

Readers about this book:

*"This book is the perfect companion to 'The 7 Habits.'
I finally understand how I can actually achieve the change I desire."*

*"At last - somebody who goes a couple of steps further
than most change gurus ...
Ben Tiggelaar reveals the pain of personal behavioral change
in an entertaining way."*

*"This book helped me to understand the behavior of others,
and it gave me a great deal of insight into my own behavior."*

*"Ben Tiggelaar is truly able to inspire people.
He combines theory and practice in a highly professional way."*

*"If you really want to change, you will just have to do it.
That's what we say. What we think. And we usually do not do it.
With this clear book you will have a large chance of succeeding.
A breath of fresh air..."*

*"After reading this book there is only one thing left:
roll up your sleeves and follow your dreams."*

Ben Tiggelaar

Dream Dare Do

Managing the most difficult person on earth: yourself

Tyler Roland Press

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Dream, Dare, Do

Dream, dare, do. Three nice sounding words that alliterate beautifully. They invite you to read, especially if you want to change something in your life.

But am I not communicating a complex subject like behavior modification too simply? Yes and no....

Yes, for I've attempted to write down the things I've learned about behavior modification and change as accessibly as possible, so that you can apply them in the day to day.

And no, understanding the contents of this book is not the biggest challenge. Actually applying it, is what it's about, and that is not simple. A book can help but in the end you'll have to take the steps from dreaming to daring and doing yourself.

My frustration

I wrote this book because I needed it myself. You see, countless books have been written about *what* you should manage or change in your life. Bookstores are filled with books with advice on relationships, happiness, work, food, physical exercise, entrepreneurship, spiritualism, and so on.

But *how* this works exactly, *how* you can really make sure you turn this advice into practice, how you can get more grip on your own behavior.... this remains a dark secret to many people.

Many books end – after a long series of advice – with the simple statement that you just have to do it. '*Just*'....

Many other books suffice with 'open door' advice like: 'It is a matter of persevering and persisting.' Or vague language like: 'Listen to the voice of your soul.'

I have always persevered and followed the advice of my soul, but I have never had the impression it really helped. Absolutely frustrating.

All-purpose wipe

In the end, change and growth come down to managing your own behavior. You see, that is the weak link between plans and results.

We may know what we want to achieve, we may know what we need to do to get there, but how do we motivate ourselves to get started and actually persevere? For most people - myself included - that remains the most important question.

I received many letters and e-mails in response to the book *Can Do!* - published in 2003 - and the first edition of *Dream, Dare, Do* - published in 2005 - from people who have used the books for a huge range of things.

Managers wrote that they applied the approach to changes made within their company; entrepreneurs e-mailed that they had used the book when starting up their own business; dietitians advised using the method to help people lose weight; students used the book to reach the finish line in their studies; a center for addiction care uses it to help clients get back on their feet; parents use it in raising their children.

What this book will bring you

This book doesn't contain heavy reading material or vague language. I present a realistic, practical approach that really works. It is a bit like sports: there are a few rules for managing behavior, and it is sensible to practice a bit. But if you take it seriously, it can deliver wonderful results.

You are already familiar with some of the things in this book. You are familiar with them, but you may not be applying them yet. And some things in this book will be new to you.

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The first three chapters mainly deal with your behavior. You will get more insight into yourself. You will understand better how your behavior works and how you can change things.

In chapters four through ten, you will be presented with techniques with which to improve the management of your own behavior. Research has convincingly shown that these particular techniques lead to clear, and sometimes very powerful, effects.

Between chapters, you will also find nine interviews with people who have made major changes in their lives; real, honest stories of ordinary people who have experienced or done extraordinary things.

On my website - www.bentiggelaar.com - there is a free workbook available that will give you extra support in taking the step from dreaming to daring and doing.

Ben Tiggelaar

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The most difficult person on earth to deal with: you

- ***Do plans and intentions actually help?***
- ***Why you often do something you do not want to do (and the other way around)***
- ***Two kinds of opposing behavior***

A few years ago I weighed too much. Something like that creeps up on you. A few years on end I ate at the better 'restaurants' when I was on the road for work. A snack at Shell's, another one at Texaco's, a cone of ice-cream at Esso's. All in all a rather unhealthy pattern of nutrition.

Of course I noticed that I was gaining weight, but by carefully avoiding the scales I could tell myself it was not that bad. Until, on a bad day, my wife bought electronic scales and dared me to stand on them. I turned out to weigh more than 240 pounds. 55 pounds too much. And about 33 pounds more than I assumed I weighed.

This kind of moment helps to get changes going. You can tell yourself for a long time that you are in fact eating too much and exercising too little. For a long time you can dream about a tight and healthy body. But something has to happen that makes you want to start changing. Something that motivates you to really *do* something.

*By carefully avoiding
the scales
I could tell myself it
was not that bad*

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This is actually weird. In our daily lives, we do many things again and again, but we don't really want to do them. And we want to do a lot of things that we do not do. We exercise less than we should; we eat less healthy than we should; we invest less time in our loved ones than would be good, and so on.

'What I do, I do not understand. For I do not do what I want, but I do what I hate.' It looks like a complaint from any person from our day and age, but the quotation comes from the Bible (Romans 7:15) and is almost two thousand years old. There is nothing new under the sun.

Good intentions alone do not work

Managing yourself is difficult. Most people I meet are full of good intentions. So am I. Here is a small collection of the intentions I have heard in my workshops in the past few years:

- *I have wanted to make a promotion at work for a long time now.*
- *I want to say 'no' more often to things I really do not want to do.*
- *I want to eat healthier food and exercise more.*
- *I want to give my relationship a boost.*
- *I want to be more confident.*
- *I have to learn to listen to others better.*
- *I have wanted to set up my own company for years.*
- *I don't experience peace of mind. I want to get the feeling that I contribute to something that really matters.*
- *I want to start studying again. I want to develop myself.*
- *I just want to go through life more positively.*
- *I have to stop constantly correcting others.*

The American researcher John Norcross has studied good intentions for years. He found out, as you might have suspected, that in most cases people do not manage to maintain their intentions.

For example, more than half of the people who start a change in their lives at the New Year, have fallen back into their old habits by the month of July. And after two years only one out of five people appears to have persevered.

So the bad news is that good intentions alone do not help. Apparently you need more than saying your intention out loud to change something in your life.

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The good news is that a concrete intention is not completely useless. Norcross also did research on the effect of just a wish to change, and not a concrete behavior intention. It appeared that of those people, not more than 4% had realized a change in their lives six months later. Ten times fewer than those people who translated their wishes into concrete behavior intentions.

Behavior is the weak link

The research into New Year's resolutions fits in with something psychologists have known for ages: if a wish to change is not translated meticulously into behavior necessary to realize this change, it doesn't help much.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States, most health benefits are gained by modifying behavior. Of course, we have known that for years: no smoking, healthy foods and drinks, more exercise.

Sonja Lyubomirsky, a leading professor who has done much research into human happiness, estimates that, next to genes and circumstances, our choices determine 40% of our daily well-being.

And management guru John Kotter says, regarding change at work, that human behavior is the 'heart of the matter'.

Not your capacities, not your goals, not your plans, but your daily actions determine whether or not you will achieve change.

Many people have a sneaking desire to one day become more assertive, to meet the perfect partner, to spend more time with their family, to set up their own company, etcetera. It may sound harsh, but the truth is that most of these people keep dreaming until it's too late.

The truth is that most of these people keep dreaming until it's too late

Behavior is the weak link between plans and results. We will have to decide very concretely what we have to do today to really achieve the long-term results that we think are worthwhile. Everybody knows that a chain is as strong as its weakest link, and in many changes in our lives behavior is that weak link. Therefore, whoever wants to change something in their life, and does want to move away from secret wishes, needs to concentrate on his or her behavior.

So what, then, is behavior? Simply put, behavior is everything we do; all actions we take of our own accord or in reaction to our environment. Among them are our movements and our words (visible to the outside world) and our thoughts and feelings (invisible to others).

Two types of behavior

Psychologists and other behavioral scientists enjoy distinguishing themselves from one another. And so there are very different insights and opinions. But almost all psychologists agree on one thing: there are at least two types of behavior.

You and I and all other people on this planet do some things *consciously* and *planned*. And we do other things *unconsciously* and *automatically*.

Sometimes we clearly discuss the future with ourselves or with others, and form a concrete intention in our minds, which we (sometimes) subsequently execute as well. We especially do this with behavior that occurs only once or a few times a year or even less, for example when planning a holiday or when choosing the person we are going to marry.

However, many behaviors are not consciously executed in our minds, but are effective behaviors from the past that are repeated fully *automatically*.

We don't consciously take notice of many of the actions we perform in traffic, for example. Fully automatically, we keep a certain distance to the car in front of us. Meanwhile we look at the signposts and have a telephone conversation. We drive – almost literally – on automatic pilot.

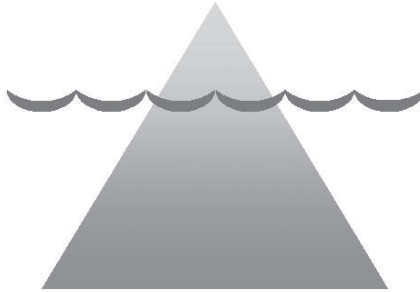
These unconscious processes are especially part of behavior that we display weekly, daily or more often. Those automatic behaviors – habits – are the ones that are in the way when we want to make changes.

Psychologists call this separation of our behavior into these two types - conscious planned and unconscious automatic - the 'dual process' approach. You can imagine two types of behavior like two parts of an iceberg. Conscious behavior is the part above water. It is what you

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'see' in your mind. Unconscious behavior is the part beneath the water. You know it is there, for example when you read about it in a book, but you don't 'see' it in your mind.

Conscious, **planned** behavior



Unconscious, **automatic** behavior

There are two types of behavior: conscious, planned behavior (5%) and unconscious, automatic behavior (95%).

Conscious, planned behavior (5%)

Let us start above water. Part of our behavior is the consequence of the plans we make. This behavior, which we discuss with ourselves in our minds, is called conscious, planned behavior.

We know beforehand what we want and subsequently, we do it. At least, that is the idea. But we have already seen that we often don't succeed in actually putting our intentions into action.

According to American researcher Icek Ajzen, three factors play a major role in forming the intentions referred to.

1. *We estimate the use of our intended behavior.* During our lives we gather all kinds of beliefs about the use of certain behaviors. We have an opinion about the question whether running has an effect on losing weight, whether a romantic weekend has an effect on improving your relationship, whether going to the doctor is useful if you have the flu, etcetera.

Mind you: it isn't about whether the behavior is really useful, but only what we *think* about it.

2. *We consider too much what people who are important to us think about our intended behavior.* We have all kinds of thoughts about other people's opinion: 'My partner will probably think this not a bright idea'; 'My friends will laugh at me when I tell them.' Mind you: it is not what people really think, but what we *think* they think.
3. *Finally, we ask ourselves whether we are able to really put our intended behavior into action.* All kinds of beliefs we have about ourselves are involved here: 'I am just not a stayer in sports'; 'Fortunately, I am reasonably good at writing letters of application'; 'I am not very good at saying "no"'.
Mind you: again, this is not about whether we are really good or bad at something; it is about what we *think* about it.

According to most psychologists only a small part of our behavior is consciously chosen

Conscious, planned behavior is behavior we contemplate in our minds beforehand. We consider in our minds beforehand what is going to happen, and we especially do this when something is involved that we don't do very often - once or a few times per year.

According to most psychologists, only a small part of our behavior is consciously chosen. It is estimated that this part is only 5% or smaller. But this is a very important part. Major choices in life, long-term decisions, are usually made consciously.

Unconscious, automatic behavior (95%)

Unconscious, automatic behavior is the kind of behavior that often amazes us, even if it is our own. Those are the things we do that we can't clearly remember. The kind of behavior that we display on automatic pilot.

I already gave the example of driving a car. We often drive for miles without knowing afterwards where we have been exactly. Sometimes we even get the feeling we 'wake up' behind the wheel. When we suddenly pass a landmark or when the situation suddenly requires our full attention.

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Until that moment, we have fully automatically kept the car between the white lines and at a safe distance to other drivers; we have fully automatically reacted to all kinds of signals from our direct environment. In fact, we do not *drive* the car ourselves at such moments, but the car is driven by stimuli from the immediate environment, through our unconscious behavior.

Unconscious, automatic behavior largely determines the results we see in our lives. The things you eat and drink every day have a great effect on your health; how you deal with your partner determines the quality of your relationship; and what you do at work every day, to a large extent, determines how your career develops.

These daily habits also determine how other people perceive us. When others have to describe our character or our personality, they usually mention those behaviors that we automatically display on a daily basis. They say you are assertive if you voice your opinion a lot; you are called enterprising if you often try new things; and you are patient and understanding if you tend to listen before you speak. This unconscious, automatic behavior determines the quality of our lives to a large extent. It is estimated that more than 95% of our behavior is brought about unconsciously and automatically. As this is unconscious behavior, it is also behavior that we usually know least about. That is why the next chapter is completely devoted to this.

What does this mean?

As a rule our conscious, planned behavior is focused on things we don't often do, and on achieving results in the future. We want to feel better in our bodies and we decide, wholeheartedly, to start a healthy diet and exercise more. Those kinds of things.

Our unconscious, automatic behavior is steered by all kinds of stimuli in the here and now. We automatically resent behavior that immediately feels bad, and have an automatic preference for behavior that immediately feels good.

You can imagine that these two types of behavior often clash. A healthier diet is a good plan in the long run, but in the short run it doesn't always feel good immediately.

More exercise really helps if we persevere for a few months, but the first few times we put on our jogging suits and run through the woods, it feels awful.

The tension between conscious, planned behavior and unconscious, automatic behavior is the explanation to why so many great ideas are thought up on excursions and vacations, but, once back home or at the office, why so few of them are actually executed. Wanting something is not the same as getting it done. We overestimate the power of our choices, and underestimate the power of habits that are continuously strengthened by friends, colleagues and numerous other external stimulants.

Tearing something down usually doesn't cost so much effort.

Misbehave once and you get instant results

What's annoying is that most behavioral changes only yield results in the long term. It sometimes costs months of repeating the daily routine before we see results. This is especially true for the most important areas in our lives: relationship, personal development, health, and career.

Tearing something down usually doesn't cost so much effort. Ruining a friendship, flunking an exam, setting your colleagues against you, in fact, this is all very easy to do. Misbehave once and you get instant results. But achieving positive results in areas in your life that really matter, almost always requires a long-term investment.

Therefore, if you want to change something in your life, you will have to manage not only your conscious, planned behavior - remarkably, the subject most 'change books' focus on - but your unconscious, automatic behavior as well!

Dream, Dare, Do ...

- Intentions alone are not sufficient to realize changes. Only one out of five people manages to maintain a good intention for longer than two years.
- Behavior is the weak link between plans and results. Changes usually come to a standstill because we fail to change our behavior permanently.
- 5% of our behavior is planned and brought about consciously. 95%, however, is unconscious and automatic. It is exactly this type of behavior that makes changing so difficult.

*‘Apparently, I needed a crisis
to be able to change’*

Sarah (34): full-time working mom of nine-year-old triplets and a four-year-old daughter. Her husband works part-time. The past nine years, the only thing they had actually done was run, run and run. Everything needed to be done fast.

Until Sarah realized that she was tired all of the time and didn't enjoy anything anymore. She didn't enjoy her kids, didn't enjoy her husband, didn't enjoy her work, and she didn't enjoy herself. At the consultancy where she worked, she had taken over tasks from the managing director, next to her own duties as HRM manager.

Everything combined, it was much too much. 'I was really at the end of my tether, but it took me a long while before I realized this.' In the end, her children's remarks were the deciding factor. 'If your child tells the teacher that you can't help out at school because "Mum is always at work", you all of a sudden clearly realize how she sees you.'

Realizing changes started by saying things out loud. First to people who she didn't have an emotional bond with; at a seminar and to a coach she already had. And after that to her husband. He was the one who got the ball rolling.

Sarah was almost ready to leave her home and family, but her husband refused to give up on her and pointed out her own part in this situation. This meant that she herself could influence the situation.

'He told me that he would support me whenever and wherever was necessary, but that I should start the process. Apparently I needed a crisis to be able to change.'

At that same moment it became clear that one of their daughters suffered from ADHD. This forced them to bring more structure into their lives. In a family where everybody is always running around, a child like that is at her wit's end. That is why there are weekly calendars on the fridge now. One with the children's activities, and one with Sarah's and her husband's activities. Sarah realizes that this makes things much clearer. They started out making these calendars for their daughter, but in the end the system brings more peace for everybody. 'At first I really disliked being

*‘Now I mainly
persevere because
I see what I get in
return’*

tied down to this structure, but when I saw that it worked I quickly came around.'

They have also added more periods of rest. On Sunday night, for example, the children go to bed early. Sarah and her husband cook and have dinner together.

On Sunday during the day it is family day. This means not visiting relatives but doing things just with the six of them. It feels good and brings a lot of peace. In this way, they have made more time to do things together and they have cancelled as many commitments as possible. Other people's reactions to this were not always positive, but by being honest and consistent about what you want and what you do not want, you can make things clear. At work Sarah indicated that she only wanted to do her own work, and this has been realized as well.

'I have to force myself to persist. I often start very enthusiastically and then lose interest again. It costs time and energy before you can reap the benefits of your changes. Because I have made arrangements with my family, I can persevere. My husband is very consistent, and the children have gotten used to the whole system as well. In fact, they got used to the arrangements we made and the new situation more quickly than I did.

It clearly is an interaction between me, the children and my husband, and it is a continuous process. Now I mainly persevere because I see what I get in return. I am a much happier person now.'

Dream, Dare, Do ...

- Change starts with you. You are responsible for your own behavior, and consequently also for changing it.
- Often a painful confrontation with reality is necessary to start thinking seriously about changing.
- Ask for help. You need people to make arrangements with and who will remind you of them, even when this is difficult.

About Dr. Ben Tiggelaar



Dr. Ben Tiggelaar (1969) is an independent researcher, writer and trainer. His goal: helping people to turn their dreams into action.

Ben works from own his own research, and a thorough background in business administration and behavioral sciences.

Since 2000 three books by dr. Ben Tiggelaar reached the number one position in the Dutch management books top 10. Ben's latest book is Dream, Dare, Do and is about effective self-management. Over 200,000 copies were sold internationally. Dream, Dare, Do is available in English, German, Arabic and Dutch.

Ben is a much sought after trainer and speaker. His approach is based on passion, fun and a practical application of behavioral science.

Ben's annual hit seminar 'MBA in One Day' is the largest business seminar in Europe. Besides 'MBA in One Day' Ben does more than hundred 'in company' seminars a year. During these seminars, participants learn, laugh and work hard to put their dreams into practice.

Ben took up communication studies at the University of Amsterdam, and received his doctorate from the VU University Amsterdam with a study on 'behavior-oriented organizational change'. This research elaborates on several themes from his books.

Ben is married to Ingrid and father of four daughters; Maria, Isabelle, Emma and Bernice.

For more information about Ben Tiggelaar and free resources please visit www.bentiggelaar.com.