Disruption of the 'Usual' - Rethinking Behavior Change and Communication in Nutrition Education

R. Craig Lefebvre, PhD
chief maven, socialShift
Lead Change Designer, RTI International
Research Professor, Florida Prevention Research Center at the University of South Florida College of Public Health
Theory: The Frames We Use
The Power of Theory

• Explains how or why things are related
• Guides us to identify what’s important
• Suggests what questions to ask
• Creates assumptions about what we should do about the problem
• Proposes what objectives to set
• Determines how we measure success
Changing Scales of Reality

• **The Frame Problem** – It is impossible to know all the potentially relevant facts and determinants of a puzzle, given the overwhelming number of possibilities and combinations of variables.

• **The Micro-Macro Problem** – Our desire to achieve *macro* outcomes, ones that involve changes among large numbers of people, or in society as a whole, are driven by the *micro* actions of individuals; changes at different levels of organization are emergent, not simply an adding up of the components.

“Social change programs need to consider more than one scale of reality at a time.”
Micro-Macro Gap

X 85 bn ≠
Sources of Program Failure

• Insufficient intervention resources
• Nonsupportive social and political environment
• Measurement and evaluation design
• Wrong theory used to understand problem and develop strategies
## Where Theory Can Make a Difference

- What problem to tackle—and how
- What the program objectives should be
- Which priority audiences to choose, and how to characterize them
- What questions to ask in formative research
- Which approaches may be the best to use with specific groups of people
- How to best promote behaviors, messages, products, and services
# Theories of Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages of Change</th>
<th>Health Belief Model</th>
<th>Social-Cognitive Theory</th>
<th>Diffusion of Innovations</th>
<th>Social Networks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Precontemplation</td>
<td>Susceptibility</td>
<td>Reciprocal determinism</td>
<td>Relative advantage</td>
<td>Opinion leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemplation</td>
<td>Severity</td>
<td>Behavioral capability</td>
<td>Compatibility</td>
<td>Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Threat</td>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td>Adding/deleting nodes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Perceived benefits</td>
<td>Self-efficacy</td>
<td>Trialability</td>
<td>Bridging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Perceived barriers</td>
<td>Observational learning</td>
<td>Observability</td>
<td>Rewiring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision balance</td>
<td>Cues to action</td>
<td>Reinforcement</td>
<td>Network weaving</td>
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</table>
Behavioral Economics

Applies scientific research on human and social, cognitive and emotional factors to better understand economic decisions by consumers, borrowers, investors, and how they affect market prices, returns and the allocation of resources.
Personal Biases

- **Loss Aversion** - People are more averse to losing things than they are inclined to gaining things.

- **Status Quo Bias** - One of the best predictors of our future behavior is our current behavior. This is because inertia is so powerful.

- **The Dual Self** - People have competing preferences, with different preferences dictating different actions at different times.

- **Attention Constraints** – People get distracted. Simply paying attention to one’s goals is often half the battle in reaching them.

- **Defaults** - People make passive choices based on how the choices are presented to them.

- **Resource Slack** – In planning for the future, people realistically assumed that money will be tight, but they expect free time to magically materialize.
## The MINDSPACE Effects

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<tr>
<th>Messenger</th>
<th>We are heavily influenced by who communicates with us</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incentives</td>
<td>Our responses to incentives are shaped by predictable mental shortcuts, such as strongly avoiding losses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norms</td>
<td>We are strongly influenced by what other people do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defaults</td>
<td>We tend to ‘go with the flow’ of pre-set options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salience</td>
<td>Our attention is drawn to what is novel and seems relevant for us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priming</td>
<td>Our actions are often influenced by sub-conscious clues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affect</td>
<td>Our emotional associations can powerfully shape our actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitments</td>
<td>We seek to be consistent with our public promises, and reciprocate acts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ego</td>
<td>We act in ways that make us feel better about ourselves</td>
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</table>
Diffusion on New Ideas and Behaviors

- Innovators: 2.5%
- Early Adopters: 13.5%
- Early Majority: 34%
- Late Majority: 34%
- Laggards: 16%

Market share %
## Characteristics of Segments

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<td>Venturesome</td>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Deliberate</td>
<td>Skeptical</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
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<td>High tolerance of risk</td>
<td>Opinion leaders</td>
<td>Very local perspective</td>
<td>Sensitive to peer pressure and norms</td>
<td>The traditionalists – tried and true</td>
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<td>Fascinated with novelty</td>
<td>Well-connected socially and locally</td>
<td>Very engaged in peer networks</td>
<td>Cautious</td>
<td>Keepers of the wisdom</td>
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<td>Willingness to travel to learn</td>
<td>Resources and risk tolerance to try new things</td>
<td>Rely on personal familiarity before adoption</td>
<td>Usually scarce resources</td>
<td>Near isolates in their social networks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seen as mavericks, not opinion leaders</td>
<td>Self-conscious experimenters</td>
<td>How does this help me?</td>
<td>Minimize uncertainty of outcomes</td>
<td>Suspicious of innovation and change agents</td>
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<td>Social networks transcend geographic boundaries</td>
<td>They are watched by others – and they know it</td>
<td>Want to see the proof locally</td>
<td>Adoption will not fail</td>
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- **Innovators**: Venturesome, Fascinated with novelty, Willingness to travel to learn, Seen as mavericks, not opinion leaders, Social networks transcend geographic boundaries
- **Early Adopters**: Respect, Well-connected socially and locally, Resources and risk tolerance to try new things, Self-conscious experimenters, They are watched by others – and they know it
- **Early Majority**: Deliberate, Very local perspective, Very engaged in peer networks, How does this help me?
- **Late Majority**: Skeptical, Sensitive to peer pressure and norms, Cautious, Rely on personal familiarity before adoption
- **Laggards**: Traditional, The traditionalists – tried and true, Keepers of the wisdom, Usually scarce resources, Near isolates in their social networks
- **How does this help me?** Minimize uncertainty of outcomes, Adoption will not fail
- **Social networks transcend geographic boundaries**: They are watched by others – and they know it

### Notes
- High tolerance of risk
- Opinion leaders
- Very local perspective
- Sensitive to peer pressure and norms
- The traditionalists – tried and true
- Well-connected socially and locally
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- Keepers of the wisdom
- Resources and risk tolerance to try new things
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- Near isolates in their social networks
- Self-conscious experimenters
- How does this help me?
- Minimize uncertainty of outcomes
- Suspicious of innovation and change agents
- They are watched by others – and they know it
- Want to see the proof locally
- Adoption will not fail
Attributes of Innovations

• How is this better than what I currently do?

• How is it relevant to the way I go about my everyday life?

• Is it simple enough for me to do?

• Can I try it first?

• Can I watch others and see what happens to them when they do it?
The Innovation Chasm

Creating Webs for Change
Shifting Focus from Individuals to Connections
Social Networks Frame the Opportunities and Constraints for Change
Visualizing the social network

Enabled through platforms such as blogs, media sharing, feeds, communities, mobile technology etc., people are meeting, connecting, organizing, sharing, and collaborating in unprecedented fashion.
New Technologies Expand The Scope and Capacity for Learning
Designing products, services and behaviors that fit their reality
What relevant behavior can we ask people to engage in rather than the one they are currently doing?

How can we make this behavior more compelling, relevant, and potentially more valuable to people when they practice it, in comparison to the alternatives?
Costs of Change

- Financial
- Energy
- Geographical distance
- Opportunity
- Social
- Psychological
- Physical
- Structural

To change is difficult. Not to change is fatal.
Creating equitable opportunities and access
Where can we locate a service, distribute a product, or create opportunities for members of our priority group to engage in healthier behaviors?
Attributes of Place

- Availability of products and services
- Accessibility to products and services
- Physical environment that supports or impedes engaging in behaviors
- Place = Distribution of (competitive) products, services, behaviors, ideas, information
Communicating change in linguistically, culturally relevant and ubiquitous ways
How Effective are Health Communication Campaigns?

5%
Lessons

- Theories should be tools – not straight jackets
- Theories can inform – and blind (the “frame problem”)
- The one with the biggest toolbox wins
- It’s a complex world (the micro-macro gap).
- “There’s nothing so practical as a good theory”
Resources


