



START NOW

# Module 4

## Sticking to healthy habits



# Strong inner motivation

*"Whether you think you can or you can't, you're probably right." Henry Ford*

Our neural pathways are similar to an incredibly complex highway.

**The two main tasks of our brains are avoiding pain and gaining pleasure.**

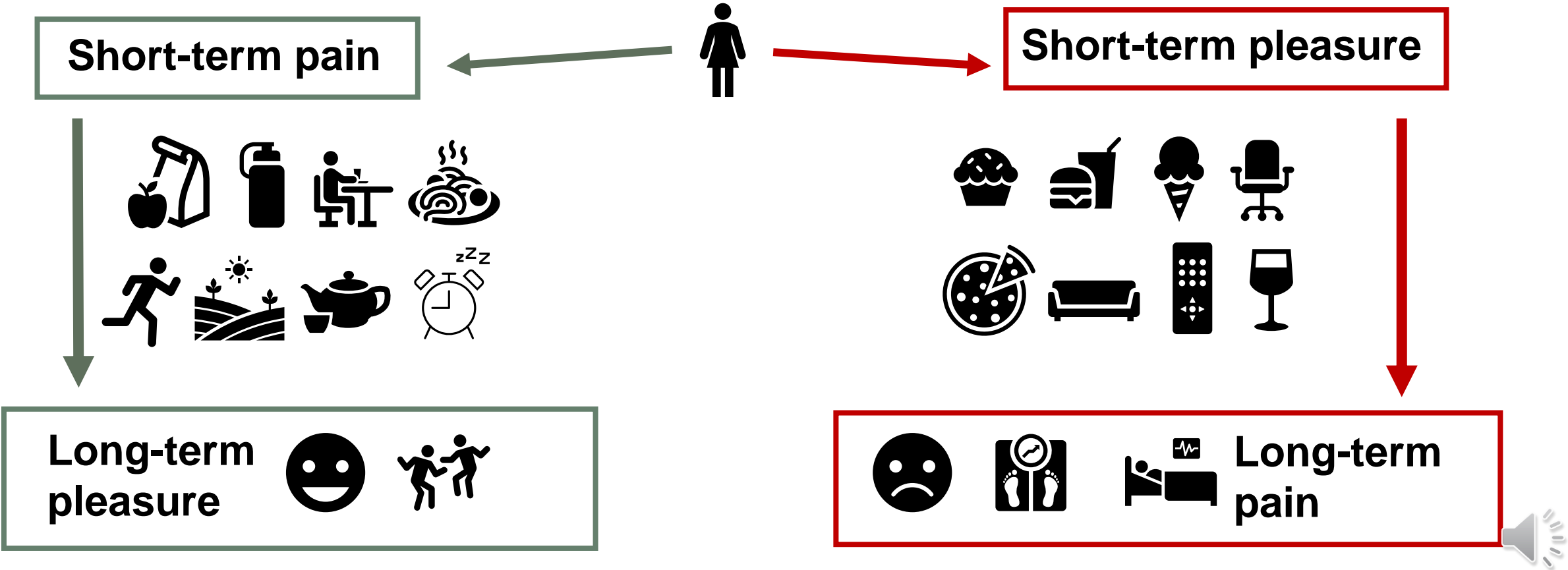
**It constantly protects us from potential danger and seeks pleasure.**



# Short-term pleasure vs. long-term pleasure

When you know you should do something, why don't you do it?

Because at some level you believe taking action now would be more painful than just putting it off.



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## Habit formation

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- If we often repeat an activity, emotion, or behavior, the responsible neural pathway becomes stronger and thicker and a habit forms.
- If we can stop ourselves from engaging in these behavioral patterns long enough, the strong neural pathways become weaker and weaker, and consequently, the bad habits will disappear.



# Decide what you want

Our intention sets our direction.

If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there.

We tend to focus on what we *don't want* to happen.

You need to learn to concentrate on what you *do want!*

We make what we focus on stronger.



**So, what do you want? What do you truly desire?**

**What habits stop you to get there? Which one do you want to change now?**

**Decide on the change you want to make. Use positive words.**



# The pain and pleasure twins

Our brain likes what it is used to and doesn't like unusual situations (perceived danger).

Therefore, we often stay in unpleasant or even horrible circumstances, because our brain wants to protect us from a potentially dangerous unusual situation.

**You overeat/binge because it's easier than facing your feelings (= pain).**



**You don't truly commit to lose weight because you might fail (= pain).**

1. Associate huge **pain** with **not changing**.



2. Associate **pleasure**: positive feelings, happiness, contentment with **changing**.



3. Uncover hidden benefits (**pleasure**) of **not changing**.



4. Uncover **pains** associated with **changing**.





**Pains** associated with **changing**.

Why haven't I taken action yet?  
In the past what pain have I linked to taking this action?  
What will I lose by giving up overeating?  
What pains do I associate with losing weight?  
What holds me back?

**CHANGE**



**Pleasure** associated with **changing**.

What pleasures will you gain if you change now?  
How do you want to feel? List the things you want.  
Why do you want to feel that way?  
How will this change affect your life, your relationships,  
your health, your career, your intimate relationships?

**PAIN**

**PLEASURE**

What will it cost me if I don't change, what are the  
pains associated with not taking this action?  
List the things you *don't* want.  
How will you feel?  
How will this affect your life, your relationships,  
your health, your career, your intimate relationships?

What pleasure do I link to not taking this action  
(e.g. indulging in overeating, suppressing feelings with food,  
not getting attention)?  
What are the hidden benefits of staying the same?



**Pains** associated with **not changing**.

**NO CHANGE**



**Pleasures** associated w/ **not changing**.







Pains associated with changing.

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Pains associated with not changing.

NO CHANGE



Pleasures associated w/ not changing.



## **Pains** associated with **not changing** - examples



- Not being able to eat normally,
- not being able to enjoy social situations without thinking about food instead of your company,
- having to hide how much you eat,
- feeling out of control, feeling like a monster took over your body,
- wasting money on food your body doesn't need,
- not being able to deal with your emotions without eating,
- feeling like a failure over and over again,
- need to wear clothes that hide some parts of your body and not the ones you would like to,
- not being able to perform confidently at an important event (such as a business meeting, presentation, job interview, or social event),
- not being able to go out and dance, enjoy yourself carelessly,
- not being able to run around with your children, grandchildren.



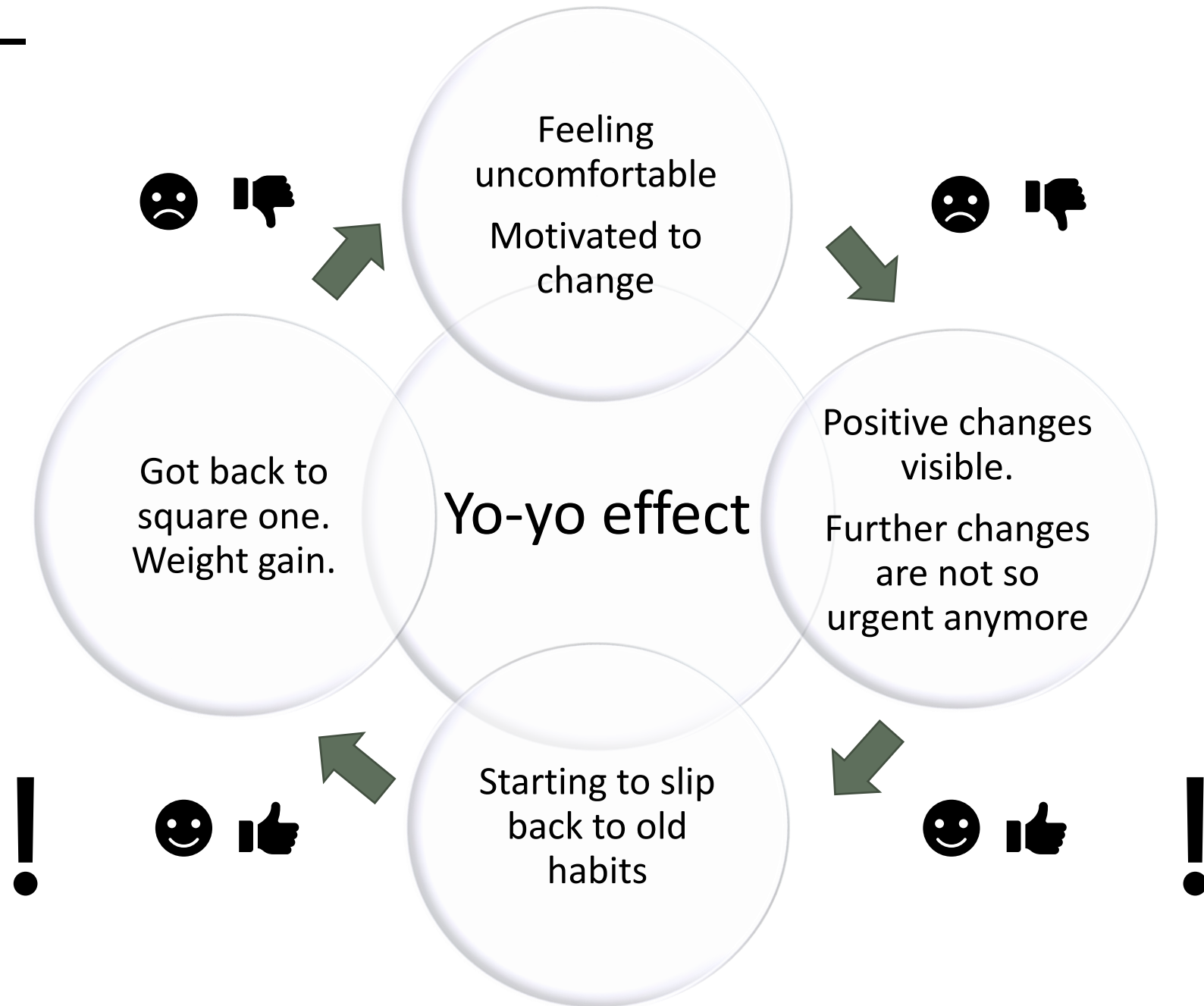
# Pleasure associated with **changing** - examples



- The feeling when you can eat normally again.
- You have mastered your overeating issues and now have time to concentrate on the joyful things in your life instead of obsessing about food and diets.
- You can allow your light to shine again.
- You feel confident and unstoppable.
- You enjoy eating without feeling guilty and you know how not to overdo it or eat mindlessly in a fog.
- You are able to tell when you are hungry, satisfied, and full, instead of eating until you are almost sick every time you eat.
- You can eat a piece of chocolate without having to finish the whole bar. Imagine that feeling of freedom.
- You can choose any clothes you want.
- You can carelessly dance, run, exercise. The feeling of being energetic.
- You walk confidently across the beach, your crush notices you, and you can confidently perform at that important event.



# The yo-yo effect – how to avoid it



# Make sure losing weight is YOUR goal

- Ask yourself: Why you want to accomplish what you are?
- If the word “should” comes up, then chances are you might want to re-evaluate what you’re doing.
- We often set goals because we feel like they’re something we’re supposed to do, and not because they’re something we want to do. You’re less likely to stay motivated when you’re on the path of ‘should.’
- Now that you have a goal and are sure it’s something you want to do, don’t forget that you will use small habits and mini-goals to get there. By breaking your big goal up into smaller pieces, you will feel that you’re doing something possible and you won’t feel overwhelmed.
- Also, as we discussed before, don’t forget to celebrate the small successes as you go. That will help keep the motivation levels high.



# My favorite motivational Youtube channels

- While inner motivation is key, the support, encouragement, and guidance of people who believe in us and want to see us successful like a coach, mentor, spouse, or friend are also important.
- These support systems are integral to our success because motivation can be hard to sustain over time. And for that reason, a helping hand can be just what someone needs to continue on.
- This helping hand can also come from a motivational YouTube channel or an inspirational podcast. Some of these are so educational and contain so much useful information that watching/listening to them feels like having an online coach or mentor for free.
- In this blog post I show you favorite motivational YouTube channels that can give you a big boost of motivation when you need it. Of course, there are many more brilliant motivational YouTube channels out there but these are the ones that I know and regularly watch.
- 13 motivational Youtube channels



# Homework

- Fill in the pain and pleasure graph.
- Read these lists daily (or as often as you can) and do your best to remember them when you have the urge to overeat or break your habit.
- Be aware that motivation can fluctuate, and it's completely normal. Some days we feel more motivated, while sometimes we are not so motivated.
- When we concentrate mainly on the pains associated with not reaching our goal, our motivation weakens when we reach a certain degree of success and changing the habit doesn't seem that urgent anymore.
- When your motivation is low, remind yourself of all the pleasures you associated with reaching your goal. Take your list and read what you wrote there, visualize your new life, and imagine how it will feel to be a natural eater who has a healthy, fit body. Picture yourself achieving it.
- Make sure this is YOUR goal. We often set goals because we feel like they're something we're supposed to do, and not because they're something we want to do. You're less likely to stay motivated when you're on the path of 'should.'

