

Construal Level, Eating Behavior, and Perceived Social Norms

by

Jaclyn Lischak

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Sponsor: Jessica Carnevale

Second Reader: Meagan Curtis

### Abstract

This study was designed to determine whether construal level affects people's susceptibility to social norms that influence their eating behavior. This was determined by manipulating participants to either a high-level construal or low-level construal condition, which has been found to influence their self-control. There were 140 participants who were conditioned to either construal level using a Why/How task and then answered questions based on hypothetical social scenarios, which measured their susceptibility to social norms. Participants also completed a Behavior Identification form which served as a manipulation check. Results showed that there were no significant differences in scores on the measure of susceptibility to social norms between high and low-level construal conditions. However, there were also no significant differences on the Behavior Identification Form between conditions, meaning the construal level manipulation was not effective in changing the mindset of the participants. In the future, this procedure may be more effective in a laboratory setting in order to ensure a controlled setting. A laboratory setting may also cause the manipulation to be more effective. Research on self-control, eating behavior, and social norms is important for the medical field and can help people who may be struggling with conditions affecting their eating behavior or social abilities.

### Construal Level, Eating Behavior, and Perceived Social Norms

Self-control is a major influence on people's eating behavior. Our level of self-control may fluctuate, but usually returns to a baseline. One way to alter people's self-control level is to manipulate construal level, which can affect eating behavior. Construal level refers to increasing or decreasing psychological distance, resulting in either more abstract or concrete thought (Trope & Liberman, 2010). Social norms can also influence people's eating behavior because people often parallel what they think others eat. People may also have different eating behaviors in different social settings, such as with their family or at a business meeting. If construal level influences self-control, which in turn affects eating behavior, then construal level may influence the way people perceive social norms in relation to eating behavior.

Self-control refers to resisting temptations to achieve a future goal, such as choosing a healthier option to support one's health (Schmeichel, Vohs, & Duke, 2011). Although everyone has a capacity for self-control, some people tend to exhibit greater self-control in response to certain self-control conflicts than others. One's mindset can have an effect on their level of self-control. This can be understood by Construal Level Theory which explains how one's level of psychological distance influences how they think, behave and make decisions (Trope & Liberman, 2010). High-level construal refers to increasing psychological distance and taking a broader view. Low-level construal refers to decreasing psychological distance and taking a narrower view. High-level construal results in more abstract thinking and low-level construal results in more concrete thinking. As temporal distance increases, people are more likely to place objects into fewer and broader categories, such as associating the word "dog" with "animal" rather than "poodle." It has been previously found that high-level construal promotes high self-control because it raises people's awareness of the effects of their behavior on their overall valued goal

(Fujita & Carnevale, 2012). When in a low-level construal mindset, the person does not address the possible negative effects of their decision; they are only interested in the immediate gratification.

Individuals who exhibit high self-control tend to make decisions that protect their valued goal from future temptation. Participants conditioned to a high-level construal through a subordinate vs. superordinate task imposed a greater self punishment in response to a self-control conflict than individuals in a low-level construal condition, but only those who valued the outcome of the self-control conflict (Fujita & Roberts, 2010). In this case, participants were asked how much they'd be willing to pay as a cancellation fee if they missed their appointment to receive feedback on their cognitive skills. This was made to be a self-control conflict because the appointment would take place during the uncomfortable hours of 2am to 5am. People in the high-level construal condition who highly valued feedback self-imposed a greater fee than people in the low-level construal condition who also valued feedback. This response revealed that participants who were conditioned to think in a more abstract way made a greater effort to protect their valued goal from future temptation. High construal level promoted greater self-control.

Control of impulses can be altered by construal level non deliberately and without consciousness. Using an Implicit Association Task (IAT), which measures the ease of association with concepts as positive or negative, participants conditioned to a high-level construal associated temptations with negativity (Fujita & Han, 2009). This was determined in a series of three experiments where participants' construal level was manipulated using the why/how task in Experiment 1, which asked either why or how participants "maintain good personal relationships." Experiments 2 and 3 utilized the category exemplar task to manipulate participants to a high or low-level construal. The IAT required participants to choose whether they associated apples with

good or bad words (such as “love” and “murder”) and candy bars with good or bad words. Their reaction time was measured, which showed how highly they associated one with the other. Results of Experiment 3 supported that construal-dependent changes in these associations promote self-control because more participants in the high-level construal condition than participants in the low-level construal condition chose to eat an apple over a candy bar in that given moment. This effect was present even though none of the manipulations had to do with dieting. High-level construal prompts people to associate unhealthy foods with negativity without being consciously aware, which in turn, promotes self-control.

It has also been previously discovered that self-control is a limited resource, and that high-level construal thinking can not only promote self-control, but can restore our capacity for self-control after it has been depleted (Schmeichel & Vohs, 2009). This was supported in a study that had participants reflect on their number one core value and describe a time in their lives that it was especially important. This is a form of self-affirmation, which refers to expressing one’s core values and reflecting on positive aspects of oneself, which can promote abstract thinking. There were two conditions: the experimental group exerted self-control by doing a regulated writing task where they could not use particular letters, and the control group did a free writing task with no restrictions. Following this task, all participants ranked 11 values and personal characteristics in order of personal importance. Participants randomly assigned to the self-affirmation condition were then asked to write about why their top-ranked value was important to them and participants randomly assigned to the no-affirmation condition were asked to write about why their seventh value was important to them. Following the manipulation, participants completed a cold pressor task which involved placing their non-dominant hand in cold water for as long as they could. Then they completed a numeric puzzle task where they had to find specific strings of

numbers within a large grid. Participants who self-affirmed were able to persist longer at the challenging puzzle task and had higher pain tolerance during the cold pressor task, but only those in the regulated writing group since they previously exerted self-control. This shows that people have a baseline for self-control and it is difficult to exceed it. In another experiment within the same study, it was also found that participants in the high-level self-affirmation condition (participants who self-affirmed and then completed a why/how task based on their top value) were more willing to wait longer for a greater reward than get a smaller reward immediately. This was measured using a computer game involving delay of gratification. The goal of the game was to accumulate points by clicking shapes, but shapes that earned more points caused the computer screen to freeze for longer than the shapes that earned fewer points. Therefore, participants with more points at the end of the task exhibited more self-control because they chose larger, yet delayed rewards. These results show that self affirmation promotes abstract thinking and can restore one's capacity for self-control.

Self-control is also an important factor for understanding eating behavior. It has been previously found that people with low self-control eat more unhealthy foods than people with high self-control (Hankonen, Kinnunen, Absetz, & Jallinoja, 2013). Self-control was measured using a 20-item self-report scale and food consumption was measured using a 36-item food frequency questionnaire. High self-control was associated with higher fruit and vegetable intake and less fast food consumption. This study also found that the behavior of high self-control participants could be closely related to self-efficacy and importance of planning, meaning these individuals have higher self-efficacy for healthy eating and plan how to eat healthily. The results also showed that there was no association between the eating behavior of high self-control participants and perceived weight gain, which means it is not the fear of gaining weight from unhealthy

food that causes people with high self-control to eat healthier. Although people with high self-control did not associate their eating with weight gain, they were more aware of the possible health risks of their eating behavior, such as diseases. This study also discovered that people with low trait self-control expected healthy food to taste bad, which led to lower intentions to eat healthy food. This exemplifies the idea that low self-control is associated with concrete thinking. People perceive healthy food to taste bad, so if they do not see the big picture, which is the overall effect on their health, why would they eat food that tastes bad?

Eating behavior is one of the most common self-control conflicts, since each day people make a decision on what to eat, whether it be healthy or unhealthy. Resisting sweets influenced smokers by depleting their capacity for self-control, compared to smokers who resisted vegetables (Shmueli & Prochaska, 2009). This was determined by measuring how many participants stepped outside to smoke during a break in the experiment. More participants who resisted sweets smoked during the break than participants who resisted vegetables, showing that resisting sweets may have been responsible for depleting smokers' self-control. Since this study's purpose was to determine the relationship between cigarette smoking and self-control, only smokers were eligible for participation. Participants were randomly assigned to either be presented with a plate of high fat sweets (chocolate chip cookies and brownies) or a plate of raw veggies (radishes and broccoli). The participants were told not to eat the food while the instructor left the room. When the instructor was gone, a prerecorded bell would ring which prompted participants to pick up the plate of food and smell it for a few seconds. After completing this task, participants were given a 10 minute break and had to leave the room, but no other instructions were given. The public waiting room was located on the ground floor of the building, so participants could easily step outside to smoke. Participants who resisted the sweets had greater carbon monoxide levels

following the break and reported a greater urge to smoke on the Questionnaire of Smoking Urges measure. After resisting the urge to eat the sweets, it was more difficult to resist the urge to smoke. This study provides further evidence that our capacity for self-control is limited. It also suggests that resisting unhealthy foods tends to require greater self-control than resisting healthy foods.

Other research takes into account social norms that influence people's eating behavior. It is important to note that internalized social norms refers to the perception of what other people think you should eat and descriptive social norms refer to what you think other people eat. How people perceive their peers to eat (descriptive social norms) has been shown to parallel how they eat, but only for unhealthy foods (Robinson, Otten, & Hermans, 2016). Participants completed an online survey that first asked about how frequently they consumed common sugar sweetened sodas, cakes/pastries, and 15 other food types. To measure perceived peer norms, participants rated how often they thought other students consumed sugar sweetened soda and cakes/pastries. Participants who perceived their peers to eat sweet pastries and sugar sweetened soda were more likely to consume these food items more frequently than participants who did not perceive their peers to eat soda and pastries. Participants with low trait self-control, as indicated in a self-report scale, reported that they were more likely to be influenced by their peers to eat sweet pastries, but not soda, than participants with high trait self-control. This effect could be because participants with high self-control consumed less soda than participants with low trait self-control. It was not found that participants with high self-control consumed less pastries. This study also measured participants' need for social acceptance, but it was found that the need for social acceptance did not mediate consumption and descriptive norms.



Most research on eating behavior and social norms has only looked at the influence of others to eat unhealthy foods. Croker, Whitaker, and Wardle (2009) looked at the impact of social norms on intended fruit and vegetable consumption. They predicted that people would perceive social norms as less important than health outcomes and costs of fruits and vegetables. They also predicted that normative information (statistics of people's eating behavior) would positively impact their intended food choices. Participants rated the importance of perceived health, perceived costs, and perceived normative influences using a Likert scale. The results of this study suggested that people may be unaware of the social influence on their eating behavior because participants rated normative information as least important. After hearing normative information about other people's eating behavior, men reported that they would consume more servings of fruit and vegetables in the future. Even though the men in this study rated social norms as least important out of health and costs, they were only influenced by receiving normative information, not health or cost information. Women had an increase in future fruit and vegetable consumption, regardless of which type of information they heard. This could be because women have a greater general optimism for dieting, since they were not particularly influenced by either factor.

The current study was designed to examine whether construal level influences susceptibility to social norms that influence eating behavior. Participants were conditioned to either a high or low-level construal mindset. They were asked questions related to different scenarios that required them to make food choices. These scenarios would be centered around self-control conflicts in social settings. The current study predicted that participants in the high-level construal condition will demonstrate high self-control and be less influenced by their perceived social norms. Research about social norms influencing eating behavior is important for the health

community because it is important to understand the factors that influence people's food choices in order to help people make healthier choices. Construal level has also not been previously studied as an influence for perceived peer norms of eating behavior.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

This study recruited participants using Amazon's MTurk, an online resource for taking surveys for compensation. There were 145 participants (86 male and 59 female) who took part in this study. The average age for these participants was 35 years old, and they described themselves as White (80%), Black or African American (9%), Asian (7%), American Indian or Alaska Native (1%), and Other (3%). Participants were randomly assigned to one of two groups. They were compensated \$1.85 for their participation.

### **Materials (and/or Apparatus)**

This study was published online using Amazon's Mturk and collected using the online survey tool, Qualtrics. This study utilized the Why/How Form, which served as the construal level manipulation by forcing participants to either think concretely or abstractly (Freitas, Gollwitzer, & Trope, 2004). We created five hypothetical social scenarios to measure susceptibility to social norms, which we called the Susceptibility to Social Norms Scale. These scenarios were based off a previous survey, which determined the most common social norms that influence people's eating behavior. Each scenario was based off one of the following eating norms: because I am supposed to eat it, because other people eat it, because my family/partner thinks it's good for me, because it would be impolite not to eat it, and to avoid disappointing someone who

is trying to make me happy (Renner, Sproesser, Strohbach, & Schupp, 2012). This study also utilized the Behavior Identification Form to measure the strength of the construal level manipulation (Vallacher & Wegner, 1989). (See Appendix A for full materials.)

### **Procedure**

The participants were first presented with a consent form that they agreed with before beginning the study. To manipulate construal, participants then completed either the Why or How version of a task and answered three steps from top to bottom how they “improve and maintain health” or from bottom to top why they “improve and maintain health.” Then both groups were presented with the Susceptibility to Social Norms scale, which included five hypothetical social scenarios that measured participants’ susceptibility to social pressure from others. This measure served as the dependent variable. Participants answered how likely they are to behave in a certain way on a 5-point Likert scale of Extremely likely to Extremely unlikely. Those who had higher scores on this questionnaire were less susceptible to social norms, meaning they exhibited higher self-control. Participants were then presented with a behavior identification questionnaire. There were 24 different behaviors with two different ways to describe the behavior (abstract and concrete). Participants rated on a scale of 1-7 how they would describe the behavior. An example of these behaviors was “Reading,” which is described as either “1- Following lines of print” or “7- Gaining knowledge.” This was followed by a short demographics questionnaire which asked participants’ age, ethnicity, and gender. Participants also indicated their type of diet, if they are currently dieting, and rated how picky of an eater they are (Very, A little, Not at all). The final step in this study was a debriefing statement, which revealed the background and purpose of the research.

### **Results**

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare participants' susceptibility to social norms in high-level construal and low-level construal conditions, based on their ratings on the Susceptibility to Social Norms scale. There was not a significant difference in the scores for high-level construal ( $M=3.21$ ,  $SD=.86$ ) and low-level construal ( $M=3.01$ ,  $SD=.88$ ) conditions;  $t(143) = -.709$ ,  $p = .862$ . These results suggest that construal level did not make a difference in the eating behavior of participants in social settings. Participants in the high-level construal condition did not display higher self-control than participants in the low-level condition.

After looking at the average response of both groups and not finding significant results, another independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the average response collapsed across all participants in each condition on the Susceptibility to Social Norms scale. These analyses displayed the difference in responses between conditions for each individual scenario, instead of displaying the average of all five scenarios of the two groups. The results of four of the five scenarios revealed no significant differences in susceptibility to eating norms between construal level conditions. However, there was a significant difference in scores for the high-level construal condition ( $M=4.05$ ,  $SD=1.24$ ) and low-level construal condition ( $M=3.28$ ,  $SD=1.50$ ),  $t(143) = -3.306$ ,  $p = .001$ , on the 3rd scenario, which had participants choose whether to stick to their new vegetarian diet or get a burger like their friends are all getting. Counter to hypotheses, these results indicate that participants in the high-level condition were more susceptible to social eating norms and more likely to go with what their friends ordered than to stick to their vegetarian diet than participants in the low-level construal condition. This could be because the participants in the high-level construal condition were looking at the big picture, and did not want to let a diet come between their typical get together with their friends. They let social norms influence

them instead of displaying high self-control, which did not support the hypothesis that high-level construals would display higher self-control.

As a manipulation check, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare participants' scores on the behavior identification form in high-level construal and low-level construal conditions. There was not a significant difference in the scores for high-level construal ( $M=4.84$ ,  $SD=1.50$ ) and low-level construal ( $M=4.60$ ,  $SD=1.42$ ) conditions,  $t(143) = -.983$ ,  $p = .367$ . These results indicate that participants in the high-level construal condition did not describe different behaviors more abstractly than participants in the low-level construal condition.

A test was conducted to measure the reliability of the self-control scale using a Cronbach's Alpha Reliability test. The Susceptibility to Social Norms consisted of 5 items ( $\alpha = .61$ ). The results suggest that the scale for self-control using hypothetical social scenarios was found to not have good internal consistency, meaning the items did not correlate well with each other.

### **Discussion**

The prediction of this study was that construal level would affect people's susceptibility to social norms that influence eating behavior. High-level construal would affect one's self control, making their level of self-control increase. This increase in self-control would make them less susceptible to social norms that would influence their eating behavior. Participants in the high-level construal condition would be more likely to make decisions about food for themselves and their personal eating goals, rather than letting another person or group of people influence their decision. Being conditioned to a low-level construal would affect one's self-control by decreasing it, which would make them more likely to be influenced by social norms affecting eating behavior. Participants in the low-level construal condition would likely be influenced by an

external social factor, such as someone giving them food. The person may think that they have to eat the food in that situation in order to be polite.

After analyzing the data, many of the results did not support the hypotheses. One surprising result was the significant difference in high-level and low-level construal for choosing the burger or vegetarian option on the hypothetical scenario questionnaire. Although it was predicted that participants conditioned to a low-level construal would likely be influenced by social pressure and display less self-control, more participants in the low-level condition chose to stick with their vegetarian diet. Although this was not a consistent finding throughout the scenarios, it's notable to mention the significance of this particular scenario.

One limitation of this study is that it is an online only experiment. Since it was administered online, the manipulation may not have been as effective since it was not in a controlled environment. If it were in a lab, the experimenter could ensure that there were no external distractions during the course of the experiment. With the experiment being online, the participants could have checked their phone or done other things that distracted them from the experiment. Such distractions may have influenced how they answered the questions or how focused they were during the manipulation. The results of the Behavior Identification Questionnaire showed that the manipulation was not effective because there was no significant difference between the construal level of the two conditions. Another limitation to this study is that the participants only reported how they thought they would react since they were presented with hypothetical scenarios. This does not mean that they would actually react the way they say they would. Their answers were just a prediction of how likely they were to react.

In the future, this experiment may be more effective if it were administered in a lab setting, but this would also limit the amount of potential participants. A potential follow-up study

that may further the research on this topic is if participants are placed in an actual social setting where food is present, such as a cafeteria. After being manipulated to either a high-level or low-level construal mindset, they would be assigned without their knowledge to either sit near a confederate who would try to influence their eating behavior or someone who would not communicate to them. This would be closer to a real life scenario and we could see how people would actually behave. People would demonstrate real behaviors rather than self-reporting about what they think they would do. This would increase the validity of the study and help us better understand how people's eating behavior is influenced by social norms.

It is important to study eating behavior in social settings and self-control because it can benefit people who may be struggling with low self-control when making food choices. It would further knowledge within self-control and eating behavior research. The current study may also be helpful within the medical field. It could be particularly helpful for people with mental illnesses that affect their eating behavior, such as anorexia nervosa and binge eating disorder, as well as mental illnesses that affect their social abilities, such as social anxiety disorder. Understanding the role of self-control in terms of eating behavior can be helpful for people with these disorders because it can help them be more aware of their actions and the reasons for their behavior, such as benefitting themselves in the future. Someone with anorexia may feel like they cannot eat or they will gain weight. By constantly feeling this way they may be using all of their self-control abilities and not have enough self-control resources left for other things. Understanding the role of social norms and eating behavior for people suffering with eating disorders may also be helpful because they may be more aware of why they feel like they have to eat a certain way. By researching more about self-control and eating behavior, researchers can find out not

just how people can use self-control to not give into peer pressure, but to maintain their self-control to promote a healthy life.



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## Appendix

**“How Do We Do the Things We Do?”**

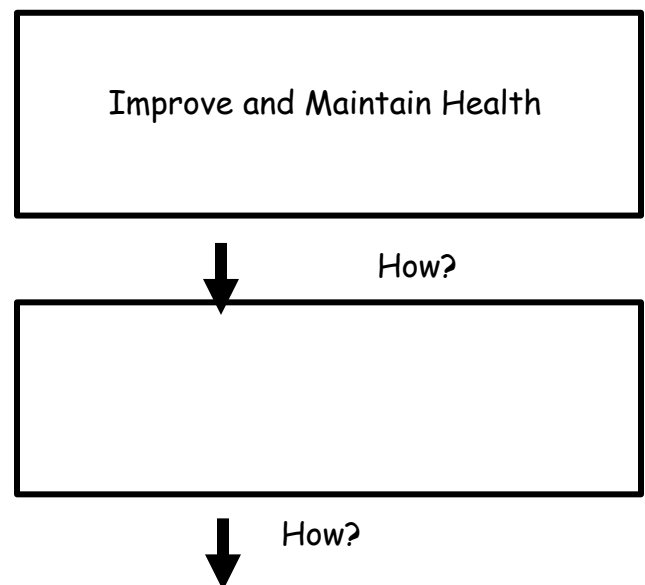
For everything we do, there always is a process of how we do it. Moreover, we often can follow our broad life-goals down to our very specific behaviors. For example, like most people, you probably hope to find happiness in life. How can you do this? Perhaps finding a good job, or being educated, can help. How can you do these things? Perhaps by earning a college degree. How do you earn a college degree? By satisfying course requirements. How do you satisfy course requirements? In some cases, such as today, you participate in a psychology experiment.

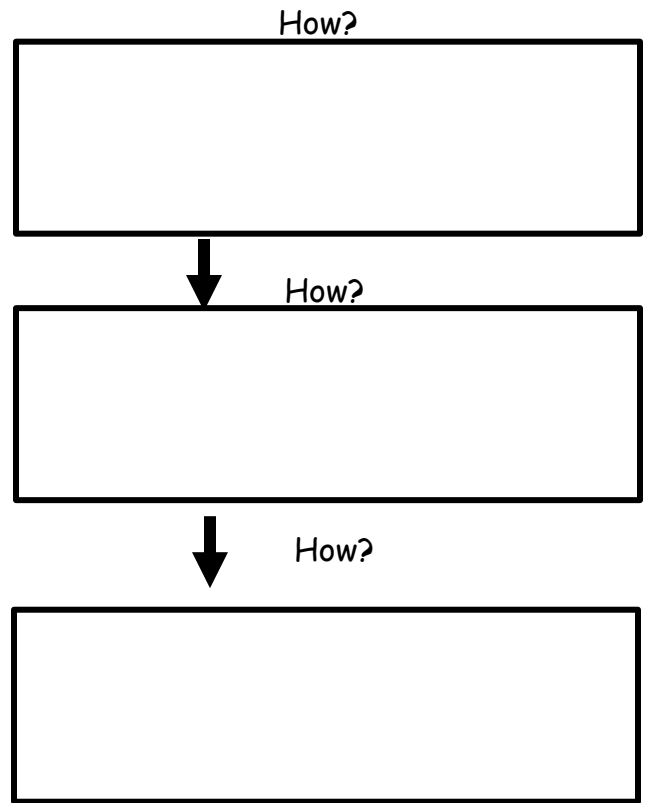
Research suggests that engaging in thought exercise like that above, in which one thinks about how one’s ultimate life goals can be expressed through specific actions, can improve people’s life satisfaction. In this experiment, we are testing such a technique. This thought exercise is intended to focus your attention on how you do the things you do.

For this thought exercise, please consider the following activity:  
“Improve and maintain health”

To show how the goal of “Improve and maintain health” can be met through specific activities, please fill in the 4 blank boxes below, in the series on the right. Beginning in the highest blank box (the one just below the box labeled “Improve and maintain grades” fill in each box by answering the question “How I can meet the goal described in the immediately higher box?”

To help you with this exercise, the boxes on the left show how our example, attaining life happiness, can be linked to specific activities.





**“Why Do We Do The Things We Do?”**

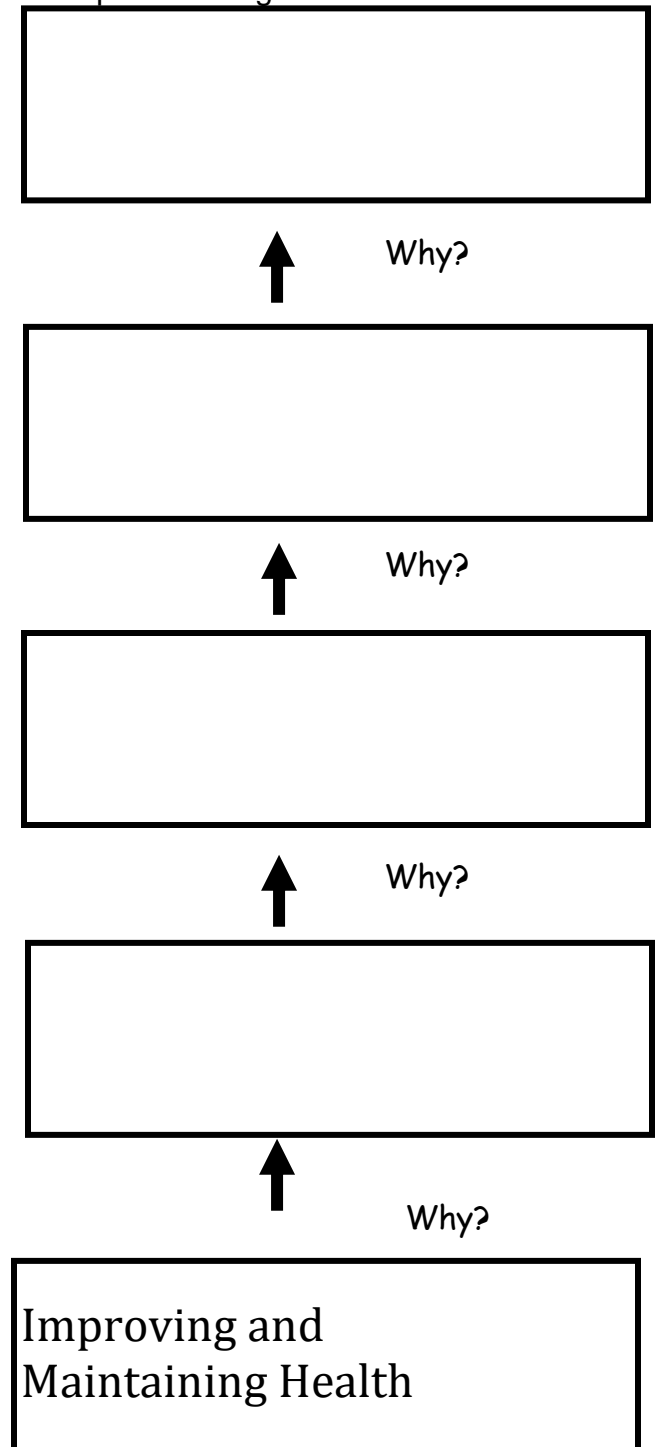
For every thing we do, there always is a reason why we do it. Moreover, we often can trace the causes of our behavior back to broad life-goals that we have. For example, you currently are participating in a psychology experiment. Why are you doing this? Perhaps to satisfy a course requirement. Why are you satisfying the course requirement? Perhaps to pass a psychology course. Why pass the course? Perhaps because you want to earn a college degree. Why earn a college degree? Maybe because you want to find a good job, or because you want to educate yourself. And perhaps you wish to educate yourself or find a good job because you feel that doing so can bring you happiness in life.

Research suggests that engaging in thought exercise like that above, in which one thinks about how one’s actions relate to one’s ultimate life goals, can improve people’s life satisfaction. In this experiment, we are testing such a technique. This thought exercise is intended to focus your attention on why you do the things you do.

For this thought exercise, please consider the following activity: “Improving and Maintain Health.”

To show how the activity of “Improving and Maintaining Health” can help you meet important life goals that you have, please fill in the 4 blank boxes below, in the series on the right. Beginning in the lowest blank box (the one just above the box labeled “attain good grades”), fill in each box by answering the question “Why do I engage in the behavior described in the immediately lower box?”

To help you with this exercise, the rectangles on the left show how our example, participating in a psychology experiment, can be linked to important life goals.



Instructions: Do your best to imagine you are in each of these scenarios and answer the questions as honestly and realistically as possible.

1. You were invited to one of your friend's family dinner at their house. Your friend's mom puts out the main dish that makes your stomach turn as she puts it down on the table. It is a type of food that you're not very fond of. There is also a side salad that you could eat. Your friend's dad starts putting a serving of the main dish on your plate. Do you eat the dinner to be polite or leave the food on your plate?

How likely are you to eat the food?

- 1-Extremely Likely
- 2-Somewhat Likely
- 3-Neither likely nor unlikely
- 4-Somewhat unlikely
- 5-Extremely unlikely

2. Your grandparents come to your house to make you a home cooked meal. Your grandma is so excited to share her new recipe with you. She keeps saying how much your grandpa loved it when she made it for him and that she hopes you love it too. You are sitting at the kitchen table watching her prepare the dinner and you see her put an ingredient that you hate in the pot. You feel so bad telling her that you can't eat it but you know you will hate the taste of it. Do you tell her you don't like it or avoid disappointing her and pretend you love it?

How likely are you to eat the food?

- 1-Extremely Likely
- 2-Somewhat Likely
- 3-Neither likely nor unlikely
- 4-Somewhat unlikely
- 5-Extremely unlikely

3. You have recently decided to switch to a vegetarian diet. A few days later you were invited to go out to a restaurant with your friends, and of course- they chose a burger place. You are prepared to ask the waiter what vegetarian options they have, but before the waiter gets to you, your friends start to order. One friend gets a bacon cheeseburger, the next gets a buffalo ranch burger, and the other gets a spicy chipotle burger. They all sound so delicious, plus all of your friends are getting burgers, you'd be the odd one out. Do you stick to your diet and order the vegetarian option or go with what your friends are ordering?

How likely are you to order what your friends are ordering?

- 1-Extremely Likely
- 2-Somewhat Likely
- 3-Neither likely nor unlikely
- 4-Somewhat unlikely
- 5-Extremely unlikely

4. Your partner always makes you this smoothie that you don't like the taste of. You are not sure of the ingredients, all your partner says is "it's good for you." Your partner drinks this smoothie all the time and wants you to as well. Do you drink it just because they drink it or stop taking it from them since you do not like it?

How likely are you to drink the smoothie?

- 1-Extremely Likely
- 2-Somewhat Likely
- 3-Neither likely nor unlikely
- 4-Somewhat unlikely
- 5-Extremely unlikely

5. Recently kale has become a trendy vegetable; it's almost like you need to eat kale to be healthy. You are out with your friends at a new cafe in town. Your friends are discussing what they are thinking of ordering. Everything has kale- Blueberry kale smoothie, cranberry walnut kale salad...you want to seem healthy and trendy in front of your friends, but you really don't like the taste of kale. Do you order something deemed "unhealthy" or go with something like what your friends are getting, probably containing kale.

How likely are you to get something similar to your friends?

- 1-Extremely Likely
- 2-Somewhat Likely
- 3-Neither likely nor unlikely
- 4-Somewhat unlikely
- 5-Extremely unlikely

### Behavior Identification Form

Instructions: Any behavior can be identified in many ways. For example, one person might describe a behavior as “typing a paper,” while another might describe the behavior as “pushing keys.” Yet another person might describe the behavior as “expressing thoughts.” We are interested in your personal preferences for how a number of different behaviors should be described. Following, you will find several different behaviors listed. After each behavior will be two choices of different ways in which the behavior might be identified.

Your task is to mark where, between the two identifications listed, the target behavior fits best to you. *Simply circle the number that most closely represents where the behavior belongs*, based on how similar it seems to each of the listed identifications. You may choose any point between the two for each behavior. Of course, there are no right or wrong answers. People simply differ in their preferences for the different behavior descriptions, and we are interested in your personal preferences. Be sure to mark your choice for each behavior. Remember, choose based on what *you personally believe* is most appropriate for each behavior.

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
				1. Making a list			
Getting orga- nized							Writing things down

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
				2. Reading			
Following lines of print							Gaining knowledge

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
				3. Joining the Army			
Helping the Nation's de- fense							Signing up

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
				4. Washing clothes			
Removing odors from clothes							Putting clothes into the ma- chine





10. Paying the rent

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Maintaining a place to live						Writing a check

11. Caring for houseplants

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Watering plants						Making the room look nice

12. Locking a door

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Putting a key in the lock						Securing the house

13. Voting

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Influencing the election						Marking a bal- lot

14. Climbing a tree

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Getting a good view						Holding on to branches

## 15. Filling out a personality test

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Answering questions						Revealing what you're like

## 16. Brushing teeth

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Preventing tooth decay						Moving a brush around in one's mouth

## 17. Taking a test

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Answering questions						Showing one's knowledge

## 18. Greeting someone

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Saying hello						Showing friendliness

## 19. Resisting temptation

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Saying "no"						Showing moral courage

Eating

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Getting nutri- tion						Chewing and swallowing

20. Growing a garden

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Planting seeds						Getting fresh vegetables

22. Traveling by car

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Following a map						Seeing country- side

23. Having a cavity filled

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Protecting your teeth						Going to the dentist

24. Talking to a child

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Teaching a child some- thing						Using simple words

25. Pushing a doorbell

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Moving a finger						Seeing if someone's home

## Demographic Questions

What is your age?

What is your ethnicity?

- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Native American or American Indian
- Asian / Pacific Islander
- Other

What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary

What is your type of diet?

- 1-Omnivore
- 2- Pescatarian
- 3- Vegetarian
- 4- Vegan
- 5- Other, Please indicate

Are you currently dieting? Yes/No, If so what kind?

How picky of an eater would you rate yourself?

- 1- Very picky
- 2- A little picky
- 3- Not picky