop.

Your habits shape your identity and your identity shapes your habits.

Can we fake it?

Yes.

Fake it till you make it.

Ask yourself the question what would a healthy person do?

What would a fluent English speaker do?

And then just do that small thing.

One small workout doesn't make you an athlete.

But it provides evidence that you could be one.

Part 9 conclusion.

So Martin we covered a lot today.

Let's recap the main philosophy.

Stop trying to make giant leaps.

Trust the math of the 1%.

Don't worry if you are in the valley of disappointment.

Your roots are growing like the bamboo.

Forget the goal of finishing English.

Build a system of daily contact.

And finally change your identity.

Don't say I want to learn.

Say I am a

learner.

Cast your votes every day.

If you show the platforms that our community is real, active, and growing.

This support is crucial for us to continue creating new episodes every week.

Tell us what vote are you casting today?

Are you voting for the runner, the writer, or the English speaker?

We need your comments because your voice is more important than ours.

Your voice and comments will show us the right path.

Thank you for listening.
