

UNITED WISDOM

I Understand Everything, Yet Nothing Changes

Action and Creativity

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A21 · EN

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I Understand Everything, Yet Nothing Changes

Epigraph

> *Like a beautiful flower, full of colour, but without scent, are the fine but fruitless words of him who does not act accordingly.*

The Dhammapada, verse 51, translated by F. Max Müller, 1881. This verse concerns practising the Buddhist teaching; it does not make every refusal to act wrong.

What this article is about

Imagine someone who has known for a year that they should go to bed earlier. They can explain why sleep matters, how many hours doctors recommend and why a screen before bed makes it harder to fall asleep. Every evening around midnight they promise themselves to start tomorrow, and the next day they are again on their phone until one. To friends they say: "I understand everything." And that is true. Yet somehow the understanding does not turn into a different evening.

This article explains why "I understand but don't do it" is usually not one problem but several different ones. We distinguish four possible obstacles: it is unclear what exactly to do; a resource or an opportunity is missing; a skill is missing; or there is no agreement with the goal itself. Each needs its own next step, and "more willpower" does not fit them all. We draw on research into the gap between intention and behaviour, on the COM-B model, on the disagreement between Socrates and Aristotle, and on several religious traditions, each in its own context. The everyday scenes are hypothetical examples written by the authors. The article does not teach particular techniques and makes no diagnoses; when "nothing changes" calls for a different kind of assessment is discussed separately.

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I. The gap between intention and action is the rule, not the exception

Let us begin with a fact that is both reassuring and sobering: someone who intends to change and does not is far from alone. Psychologists call this the intention-behaviour gap. In their review, Mark Conner and Paul Norman (Frontiers in Psychology, 2022) write that “intentions rarely if ever explain all the variance in behavior”. According to the reviews they cite, intentions explain between 18 and 23% of the variance in behaviour, and in experiments that succeeded in changing people's intentions, medium-to-large shifts in intention went with only small-to-medium shifts in behaviour. Conner and Norman, 2022.

The figures the review reports for physical activity are even more telling. According to Sheeran (2002), 54% of intenders did not carry out the intended behaviour, while only 3% of non-intenders did. These figures concern carrying out the behaviour, not whether a first attempt was ever made. Most of the gap belongs to people who sincerely meant to act.

Two conclusions follow for our subject. First, the gap does not prove that a person does not really want the change or is lying to themselves. An intention can be genuine and still fail to reach action. Second, intention alone is an unreliable predictor of action, so strengthening it again and again, understanding everything once more, is not the surest route.

Conner and Norman add an important observation: strong intentions, those that are stable, important to the person and held with certainty, predict behaviour better than weak ones. This will matter when we come to the fourth cause: sometimes "I understand" means only that a person accepts an argument without regarding the goal as their own.

These findings have limits. Most of the research concerns health and physical activity, much of it is correlational, and we know Sheeran's figures through the review's account. The percentages cannot be transferred to every change in life. But the overall conclusion is robust enough to lift some needless guilt: if understanding does not turn into action, this is not a rare personal defect but an ordinary problem worth taking apart.

II. Socrates and Aristotle: can one know and not act?

How a person can know what is better and do what is worse is one of philosophy's oldest questions. In Plato's Protagoras, Socrates answers it radically: “no man voluntarily pursues evil, or that which he thinks to be evil”. If someone chooses the worse, he must be missing some knowledge and misjudging: a near pleasure looks greater to him, just as an object looks larger when it is near, and only “the art of measurement” can save him here. On this view, "I understand but don't do it" is a slip of the tongue: there is no real understanding. Plato, Protagoras, tr. Jowett.

In Book VII of the Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle restates this position: for Socrates it is strange that, while knowledge is present, “something else should master him and drag him about like a slave”. And he objects that such a view is at variance with “plain facts”. People really do act against what they hold to be right. Aristotle is quoted here and below in D. P. Chase's translation. Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics.

Aristotle offers a distinction that is still useful. Knowledge can be had and not used: this is how a sleeper, a madman or a drunk "knows", and a person in the grip of passion is in a similar position. Moreover, saying the words that express knowledge is not yet using it. Aristotle compares such people with actors speaking someone else's lines and with beginners who string words together without yet grasping their meaning, because “they must grow into it, and this is a process requiring time”.

This distinction removes the false dilemma "either I know, and then I will act, or I don't act, and then I don't know". There are intermediate states: I know it as an argument but not as a skill; I know it in general but not what to do tomorrow at eleven in the evening; I know it, but the knowledge is not available at the moment the decision has to be made.

Book I of the same Ethics contains an image that fits our subject exactly: at the Olympic games “it is not the finest and strongest men who are crowned, but they who enter the lists”. Worth, for Aristotle, shows itself in activity, not in possession alone.

The limit of this support is clear: ancient ethics reasons about virtue and the passions, not about the modern psychology of habits. What we take from Socrates and Aristotle is not a theory but a question and one distinction: there is more than one way of understanding.

III. Four different causes instead of one

If "I understand" can mean different things, so can "I don't do it". We suggest distinguishing at least four causes. First, it is unclear what exactly to do: the goal is understood, but the first observable step has not been named. Second, a resource or opportunity is missing: time, money, energy, conditions, support. Third, a skill is missing: the person knows what is needed but cannot yet do it. Fourth, there is no agreement with the goal: it belongs to someone else, has been imposed, or conflicts with another, more important goal.

This map echoes a well-known model of behaviour, COM-B. Susan Michie and colleagues (Implementation Science, 2011) describe behaviour as the product of three conditions: the person's capability, opportunity and motivation. They define capability as the individual's psychological and physical capacity to engage in the activity, which includes having “the necessary knowledge and skills”. Opportunity is all the factors outside the individual that make the behaviour possible or prompt it. Motivation is all the brain processes that energise and

direct behaviour: not only goals and conscious decisions, but also habits, emotional responses and analysis. Michie et al., 2011.

Our four causes do not map onto this scheme one to one. Clarity and skill belong to capability. Here, “resources” is our broad category: time, access and support can belong to opportunity, while physical capacity belongs to capability. But agreement with the goal is not the same as motivation in COM-B. There can be motivation for someone else's goal, through fear, shame or the wish for approval, and there can be no agreement despite plenty of energy. Agreement is the question of whether a person regards the goal as their own and whether it fits with their other goals. This distinction is the authors' own; it is not part of the COM-B model.

Telling the causes apart matters because each has its own next step. Lack of clarity is removed by formulating the first step, lack of resources by changing the conditions or by honest postponement, lack of skill by learning in small steps, and disagreement by reconsidering the goal itself. The advice "pull yourself together and do it" fits at best one of the four situations and can do harm in the others: demanding willpower from someone who lacks resources adds guilt to the shortage.

COM-B is a model, not a law of nature. It helps to ask questions but does not guarantee that the answer will fall into one of its three cells. Our map, too, is a tool for drawing distinctions, not a diagnosis. In life the causes are often intertwined; the following sections take them one at a time so that each is easier to recognise.

IV. The first cause: it is unclear what exactly to do

Understanding a goal and knowing what to do are different things. "I need to get enough sleep" is a clear goal. But what exactly will the person do tonight at eleven? Leave the phone in another room? Switch off the series after the first episode? As long as there is no answer, the goal remains a general wish, and every evening it has to be translated into action anew, at the most awkward moment, when energy is lowest.

The answer to “what exactly will I do tomorrow, and when?” offers a clue. If it sounds like “I’ll try” or “I’ll do better”, that is a reason to check clarity, not proof that clarity is the only thing missing. Fear, exhaustion, conflicting goals or reluctance to explain may be present at the same time. In COM-B terms, uncertainty about the step can be considered a gap in psychological capability: knowledge of what to do.

Lack of clarity often passes for understanding. A person can explain in detail why sleep matters and still not know which action comes first. Aristotle would call this knowledge that is spoken but not used. Many people end such conversations with "it's all clear", and that very phrase prevents them from noticing that not everything is.

The next step for this cause is to formulate the first observable step: an action that can be seen, done at a set time and checked in the evening. How to do this within a particular task is not discussed here: a separate article in the series deals with an unclear task, a missing skill and disagreement with the goal inside a concrete undertaking. Here it is enough to recognise the cause.

There is a limit too. Clarity does not guarantee action: one can know the step precisely and still not take it, and then other obstacles also deserve checking. Clarity helps this inquiry, but it need not always be checked first.

V. The second cause: a resource or an opportunity is missing

Sometimes a person knows what to do and knows how to do it, but conditions do not allow it. In our example these might be small children who fall asleep late, shift work, or the fact that the only free time falls exactly in the late evening. This is not a question of character but of conditions.

Research shows an association between external conditions and behaviour, though its size depends on the task. In a study in Frontiers in Public Health (2026), Gao and colleagues analysed data from 55,804 adults aged 20–59 in China. The association between family socioeconomic status and moderate-to-vigorous physical activity was weak (r = 0.053). In the statistical mediation model, access to an exercise environment accounted for about 49% of the overall association, and motivation for about 19%. These are cross-sectional data from one country: the direction of causation is not established, and a causal mechanism is not confirmed. The result is consistent with the COM-B hypothesis about the role of conditions, but does not prove how conditions change any particular person’s behaviour. Gao et al., 2026.

An old parable from the Mencius helps to tell a missing resource from unwillingness. Mencius tells a ruler that if someone says he cannot take Mount Tai under his arm and leap over the North Sea with it, that really is a case of not being able. But if he says he cannot break off a branch from a tree at the order of a superior, then “that is a case of not doing it, it is not a case of not being able to do it”, in Legge's translation. Hence Mencius's conclusion about the ruler himself: he fails to govern humanely because he does not do it, not because he cannot. Mencius 1A7, tr. Legge.

The parable is addressed to a king and concerns a ruler's duty; it should not be applied literally to everyday decisions. But the question it raises is precise: what is in front of me, a mountain or a branch? If it is a mountain, what is needed is not willpower but different conditions: help, money, time, another schedule. If it is a branch, the cause should be sought elsewhere.

The next step for this cause is to change the conditions or to postpone the goal honestly until the conditions change. Honest postponement differs from an endless "tomorrow": it has a date for review and a named condition without which starting makes no sense.

VI. The third cause: a skill is missing

Sometimes it is clear what to do, the conditions are there, the goal is one’s own, and things still go badly. Imagine someone who wants to configure a work application: the instructions are in front of them and time has been set aside, but they have not yet learned the operations. A missing skill is part of this hypothetical example; it cannot be inferred from a single sleepless night. In COM-B terms, this is a gap in capability: the ability to perform the action, not simply knowledge of its benefits.

A skill differs from understanding in requiring repetition and time. Aristotle, as we saw, compared knowledge that has not yet become one's own with the speech of beginners: the words are already there, but the ability to use them is not, and one has to grow into their meaning. Sometimes an explanation becomes clear in an evening, while learning the corresponding skill takes longer practice.

Hence a common trap: a person takes the first failures as proof that they will never manage. But failing in the first attempts is an ordinary feature of any skill, not a verdict on one's character. Confusing a lack of skill with a lack of desire makes it easy to abandon a goal for which practice may help; this does not rule out other obstacles.

The next step for this cause is to learn in small steps: choose a part of the skill that can be practised today and allow yourself time. Particular ways of learning are a subject for other articles; what matters here is not to confuse "I can't yet" with "I don't want to".

The limit is the same as before: skill is not the only cause. Sometimes a person can do something and still does not. But where the skill is missing, no reminder of the benefits will replace it.

VII. The fourth cause: there is no agreement with the goal

The last cause is the most uncomfortable. A person may understand the arguments, know the step, have the conditions and the skill, and still not act, because the goal is not theirs. It was set by parents, a manager, a doctor, a partner or an unwritten "that's how it's done". Or it conflicts with another goal that matters more to the person. In our example, the late evening may be the only time that belongs to them alone, and an early bedtime takes exactly that away.

Two mistakes are easy here. The first is to treat disagreement as weakness of will and to push oneself even harder. The second is not to notice the disagreement at all: a person repeats

other people's arguments as their own and is honestly surprised that nothing changes. Conner and Norman, as we noted, show that intentions which are important to the person and stable predict behaviour better than weak ones. One may suppose that a borrowed intention often turns out to be precisely a weak one.

In his essay On Liberty (1859), John Stuart Mill wrote: “The only freedom which deserves the name, is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs”. Mill was reasoning about freedom in society rather than about self-management, but his idea helps us see that a person has a right to their own conception of their good. A goal they do not share does not become theirs because its arguments convince others. Mill, On Liberty.

The next step for this cause is to reconsider the goal itself. Sometimes reconsidering it reveals one's own version: not "go to bed at eleven because one should", but "get enough sleep so as to be more patient with the children in the morning". Sometimes it uncovers a conflict that has to be resolved separately: where else to find time for oneself. And sometimes it turns out that the goal really belongs to someone else and that it is more honest to give it up.

The distinction between agreement and motivation is the authors' own. COM-B does not contain it, and it has not been measured the way intentions have. But without it the map of causes would be incomplete: "I don't want to" and "I can't" call for different answers.

VIII. An objection: not changing is sometimes the right answer

The previous section gives rise to a strong objection to the whole article. If the goal belongs to someone else, perhaps "nothing changes" is not a problem but a reasonable response? Yes, this happens. Giving up a goal that contradicts a person's values or was set without their involvement can be a healthy decision rather than a failure.

To reflect on the difference between refusal and avoidance, one can ask: can I name the decision to myself, its cost and the people it will affect? “I have decided not to go to bed earlier, because the evening is my only time, and I accept tiredness as its price” is an example of a stated decision. “I’ll start tomorrow”, repeated for a year, leaves open whether a choice has been made. This is a prompt for reflection, not a test of honesty. Explaining the decision to other people is not required: privacy and safety can call for silence even when the choice is clear.

Mill limited freedom by one condition: not depriving others of their good and not impeding their efforts to obtain it. Carried over to personal decisions, this suggests that giving up a goal calls for considering both its personal cost and its consequences for other people. If an early bedtime matters not only to the person but also to those who depend on them, for example because they drive the children early in the morning, the question stops being purely personal.

The objection does not cancel the map of causes; it completes it. Disagreement with a goal is not always an obstacle to be overcome; sometimes it is information that the goal should be replaced. A separate article in the series deals with cases in which postponing signals a real conflict of interests; here it is enough to acknowledge that such an outcome is legitimate.

There is also the opposite risk. Declaring any difficult goal someone else's is convenient: it removes the need to learn and to change conditions. Agreement is therefore worth checking alongside the other obstacles. One can begin with clarity, conditions and skill, or ask about the goal first if its mismatch is already apparent. There is no universal order here.

IX. What the traditions say about knowledge without practice

The gap between knowing and doing was familiar to religious and philosophical traditions long before psychology. Similarities must be checked together with differences: each tradition explains the gap in its own way.

In the Epistle to the Romans, the apostle Paul describes it with complete frankness: “For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.” and “For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.” (Romans 7:15, 7:19). For Paul this belongs to a theology of sin and law, and he sees the way out not in an effort of will but in grace. We do not turn his words into a psychological theory; but they show that the experience of "I know and I do not do it" was described long ago, and without self-justification. The King James Bible.

Deuteronomy puts the opposite emphasis: “For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off.” and “But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.” (Deuteronomy 30:11, 30:14). Here there is no tragedy of the gap: the text asserts that fulfilment is possible and close. This is an exhortation within the covenant, not a promise that every task is easy.

The Dhammapada, a collection of verses in the Pāli canon, says of a person who can recite much of the teaching but does not practise it that he is “like a cowherd counting the cows of others” (verse 19, in Max Müller's translation). Elsewhere, the “fine but fruitless words of him who does not act accordingly” are compared with a beautiful flower without scent (verses 51–52). The Buddhist emphasis falls on practising the teaching rather than knowing about it. The Dhammapada, tr. Müller.

In its third chapter the Bhagavad Gita continues its instruction to the warrior Arjuna, troubled before battle: “Do thine allotted task! Work is more excellent than idleness”, in Arnold's rendering. The teaching of action without attachment to its fruits belongs to its own religious and epic frame, a warrior's duty on the eve of battle, and is not transferred literally to everyday decisions. The Song Celestial, tr. Arnold.

In the Quran (sura 13, verse 11), in the English translation published on QuranEnc.com: “Indeed, Allāh will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves.” This is a religious statement about the link between outer and inner; it contains no psychological technique, but it holds a thought close to our subject: change does not come from outward circumstances alone. Quran 13:11, translation of meanings by Noor International Center, V1.1.2 (24 June 2025), QuranEnc.com.

Mencius, discussed above, adds to the distinction between "cannot" and "do not" the advice that the ruler should measure the motions of his own mind: “I beg your Majesty to measure it.” A similar image appears in Socrates' argument in the Protagoras, where the art of measurement is called saving. The similarity of the image does not make the teachings the same, but it shows a shared line of thought: the gap narrows when a person sees more accurately what lies before them.

These voices differ in their grounds: sin and grace in Paul, the commandment in Deuteronomy, the practice of the teaching in the Buddhist text, duty in the Gita, inner change in the Quran, humane government in Mencius. One thing unites them: understanding is not regarded as the completion of the task.

X. When "nothing changes" calls for a different assessment

Sometimes what stands behind the inability to start is not one of the four causes but a condition that calls for professional help. This article cannot and should not make diagnoses. It can name the signs that make a conversation with a doctor or psychologist worth not postponing.

The US National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) advises seeking professional help for “severe or distressing symptoms that have lasted 2 weeks or more”, such as difficulty sleeping, changes in appetite, difficulty getting out of bed in the morning because of mood, difficulty concentrating, loss of interest in things you usually enjoy, inability to complete usual tasks, and irritability, frustration or restlessness. If "nothing changes" comes together with these, the problem may lie not in clarity, resources, skill or agreement but in a condition that interferes with everything at once. NIMH, Caring for Your Mental Health.

Another possibility concerns attention. NIMH describes attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) as “a neurodevelopmental disorder” marked, among other things, by inattention: “difficulty paying attention, keeping on task, or staying organized”. If difficulty starting and finishing things is long-standing and shows up in many areas of life, it is sensible to discuss it with a professional rather than accuse oneself of laziness once again. There is no need to diagnose oneself. NIMH, ADHD.

Burnout after long overload can also look like "I understand, but I can’t bring myself to act". We mention it here without a separate source, only as one more reason not to rely on self-observation alone.

NIMH suggests starting with a primary care provider, who can refer you to a psychologist or psychiatrist. If thoughts of harming yourself appear, contact the emergency services in your country immediately.

This caveat does not cancel the map of causes: for ordinary difficulties it remains useful. But if working through it brings no change for weeks and life is narrowing, the next step is not a new plan but a conversation with a professional.

What this means in practice

Let us return to the person who has meant to go to bed earlier for a year. Instead of one more promise, they can ask themselves four questions, one for each cause.

First: is it clear what exactly I will do tonight, and at what time? If the answer sounds like “I’ll try”, one can check clarity and try naming one observable action; other obstacles are not ruled out.

Second: do I have the conditions, that is, time, energy, help, a suitable schedule? Is this a mountain or a branch? If it is a mountain, the next step is to change the conditions or to set a date when the goal will be reconsidered.

Third: do I know how to perform the chosen action? Where sleep is concerned, the obstacle needs to be clarified first; sleeplessness is not proof of a missing skill. If the chosen skill has not yet been learned, the next step is to learn in small portions and not to take the first failures as a verdict.

Fourth: is this my goal? Do I agree that early sleep matters more than what I get from the late evening? If not, the next step is to reconsider the goal: find my own version of it, resolve the conflict, or give it up honestly.

The answers may point to several causes at once. One can begin with the obstacle that currently seems decisive and reconsider that choice in light of the result. This is an authorial suggestion for inquiry, not an established frequency of causes.

There is also a researched form for a small step. A meta-analysis by Guoxia Wang and colleagues (Frontiers in Psychology, 2021) combined 21 articles (24 independent studies) with 15,907 participants evaluating a technique that joins mental contrasting of a wish with its obstacles to "if-then" plans. The average effect on goal attainment was small to medium (g = 0.336), and the authors call it “a brief and effective strategy for goal attainment with a small to

moderate effect”, warning that publication bias may mean the true effect is smaller. This is an example of a studied combination of self-regulation methods with a modest average effect. Comparison groups received either no intervention or the same additional techniques without MCII; the result does not prove that any small concrete plan outperforms any general intention. We mention the combination, not a universal technique; how to apply it within a particular task is the subject of a separate article. Wang et al., 2021.

If working through the four questions brings no change for weeks and comes with the signs described in the tenth section, the next step is a conversation with a professional.

These questions are the authors' suggestion for reflection, not a therapeutic protocol. Their use is easy to check: has it become clearer which of the four causes is in the way, and has one next step appeared?

At the start of this article the person said: "I understand everything." Now they can specify what exactly they understand and what is missing: clarity, conditions, skill or agreement. This specification is not yet a change, but it makes change possible.

Key quotation

> *Rather the following is the account of it: the term knowing has two senses; both the man who does not use his Knowledge, and he who does, are said to know: there will be a difference between a man’s acting wrongly, who though possessed of Knowledge does not call it into operation, and his doing so who has it and actually exercises it: the latter is a strange case, but the mere having, if not exercising, presents no anomaly.*

Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, VII.3, 1146b, translated by D. P. Chase. This passage distinguishes possessing knowledge from using it within ancient ethics; it is not a modern model of behaviour or a requirement to act towards someone else’s goal.

Connections between traditions

This map compares particular passages that were read. It shows similar questions and different answers; neither historical independence nor a single theory of the person follows from it.

Line and texts	Similarity or disagreement	Limit of the comparison
Socrates in Plato's Protagoras 352–358 ↔ Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics VII.2–3	Both ask how knowledge relates to action; Aristotle challenges the Socratic rejection of akrasia	This is an actual philosophical dispute, not agreement in their answers. Plato, Aristotle
Aristotle, VII.3 ↔ Dhammapada 19–20, 51–52	Speaking knowledge and actually applying it are distinguished	Ancient virtue ethics and Buddhist practice have different grounds and ends. Aristotle, Dhammapada
Mencius, 1A7 ↔ COM-B, Michie et al., 2011	The question of whether action is possible cannot be replaced by an appeal to desire alone	An exhortation to a ruler about humane government is not a behavioural model; COM-B does not validate a diagnosis of the person in the parable. Mencius, COM-B
Romans 7:15–19 ↔ Deuteronomy 30:11–14	Both relate word, will and fulfilment, but stress different aspects: the gap and the nearness of the commandment	Paul's theology of sin and grace and a covenantal exhortation do not form a unified psychology of willpower. King James Bible
Socrates, Protagoras 356–357 ↔ Mencius, 1A7	The image of measurement directs attention to assessing what lies before a person	Socrates discusses assessing pleasure and evil, Mencius the heart and government; a shared image does not establish identical teachings. Plato, Mencius
Dhammapada 19–20 ↔ Bhagavad Gita III, 3.8 ↔ Quran 13:11	Knowledge alone, or waiting for outward change, does not exhaust a person's relation to action	Buddhist practice, Arjuna's duty and a religious statement about change in a people have different frames; they are not a common technique for goal attainment. Dhammapada, Gita, Quran

Comparisons and limits

Distinction	What it helps us see	What does not follow from it
Having knowledge and using it	Knowledge can be spoken and not applied	That understanding is useless
Lack of clarity and unwillingness	Sometimes the first step is missing, not the will	That the goal will clarify itself
"Cannot" and "do not"	The difference between a mountain and a branch	That every "cannot" is an excuse
Skill and knowledge	Ability needs repetition and time	That the first failures are a verdict
Motivation and agreement with the goal	There can be energy even for someone else's goal	That other people's goals must always be dropped
Healthy refusal and avoidance	One can name the decision, cost and consequences to oneself	That every refusal is honest
Self-observation and professional help	There are signs that call for a conversation with a professional	That the article diagnoses

This is a map of the distinctions within the article. The similarities between traditions and psychological findings are limited to the passages cited; religious statements are attributed to their own texts, and the everyday scenes are the authors' examples.

Sources and passages used

The sources are public-domain editions and translations, articles under Creative Commons Attribution licences, NIMH materials (US public domain) and a translation of the meanings of the Quran from QuranEnc.com. Biblical quotations follow the King James Version. The modern scenes and practical questions are the authors' own.

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Tags

Understanding and action, intention-behaviour gap, intention, akrasia, weakness of will, clarity, first step, resources, opportunity, skill, agreement with the goal, motivation, COM-B, willpower, giving up a goal, Socrates, Protagoras, Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, Mencius, John Stuart Mill, Epistle to the Romans, Deuteronomy, Dhammapada, Bhagavad Gita, Quran, if-then plans, mental health, ADHD.

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