

# TFT

TFTs are scary!

Name it

Put it in perspective


Reality check expectations

Link the Meaning


Rest & Stay Fit

Wrap Up

Normalize it



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## TFTs are...

- Unknown
- Vulnerable
- Uncomfortable
- Difficult

Habit Loop

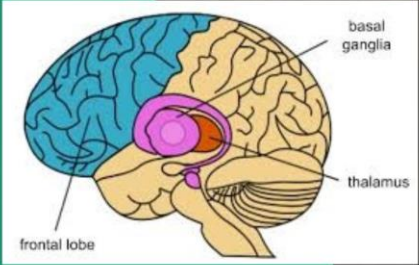
Beliefs, Worry

Novelty Seeking



What's a TFT you have been through lately?



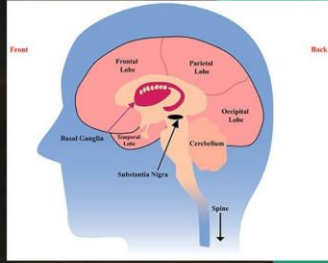

# Habit Loop



- **Basal Ganglia** turns on - Mid brain - emotions, memories, pattern recognition
- **Frontal Lobe** (pre-frontal cortex) turns off - decision making
- Takes cues from environment

# Novelty Seeking



- **Substantia Nigra/ Ventral Segmental area (SN/VTA)** - "novelty center" - responds to completely new things
- **Dopamine released** - makes us want to seek new things to get the reward - motivation chemical



## Beliefs

"I am supposed to...  
look smart."  
know what I'm doing."  
be reliable."  
not make mistakes."

## Worries

"If I try something new...  
I will fail."  
people will see I'm stupid."  
I will let people down."



## Step 1. Name it

Acknowledge to yourself and others that this is a TFT - a terrible first time.





## Step 2. Normalize it

Wise  
Harry  
Potter

"This is how new is supposed to feel." - Brene Brown, PhD

"It's normal to be...  
scared."  
worried."  
struggling."



**Working hard is important. But there is something that matters even more, believing in yourself. Think of it this way; every great wizard in history has started out as nothing more than what we are now, students. If they can do it, why not us?**



## Step 3. Put it in perspective

Worry says: "You're stupid"

**You say: "I just don't know this one new thing, yet."**

Worry says: "You are going to fail."

**You say: "I will make some mistakes as I learn this new thing"**

Worry says: "You will never learn this."

**You say: "It will take some time, but I will learn some new things along the way."**



## Step 4.

# Reality check expectations

Belief is: I should know this by now.

**Reality is: It will take some time.**

Belief is: I must be perfect.

**Reality is: I can get better with practice. (Perfection is an illusion.)**

Belief is: I can't do it.

**Reality is: It will be hard at first, then get easier.**



## Step 5.

# Remember the Meaning of the TFT

Connect to why this TFT is important:

What do I value?

Why am I doing it this way?

What is the meaning behind it?

What do I get out of it?

Where does it take me?



## Step 6 - 7.

# Rest & Stay Fit

**Brains  
get tired,  
too!**

**Top TFT  
Condition**





# Rest and Recovery are essential during TFTs

- Brains use energy (like muscles) when learning new things
- Replacing that energy requires good rest/ sleep, proper nutrition, and staying hydrated.



# Top TFT Condition

- Physical exercise: 150 minutes a week of moderate intensity aerobic exercise
- Mental exercise: work different brain areas - language, music, art, logic, emotions, math, relationships
- Mindfulness exercises: meditation, gratitude, contact with present moment
- Make it challenging (be like Goldilocks)



## Sources:

- Brene Brown: "Unlocking Us" podcast: 12-9-2020 and 3-20-2020
- Shelli Kesler, PhD: "Coping with Attention, Learning, and Memory Problems" April 17, 2021 Livestrong Cancer Institute
- Charles Duhigg: "The Power of Habit" 2011 Random House Publishing
- Belle Beth Cooper: "Novelty and the Brain" 2013 Lifehacker.com

# Questions?

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