

A PLAYFUL PATH TO SUSTAINABLE
PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION (YAAAY!)

The
Awareness
Threshold
Model™

Dave & Larry

What This Is

A quiet introduction to how change actually unfolds. Or why it doesn't.

Who It's For

People who know something's off - but aren't interested in "fixing" themselves. Because they finally realize that nothing about them is broken.

What It's Not

This isn't an instruction manual. It's a conversation. With a cool conclusion.

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Preface (by Dave)

For most of my life, I did what thoughtful people who've heard just enough about self-help to think they know what they're doing do, when they sense something isn't quite right: I tried harder. I read more. I reflected. I analyzed. I went into therapy three times, starting at 16 when my parents' marriage imploded.

I chased insight the way others chase discipline, believing that if I could just understand myself well enough, change would naturally follow. It didn't. Of course it didn't.

What followed instead were long stretches of quiet frustration and disappointment - knowing better, catching patterns, even articulating them clearly - and still watching myself repeat the same arguments, the same emotional loops, the same self-sabotaging habits. Not dramatically. Just persistently.

Until I noticed something important, and that's what this guide is all about. Change didn't fail when I lacked information.

It failed when my self-awareness failed me.

Back then, there were moments - sometimes brief, often sharp - when I could see exactly what was happening inside me. In those righteous moments, the call to change was obvious. Like Hemingway's *For Whom The Bell Tolls*. Yeah, it was tolling for me.

But then the moments would pass. Awareness would dim. Old patterns would quietly retake control of my thoughts and behaviors. And I'd find myself wondering all over again: Why is this so fucking difficult? Why can't I change?

Over time, I began paying closer attention to when change actually happened - and when it didn't. What I discovered surprised me: the difference wasn't effort or discipline or even desire. It was whether my awareness crossed a certain internal threshold... and stayed there long enough to matter. To help make a difference.

That insight became the foundation of what you're about to read. This is not about fixing yourself. It's not a call to grit your teeth and grope your way into becoming someone you're not. It's an invitation to understand how self-awareness really works: how it awakens, how it fades, and how it can be gently stabilized through play rather than pressure.

And that will make all the difference in the world to your ultimate achievement: catching up with who you already are, in all your sumptuous human imperfection.

If you've ever felt you should be thinner, fitter, richer, healthier, happier, closer to God or in a better relationship than you are... If you've ever known what to do about how you don't want to feel but couldn't follow through... If you've ever suspected that the problem isn't you, but the way change has been accidentally framed for you...

Then you're in the right place.

Read this slowly. Curiously. Playfully. You won't be asked to believe anything. You won't be asked to commit to anything. Just notice how perhaps it makes you feel.

Everything else unfolds from there.



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How to Read This

The most important instruction we can give you is this: **Don't try to apply anything. Just stay aware of your instinctive desire and potential for change.**

This isn't a workbook. There are no assignments, no habits to install, no version of you that needs fixing. Trying to "do it right" will only pull you back into the effort-and-discipline trap this book is designed to help you dismantle.

Instead, read it with childlike marvel. That this might actually apply to you. 😊

Notice what lands. Notice what irritates you. Notice what makes you feel lighter, or strangely relieved, or quietly resistant. Those reactions aren't distractions - they are clues to the work.

If something resonates, pause. If something feels confusing, let it be. If something makes you smile, linger there. (SMILING is good for your mental health!) Awareness grows through noticing, not force.

There's no finish line here. No gold star for making it to the last page. What matters isn't how much you read - it's whether awareness of your potential for Personal Transformation stays with you when you're done. If it does, then we've accomplished our objective.

If you notice even a small shift in how you observe yourself and your response to change... If you catch a pattern you haven't seen before... If you find yourself laughing at something that used to hook you...

You're already playing our Game. That's enough. Until you want to know more about the Rules.

Part I

The Real Reason Change Has Been So Hard

1. Awareness Isn't a Trait. It's a State.

Most self-help assumes that self-awareness is a stable quality - something you either have or you don't.

But awareness doesn't work that way, like intelligence or personality. It behaves more like a effervescent state of consciousness. It flickers on and off. It fades in and out. It drifts.

You can be deeply insightful one moment, and completely on autopilot the next. Which is absolutely, perfectly normal.

And possibly confusing. Which is why people can understand their patterns, talk about their growth, read all the right books... and still feel stuck. Because they're literally befuddled by how self-awareness makes them feel.

They already know, or they wouldn't be asking, that insight without sustained awareness changes nothing.

2. Why Straight Motivation Rarely Works

Traditional change models lean heavily on motivated self-sabotage: try harder, commit more, get organized. Yeah, right.

The fact is, motivation is fleeting and fragile. It fluctuates with mood, energy, stress, and self-belief. Asking motivation to carry transformation is like asking a spark to keep a fire burning.

Here's the truth most self-help systems miss: **motivation doesn't create awareness. Awareness creates motivation.**

When you clearly see - when you can feel - how something affects you - especially negatively - then desire for improvement arises automatically. You don't need willpower to step out of a cold room once you can feel the warmth coming from the one next door.

3. The Awareness Threshold

Awareness doesn't arrive all at once, either. It accumulates.

Small realizations. Repeated discomfort. Breathtaking clarity and then lingering unease. Fleeting honesty about what's really happening to you. Until one day, something clicks.

"I can't unsee this anymore."

That moment is the Awareness Threshold.

Below it: Discomfort is tolerated, patterns stay vague, and the prospect of change feels exhausting and even scary.

Above it: The problem becomes clear; undeniable. Inaction feels like a cop-out; expensive. Action feels inevitable.

But here's what most people miss: **awareness alone doesn't cross the threshold.**

You can see a pattern clearly - name it, understand it, even explain it to others - and still not change. Because seeing isn't the same as caring.

What crosses the threshold is awareness waking up to the point that it can begin working alongside desire. This is the curious tipping point we reached purely by accident when trying to diagnose why change appears so difficult to achieve and maintain.

Awareness shows you what's happening (the pattern, the cost, the reality).

Desire determines whether you care enough about what you notice to respond to it (the pull toward something different, something better). When you see clearly BUT don't want things to be different, that's when nothing changes. It's the tragedy of wanting things to be different BUT you can't see what's happening, so you spin in confusion.

But when both are present together - when you see clearly AND want better, whatever that means, so long as it's within reason - the threshold gets crossed naturally. Action stops being a struggle. It becomes inevitable.

Personal Transformation doesn't begin with effort. It begins with sustained irreversibility - when awareness and desire align so completely that staying the same is no longer tolerable.

Part II

How Awareness Actually Awakens

4. The Six Accelerators of Awareness

People don't need repeated crises to wake up. They need truth, clarity, and a side of desire.

Awareness accelerates when certain conditions are present:

- **Naming:** Giving language to vague experience.
- **Externalizing:** Separating Identity from Essence.
- **Contrast:** Tasting and enjoying even brief relief.
- **Quantifying:** Making experience concrete.
- **Permission:** Making it safe to see. (NOTE: We go even further and make it FUN)
- **Micro Noticing:** Observing without fixing.

Each one increases awareness density. Together, they move you toward threshold - gently, reliably, kindly, humanely.

5. Why Awareness Alone Still Isn't Enough

Crossing the Awareness Threshold doesn't guarantee action. Many people stir, open one eye, wake up... and then freeze. They see clearly, perhaps for the first time - but still feel overwhelmed. Even when they know what's coming. They know something must change - and they're willing to become an architect of it, but they don't yet know where to start.

This beautiful pivot into power and fulfillment is also the most dangerous moment in Personal Transformation. Without a safe and engaging way forward, awareness may collapse back into resistance, avoidance, and disillusionment.

And here's another challenge. Even when awareness is high, your desire to feel differently - to feel better, then good, then happy, then ecstatic, and finally optimistic-without-reservation, no less - might not be present and strong enough. Silly, but true.

But that's when you'll drift back into old patterns. Yes, you'll know better. You'll see the pattern running. But you won't care enough in the moment to choose differently.

The solution isn't more awareness. It's keeping both awareness AND desire alive at the same time. And that can be a lot of fun. Which is where play changes everything.

Part III

Why Play Is the Missing Technology

6. Why Play Works When Discipline Fails

Discipline asks you to override yourself. Play invites you to engage yourself and become immersed in the Game.

Discipline weakens over time. Play generates its own momentum. You wanna' win, for goodness' sake! 😊

Here's why: Play keeps both awareness (in your mind) and desire (in your heart) activated and alive, simultaneously. Your head and your heart synchronize to win the Game you're playing. Change becomes fun. Just the way it was when you were a kid.

When change feels like play, awareness sharpens (noticing becomes interesting) and desire strengthens (you start wanting to feel better and better as you go).

Play sustains attention, rewards noticing, tolerates imperfection, and generates its own momentum.

Games don't require belief. They only require curiosity. And curiosity is the doorway to awareness.

Screw discipline and determination: desire is the way!



Part IV

Dave and Larry's Game of Change

7. Game One: Expose · Trap · Destroy (ETD)

This is the detective game. First of two.

You begin to notice the mental patterns running your life: the Catastrophizer, the Inner Critic, the chronic worrier, the self-abandoner.

You don't fight them (don't waste your time). You name them. Naming externalizes. Externalizing creates distance. Distance is perspective, offering room for awareness to grow.

And here's what happens when you play: every time you name a pattern, two things strengthen simultaneously.

(1) Your awareness increases: You start seeing the hidden habitual patterns that are driving you crazy, catching them earlier, appreciating how easily they sneak into your life.

(2) Your desire to respond clarifies: You start noticing how the patterns affect you (how they drain you, limit you, keep you stuck), and that same noticing naturally creates the desire to choose differently. Better. Healthier. Less insanely.

In this Game, discovering a pattern is a win. Noticing it again is another win. You can't lose.

ETD doesn't just make you more aware. It makes awareness itself engaging enough that you want to keep playing.

8. Game Two: Kill Them With Kindness (KWK)

Our second Game is your Soft Rebellion, as we call it. Against all the 'alien' forces currently collaborating to turn you into a mental case.

Instead of waiting for your mind to cooperate, you practice feeling groovy anyway. Small acts. Gentle pleasures. Conscious choices. Fun. Play. Laughter, love and light. Not denial. Not positivity. Just positive sovereignty.

And here's what happens every time you play **KWK**: when you choose to feel even slightly better on purpose - take three deep breaths, step outside for a moment, listen to a song you love - two things happen.

(1) Your awareness sharpens further: You become more attuned to when you DON'T feel good (because you're regularly/deliberately experiencing and remembering the contrast).

(2) Your desire to feel good strengthens: You prove to yourself that feeling better is good; and it's still possible. That validation alone makes you want it more consistently. We like to say 'profusely', just to emphasize the emotional high of finally giving yourself permission to be really, fucking happy again.

Every time you feel even slightly better on purpose, you prove something revolutionary: that you are not at the mercy of your thoughts.

KWK doesn't just help you feel better in the moment. It trains both awareness and desire - through your mind and your heart - to work together naturally. The way they did, when you were still a kid.

Part V

The Loop That Changes Everything

9. The Self-Reinforcing Cycle

Once play establishes itself as a normal part of your regular day, something remarkable happens.

When you reach the **Awareness Threshold**, and you can see ultimate happiness as a real possibility in your life, you start seeing old and worn-out patterns more clearly. Your desires strengthen (you want to respond more consistently). Small wins accumulate. The gap between seeing and performing shrinks.

Eventually, the two become inseparable. You see clearly AND care immediately. Transition becomes automatic; transformation becomes inevitable. For how good it promises to make you feel.

Baseline standards rise. What you used to struggle with and suffer through becomes intolerable. What felt impossible quickly becomes obvious, realistic, and achievable.

Happiness stops feeling like a goal you're chasing. It becomes a preference you're honoring and inviting to stay around more often. Preferences don't require discipline. They just require awareness that they exist - and desire to submit to them.

And there's the sacred loop: awareness reveals preferences. Desire bows to them. Play keeps both vibrant and alive. And once you allow yourself to transcend that threshold, you'll know exactly what we mean. And what to do next.

Part VI

What This Is
Really All About

10. This Isn't Self-Improvement At All

You're not broken. Nothing's missing. You're open and responsive. Whole and perfect just the way you are.

This work doesn't ask you to become someone else. It invites you to stop overriding what you already know in your heart to be true. About who you already are, what you like, and what you need.

The Awareness Threshold Model™ doesn't promise a perfect life. It points to something better: transcendence. Of who you mostly never were, and into a new life where awareness stays awake, desire stays active and present, and change feels playful instead of punishing.

A life where you notice what's happening, you care enough to respond to it, and you finally (because you took our Course?) have the tools to do so gently. Because of how good it feels to feel good, more and more often That's not forcing yourself to be different. You just naturally start noticing, caring, and choosing - over and over, until it becomes who you already are.

Doesn't that sound refreshing? Because it's one of the divine purposes you're here to explore and confirm: How Bad You Actually Want To Feel Good. We already know the answer, without knowing anything about you and we smile at the way you're going to feel when you discover it, too.

A Closing Invitation

You don't need to rush. You don't need to force anything. Just notice. Then play.

That's how remembering begins.

Curious for more? Visit www.daveandlarry.com and accept our invitation to come remember who you already are, before venturing into the world of who you're still capable of becoming.

By playing our Game of Change.

Until you discover that you've been Comfortable With Change all along.

You know something's off. Not enough to call it a crisis. Just enough to feel tired of carrying it. Enduring it. Wrestling with it.

Whatever it is.

You've tried to think your way forward. You've tried discipline, insight, motivation - maybe even entire programs promising transformation if you'd just try harder.

But what if change doesn't fail because you lack willpower and determination? What if it fails because your conscious self-awareness rarely stays awake long enough to matter and then make a difference? Largely because you routinely and accidentally give it reasons to stay asleep?

DaveandLarry's Awareness Threshold Model™ shines love, light, and hard facts on a different path you're welcome to take.

Instead of pushing you to 'fix what's broken', it shows you how change actually begins - when awareness crosses a natural internal threshold and action becomes inevitable and then enjoyable, not forced.

Through a playful, humane framework called The Game of Change, you'll discover two simple games you play with yourself: one that helps you spot and disarm the mental patterns quietly sabotaging your happiness, and one that trains you to feel good on purpose, even before anything is "resolved." This isn't about self-improvement. It's about remembering how awareness of how you're feeling works—and letting happiness become a driver of self-improvement, not a result of it. A preference rather than a prize.

If you're quietly certain that your life could feel better than it does... If you're done grinding through lists, mantras and assorted guru weirdnesses, and ready for something simple, light, and meaningful that actually produces pleasing results you'll soon begin to crave and then duplicate almost without trying... Then these words are our invitation for you to start playing, have fun, feel better, and start living again. Welcome home, you crazy happiness warrior. We can't wait to meet you.

Dave & Larry

Two guys who spent decades wondering if they were fooling themselves or not – and finally figured out how to tell the difference.