

Multiplying Milestones to Reach Goals

In the book, *The Power of Moments: Why Certain Experiences Have Extraordinary Impact* by Chip Heath and Dan Heath, they talk about defining moments and experiences that impact us. These experiences include moments of elevation, accomplishment, insight and/or connection. In this article I am going to focus on moments of accomplishment. Often when we set goals they are ambitious and require a lot of work. This is a good thing, however, sometimes having a big goal that takes a long time to reach can feel like we are always going to basketball practice but never getting to play an actual game. To make practices meaningful we need games, or what these authors refer to as, moments of elevation. During sports games, stakes are raised, the pressure is on and you experience feelings of accomplishment if you win. One key to achieving our goals is to incorporate these moments of elevation along the way.

So, how can we incorporate these moments of elevation into our goal setting? Authors Chip and Dan Heath suggest a strategy called multiplying milestones. These authors discuss how one reason video games are appealing is the feeling of accomplishment when you beat a level. In working towards goals, are there different “levels” we can set for ourselves? One example used by the authors is Josh Clark’s Couch to 5K program. One of the major milestones in this program is week 6 when the participant completes their longest run yet. It is a major milestone and participants are often motivated by passing it. Examples of other milestones are, if your goal is to save money, your milestones might be: level 1-get \$1000 into a bank account, level 2-save 1 months’ worth of expenses, and level 3-save 3 months’ worth of expenses. If your goal is to eat more nutritious food, your milestones might be increasing the number of simple swaps (replacing a less nutrient-dense food with one that has more nutrients i.e. eating a piece of fruit instead of a donut) you make in a week.

There are many possibilities for breaking your goals down into smaller milestones and celebrating these milestones can help keep you motivated on the way to reaching your ultimate goal!

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