**Overview**

Using the trials and triumphs of actual people who have changed their behaviours and lives for the better, the authors of Change Anything have created a self-help book outlining the 6 Sources of Influence that, when used in unison, will assist any individual in successfully achieving any goal for change that they want. Kerry Patterson and his fellow authors, outline each of the 6 Sources of Influence and the tactics on how to get each source working for you. Change Anything includes real life examples of people who have used the sources to help them overcome bad habits. Bad habits such as: smoking; drinking too much; gambling; overspending; and binge-eating. These people are who the authors affectionately refer to as “Changers.”

**Part I The Science of Personal Success**

**Escape the Willpower Trap**

When we want to make a change for the better but we end up failing to do so, the first thing we blame is our lack of willpower. However, according to the authors, this view is 'tragically wrong'. Wrong because it is incomplete. Tragically wrong because it gives us nowhere to go when we fail to change. We have fallen into the *Willpower Trap*: the disappointing cycle of that begins with the commitment to change, which is followed by the inevitable decreasing of motivation to stick to the plan, and finally the return to the bad habits we want to rid ourselves of.

Therefore, in order to change, one must become aware that there is more than a lack of willpower working against you. There are 6 sources of influence that are potentially working against you as well. We must stop being blind to these influences; once we see them, we can change them.

**Be the Scientist and the Subject**

This step towards changing yourself is fairly straightforward, *you need to study you*. Discover what motivates you to stay on track and what causes you the bumps in the road.

*Examine when and where you currently give into urges → create a personal change plan that consists of what you will do to resist, remove or transform your urges at these crucial moments → implement the plan, observe the results, make changes to the plan, and repeat the process as needed until you succeed.*

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“The promise of this book is simple. If you apply the principles and tactics we outline, you can rapidly, profoundly and sustainably change your own behaviour (even long-standing bad habits).”
Part II: The 6 Sources of Influence

Source 1 – Personal Motivation
Personal Motivation can be summed up in one sentence: Love what you hate. More often than not, the things that we should do when we want to change ourselves are boring or uncomfortable; therefore, we don't want to do them. We often look at the present when it comes to changing, not the future. The authors have created five tactics to improve our personal motivation to change:

**Tactic 1: Visit your Default Future**
- Create a clear view of where you are heading if you continue down the path you are on. The more clear the visit, the more powerful the influence will be on you to change it.

**Tactic 2: Tell the Whole Story**
- Determine specific words that sum up where you are or where you are heading right now.

**Tactic 3: Use Value Words**
- Determine why you are making the changes; what are the qualities and principles you are developing; and most of all, what is the standard by which you are adhering to.

**Tactic 4: Make It a Game**
- Set a time frame and benchmarks along the way towards reaching your goal; seek out people who will be there to encourage you or who you can count compete with for the encouragement.

**Tactic 5: Create a Personal Motivation Statement**
- Draw on all the previous tactics to create a short and sweet statement that will remind you why you are making the change when you need the reminder the most.

“When it comes to changing ourselves, here's the biggest challenge: The things we should do are often boring, uncomfortable, or even painful. Ergo, we don't want to do them.”

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**SIX SOURCE OF INFLUENCE**

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Source 2 – Personal Ability

Personal Ability means doing what you can't. Like most human beings, when you seek to make a change in your life, but end up falling off the wagon; you feel disappointed in yourself. You blame your willpower for the failure, because it seems the most logical choice. However, according to the authors, most failures of change come from a lack of knowledge or a missing skill. This is where the three tactics of developing your Personal Ability come into play:

_Tactic 1: Start with a Skill Scan_
- Start by taking a look at what it will take to stop doing the wrong thing when facing the temptations that prevent you from achieving your goals. In the same sense, look for what it will take to begin doing the right thing. Determine what skills are needed when facing your problems.

_Tactic 2: Employ Deliberate Practice_
- Determine what actions are needed to be taken, and what exactly do you need to do or say to implement these actions. Think critically about these actions; is the knowledge or skill involved complicated and needed to be developed? It is also important to determine who you can trust to provide valuable feedback as you develop the skill.

_Tactic 3: Learn the Will Skill_
- Work on your willpower; learn how to distract yourself from the temptations that distract you from changing. Think about your most tempting situation, and how you can best avoid the circumstance that puts you in that scenario. If the situation is unavoidable, how can you withstand the temptation? Determine ways of distracting yourself and who can help you with your will skills.

“Knowledge and skill can be just as important as will in any personal change program.”
Source 3 and 4 – Social Motivation and Ability

The authors have combined these two sources together because they deal with the social tactics that help you turn accomplices into friends. **Accomplices** are people who stand to gain when you fail, or those people who do not care whether you succeed or fail. These same people can be further split into two groups: the **Models and the Hosts**.  

**Models** are the people who we see around us that determine our view of what is normal. Such as: if you are eating too much and everyone else around you is eating the same amount, you don't see yourself as binge eating, it's normal because everyone else is doing it.  

**Hosts** are people who don't want you to fail, per se, but they do want to indulge in sharing your temptations, and are willing to speak up. They set out what's normal regularly, and in doing so, become the hosts and enablers to your bad habits.  

**Friends**, on the other hand, are the people who are “our biggest change allies.” They are the people who keep you on the right track towards your goal by:  

− modeling good choices  
− speaking up  
− holding us accountable  
− offering advice  
− cheering us on

Friends can also be split into two groups: **Coaches and Fans**.  

**Coaches** are the people who work with you by coaching you through the process of fulfilling your change. Such as: specialists helping addicts kick their habit; financial experts assisting over-spenders; and personal trainers working with people who want to be fit and eat healthy.  

**Fans** are those people who provide the praise and motivation you need to be successful. They stand on the sidelines and cheer you on as you reach your goal.

There are four tactics to help you turn accomplices into friends; and allow social motivation and ability to work for you, not against you:

**Tactic 1: Redefine “Normal”**
− Take a look at the people around you and how they may be affecting your view of what is normal. Stop measuring yourself against unhealthy norms. You have the ask yourself two questions: How do you want to live and feel? And who do you want to be?

**Tactic 2: Hold a Transformation Conversation**
− Help transform your family, co-workers, and even accomplices into friends by holding transformation conversations with them. Ask for their help; explain to them how they are helping or hurting your progress towards your

“You don't have to be a social scientist to know that the people around you influence you for both good and ill.”

“In the end, you'll want to your world to be made up of more friends than accomplices. In an ideal world, you'll want all friends and no accomplices”
goal; and share with them how you would like them to assist you in succeeding.

**Tactic 3: Add New Friends**
- In addition to loved ones and co-workers, find people who are interested in supporting your change. Spend time with them to get some coaching, or pick up on a new normal. It can be as simple as joining a existing support group or changing some of your existing groups or associations.

**Tactic 4: Distance Yourself from the Unwilling**
- Separate yourself from your accomplices and those who don't support your efforts to change. This can happen naturally as you progress through your change. But, sometimes you will need to deliberately sever ties with those who don't have your best interests in mind.

**Source 5 – Structural Motivation**

Structural Motivation is structured as inverting the economy; developing incentives for yourself to keep with your plan to change. As we go about our lives trying to improve or change our lot in life, we neglect to use incentives as a way to motivate ourselves. We either forget about them or think that we can succeed without them. But this needs to change because incentives can be a great help to succeed in your plan to change. Our current economy looks to benefit from our bad habits; but by inverting the economy and providing benefits to ourselves for good habits, we are able to make the changes we want without the influence of the economy working against us. Change Anything includes three tactics to help invert the economy.

**Tactic 1: Use Carrots and the Threat of Losing Carrots**
- Implement **Loss Aversion**; if you put something you value at risk, you are more likely to change to prevent you from losing your valued possession. You are less likely to change if you use bonuses, prizes and other incentives. Use extrinsic rewards or the risk of losing something cherished to improve your willpower.

**Tactic 2: Use Incentives in Moderation & in Combination**
- Use small, inexpensive incentives to help you to stick to your plan to change. Don't use big incentives, as they will often come to an end and there goes your primary motivation to change. It typically only takes small rewards to help someone stick to their plan.

**Tactic 3: Reward Small Wins**
- Determine what specific benchmarks you are looking to achieve that should be celebrated. What would be a good time frame between celebrations?, determine how long you should go before rewarding yourself.
Source 6 – Structural Ability

For Structural Ability to work for you, learn to control your space. It has been shown that our physical surroundings effect our behaviour in ways that we don't even see. In order to stick to your plan of changing, you must be able to control the environment around. You can accomplish this by following the five tactics the book outlines:

**Tactic 1: Build Fences**
- Determine what rules you need to set up so that you will continue to act in a healthy way; and what actions will keep you on the straight and narrow. These fences need to be your own, not created by someone else. Create your own rules and use them in unison with the rest of the 5 sources of influence.

**Tactic 2: Manage Distance**
- Think logically about keeping good things near and easily accessible to you. Likewise, keep bad things distant and out of reach. A good start is by removing the tempting items from your home or office. Just a few feet out of reach is often all it takes to improve your success of resisting temptation.

**Tactic 3: Change Cues**
- Find places throughout your home or work where you can post reminders to yourself that will keep you on track. Determine the moments when you are most tempted to give in. If they come at predictable places, post notes in and around that area. If they come at predictable times and events, have reminders sent to your phone or computer prior to the time or events. These will serve as positive reminders to stick to your plan.

**Tactic 4: Engage Your Autopilot**
- Structure good and healthy choices into your day and make them the default choices in your life. Determine if there are commitments you can keep each day that will make a positive change in your life. The more you structure good choices, the easier the change will be.

**Tactic 5: Use Tools**
- This tactic involves using your phone and computer as valuable allies in your plan for change. Discover ways of transforming your electronic devices into allied tools. First determine how these devices are working against you; second what can be done to turn these silent foes into genuine friends of change.

“If you ever hope to take control of your life, you'll have to first take control of your space.”

“Make Sure You're the One
Part III: How To Change Anything

This is the final section of the book. It consists of five chapters; each dealing with a common topic that people look to change in their lives: Career; Weight Loss; Finances; Addiction; and Relationships. Each of these 'application' chapters consist of vital behaviours that research has found typically assist individuals with overcoming the challenges they face when trying to change. Real life examples of Changers are also included within each chapter. These examples outline how the Changers applied the ideas and tactics shared in this book to their plan for change.

The goal of these chapters are not to provide a list of actions that are needed to be taken to fulfill the change you seek. The chapters merely seek to demonstrate how others have used the tactics and ideas to their advantage.

Critical Evaluation

The authors of Change Anything have done a good job at keeping their promise of providing principles and tactics, that if followed, can “rapidly, profoundly and sustainably change your behaviour.” The principles and tactics are backed with actual observations and research done at the Change Anything Labs; along with vignettes from people who have used the tactics to change their lives for the better.

Change Anything is an easy read; written for the modern man, in terms that anyone will be able to understand. The authors want to help everyone succeed in their change. However, this wanting to help everyone by using everyone's success story hurts this self-help book in the long run. I found it difficult to grasp what the authors were getting at when it came to what exactly the 6 Sources of Influence were. Each section that contained a source was filled with two or three stories of how Changers used the source to their advantage. The source was explained briefly and the rest was the vignette. Having multiple stories going on at the same time only confused me more as to what each source was. I really had to dig deep into each section to be able to extract the information.

Another aspect of this book that I found troublesome is the blatant self-promotion that is sneaked throughout the book. At multiple points throughout, the authors would tell the reader to visit their website for more information and tips. While I realize that this would be beneficial for most people; I don't want to have to put down my book to search a website. Put the tips in the book. Despite these 'flaws', the authors of Change Anything has done a great job at creating a self-help book that will indeed help many people to change, myself included. The tactics described will assist people in creating a better life for themselves. I am glad to have read this book, and plan to implement more of the tactics addressed within Change Anything.
The Authors of Change Anything:
Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, David Maxfield, Ron McMillan and Al Switzler

Critical Questions

How do you want to live?

Who do you want to be?

How has a lack of willpower and the 6 Sources of Influence worked against you?

What are ready to do to stop the cycle?

How can the 6 Sources of Influence help you to become a leader in the classroom?

Visit ChangeAnything.com for more tips and information