# Worksheet for Sean Young | Changing Your Life for Good with SCIENCE (Episode 64)

Whether we have bad habits we want to eradicate or good habits we aspire to cultivate, the control required to change our behavior permanently doesn't usually come easily or automatically. We've all experienced the elation of temporary change only to feel somewhat defeated when we backslide into our old behaviors. So what can we do to make these changes *stick*?

Sean Young, Executive Director of the University of California Institute for Prediction Technology and the author of *Stick with It: A Scientifically Proven Process for Changing Your Life -- for Good*, joins us on episode 64 to share strategies for taking control over our own behavior and making the life changes we desire last for good.

# You Can't Be Someone Else

Conventional wisdom once held that modeling our behavior on someone else who expressed the behavior we desired was the best course of action for behavior change. For example, someone who wanted to become healthier might try to adopt the behavior of Richard Simmons.

"We have learned through our research that not only is that not true...but it's pretty difficult to become a different person," says Sean. "It doesn't stick, and it makes people feel badly about themselves. Don't change the person; change the process."

**Think about changes you have made -- or attempted to make -- in your life. Have you compared yourself to someone else or tried to meet someone else's expectations or image? Make a list of the tweaks or behavioral changes you would like to make in your life or have tried to make.**

## A Two-Step Process for Change

If you're looking to get rid of bad habits or adopt good ones, Sean identifies a two-step process you can use for changing your behavior.

**Step one** is to identify the type of behavior you aim to change: A, B, or C.

- **A**utomatic Behavior: Something you do without conscious awareness. Examples: biting your nails or interrupting people without even thinking about it.

- **B**urning Behavior: An irresistible urge or burning desire to do something. Acting on these thoughts feels almost impossible to resist, and they are nearly automatic. Examples: the need to check email immediately upon waking or a video game addiction.

- **C**ommon Behavior: Things you do repeatedly and consciously at least part of the time; these are the most common behaviors people try to change. They are not as deep-seated as automatic or burning behaviors, and they don't cause obsession like burning behaviors. Examples: lack of motivation or making excuses for not behaving in ways that you know would be beneficial, like going to bed early, exercising more frequently, or eating healthier.

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**Step two** is to identify the tools for changing the behavior using the SCIENCE Model of Lasting Change you'll find in the next section.

**Take the list from the last section and assign either the A, B, or C behavior to each item. If you feel comfortable, show the list to someone who knows you well. Do they agree with the list? Is there anything else they believe could be added to the list? Rank your list from most important to least important.**

# SCIENCE Model of Lasting Change

Sean devised this set of seven tools for changing behavior that uses the acronym SCIENCE for the sake of easy recall.

And yes, "engrain" is a less-common spelling of the word "ingrain," but it's completely valid no matter how weird it looks. We checked! So please just go with it; SCIENCI would be a pretty lame acronym.

**Stepladders:** Little by little, move forward using the model of steps, goals, and dreams.

> **Steps:** Little tasks to check off on the way to a goal.
> **Goals:**
> a. **Long-term** goals will take one to three months to achieve. They could take more than three months, but only if previously achieved.
> b. **Short-term** goals will take one week to one month to achieve.
> **Dreams:** These take more than three months to achieve and haven't previously been achieved. Remind yourself of your dreams, but don't keep your focus here.

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**Community:** Be around people who are doing what you want to be doing. Social support and social competition foster change. Communities are composed of two or more people who create a social bond and facilitate lasting change (if members are engaged).

**Important:** To ensure that change lasts, make sure it's really important to you. People have more success changing when it's important to them, and if it's important, then **stepladders** and **communities** can help.

**Easy:** Make it easy. People will do something if it's easier for them to do it than to not do it. People want things to be easy for them to do; people enjoy things that are easy for them to do; people will keep doing things that are easy for them to do. When barriers are in front of people, they quickly stop doing something, so if you learn to remove the barriers, you'll easily be able to keep doing things.

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**Neurohacks:** These are psychological tricks that get someone to reset their brain by looking back on their past behavior. Our minds play tricks on us. Use these tricks to your advantage. Change begins with action. Change your actions and the mind will follow. People often decide whether to do something based on how they think of themselves. If you want to be different, start by being different, and that self-identity will make it a lot easier for you to be that person.

**Captivating:** People keep doing things if they're rewarded with things they need. People will keep doing things if they feel rewarded for doing them. The reward needs to feel just as powerful as it would feel if the person were actually in a cage yearning to get out or get fed.

**Engrained:** This is the process the brain uses to create lasting change. Do things over and over. The brain rewards people for being repetitive and consistent. The secret to making things engrained is based on repetition: repeating behaviors, especially if they can be done every day, in the same place, and at the same time. This teaches the brain that it needs to remember the behavior to make it easier to keep doing it. Engraining causes people to favor things that are familiar.

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|  | **A**utomatic | **B**urning | **C**ommon |
|---|---|---|---|
| **S**tepladders |  | T | S |
| **C**ommunity |  | T | P |
| **I**mportant |  | T | S |
| **E**asy | P | P | S |
| **N**eurohacks | S | S | T |
| **C**aptivating | S | S | S |
| **E**ngrained | P | P | S |

**P** = Primary
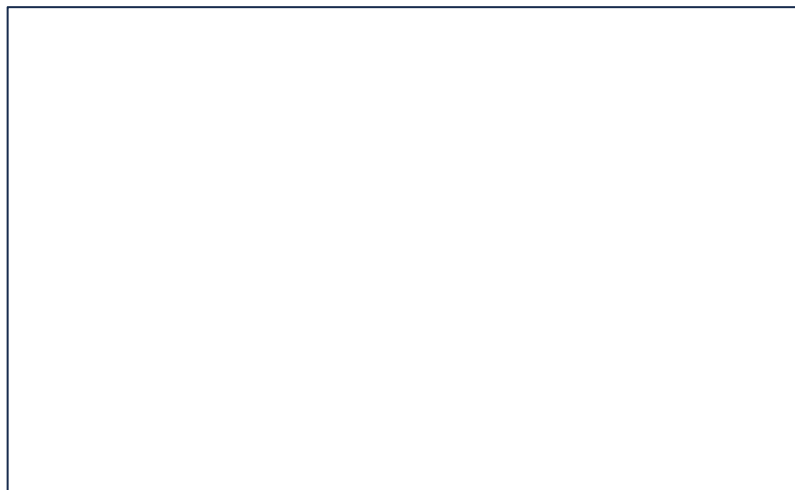**S** = Secondary
**T** = Tertiary

Primary methods will be the most important to changing the behavior while secondary will be second and tertiary will be third. For example, for A behaviors you will use the Easy and Engrained tools first, then secondary will be Neurohacks and Captivating.

**Using the list you have been working on, look at what is needed in the SCIENCE Model of Lasting Change to address each behavior. Map out the most important behavior change using the SCIENCE method. What are you going to do to address each method? For example, if it's an A behavior, what can you do that is Easy or what can you do to ingrain a change? Look at two or three of the behaviors and address the methods for change. Create a plan on the list to produce some behavioral changes.**

*Full show notes and resources for this episode [can be found here](#).*

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# About

Join Jordan Harbinger (critically acclaimed host, formerly of The Art of Charm) as we get deep into the untapped wisdom of the world's top performers -- from legendary musicians to intelligence operatives, iconoclastic writers to visionary change-makers.

We deconstruct the playbooks of the most successful people on earth -- and learn new strategies, perspectives, and insights you can't find anywhere else. Then, take these insights into your own life and live what you listen.

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