



**Dear Friends and Clients,**

I am working to change in a number of ways. For example, I want to exercise more regularly, lose a few pounds and learn some Spanish.

Yesterday I had no early appointment, which meant that I had an extra hour or two in the morning to pursue some of the projects that are important to me. So did I leap out of bed, enjoy a great workout, and then practice Español with Rosetta Stone? No! Instead I made myself a big cappuccino and went back to bed, to cuddle with our yellow Lab, Daisy, and watch the Today Show.

I'm committed to my goals for fitness and growth, and yet I find it so easy to be distracted by the chance to snuggle under the covers. This is frustrating, but it is some solace to understand that I am not alone. Throughout recorded history, thought leaders have been trying to explain how it is that people are constantly torn between long-term goals and immediate desires.

If you want to change yourself or others, it is useful to recognize that the human mind is divided into parts that are sometimes in conflict. And in this issue, I will discuss two fascinating books that explore how the change process requires alignment between our emotional and our rational selves.

**Warm wishes, Bev**

**Do You Want to Change Things?  
Appeal to Both Emotions  
And the Rational Mind**

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Social psychologist Jonathan Haidt explores ten "Great Ideas" in his intriguing book, "**The Happiness Hypothesis – Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom.**" Each chapter describes an important idea that has been discovered by several of the world's civilizations, and examines that idea in light of modern scientific research.

The ancient truth providing a foundation for the book is that the human mind is divided into two parts – the conscious, reasoning side and the emotional side – and those parts are often in conflict.

The image Haidt uses to describe our divided mind is that of a rational Rider perched upon a powerful, passionate Elephant. The Rider holds the reins and seems to be the leader. But the Rider's control is precarious because it is so small relative to the powerful Elephant.

Reason and emotion can work together to create intelligent behavior, but the emotional, intuitive Elephant actually does most of the work. And when the Elephant wants to go its own way, the Rider is helpless.

Chip Heath & Dan Heath build upon Haidt's Elephant and Rider analogy in their compelling new book, "**Switch – How to Change Things When Change is Hard.**" They explain, "Anytime the six-ton Elephant and the Rider disagree about which direction to go, the Rider is going to lose. He's completely overmatched."

The Heaths point to research that suggests that self-control is an exhaustible resource. They say that dozens of studies demonstrate that self-supervision is exhausting. In other words, when you try to change things, like your eating or work habits, your Rider is called upon to work hard. After a while, a tired Rider won't be able to lead an unwilling Elephant and you will run out of will power.

While changing yourself or others is never easy, the Heaths say it will be easier if you can get the Rider and the Elephant to work together. They offer a three-part framework to guide your change process:

- **Direct the Rider.** What looks like resistance to change is often a lack of clarity. Speed the process by offering clear direction:
  - **Focus on bright spots.** Find areas that are working, and then clone them.
  - **Script the critical moves.** Instead of trying to capture the entire big picture, specify manageable immediate steps in the right direction.
  - **Point to the destination.** Find a simple way of explaining where you are going and why it is worth it.
- **Motivate the Elephant.** Connect on an emotional level, to keep the Elephant moving forward:
  - **Find the feeling.** When people push for change and it doesn't happen they may chalk it up to a lack of understanding. But we can't simply think our way into a new behavior. It's emotion that gets the Elephant moving.
  - **Shrink the change.** Break down the change until it is so small that it no longer spooks the Elephant.

- **Grow your people.** Cultivate a sense of identity with the project and instill an optimistic growth mind-set, so that your team feels like it can manage the change.
- **Shape the Path.** If you want people to change, make the process easier:
  - **Tweak the environment.** If you change the situation, the behavior will change.
  - **Build habits.** The more instinctive a behavior becomes, the less self-control it requires from the Rider, and the more sustainable it becomes.
  - **Rally the herd.** Behavior is contagious. Help it spread by modeling the behavior and recruiting early followers.

**Want to hear something interesting?** In addition to providing executive coaching, Bev and her Clearways colleagues are available to speak about many issues related to your work and work life success. We'll build a program to meet your needs. Learn more at [www.ClearWaysConsulting.com](http://www.ClearWaysConsulting.com) or email to **Bev** directly.