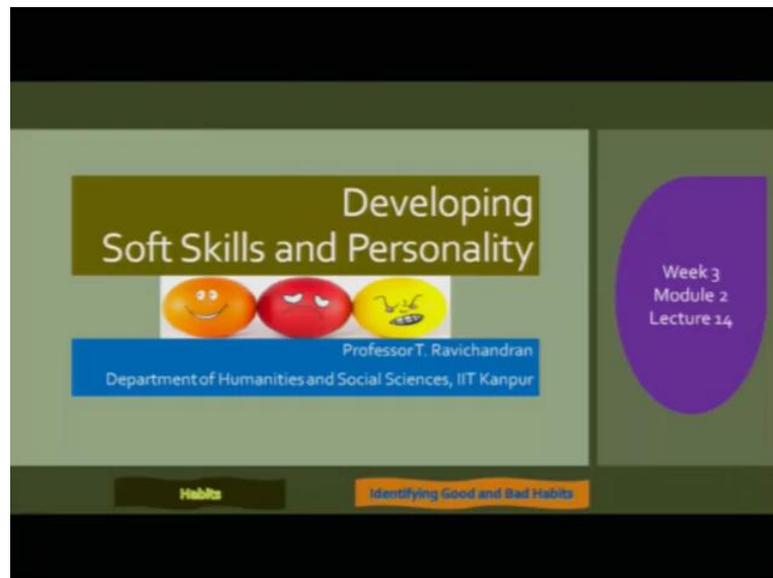


Developing Soft Skills and Personality
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Lecture – 14
Habits: Identifying Good and Bad Habits

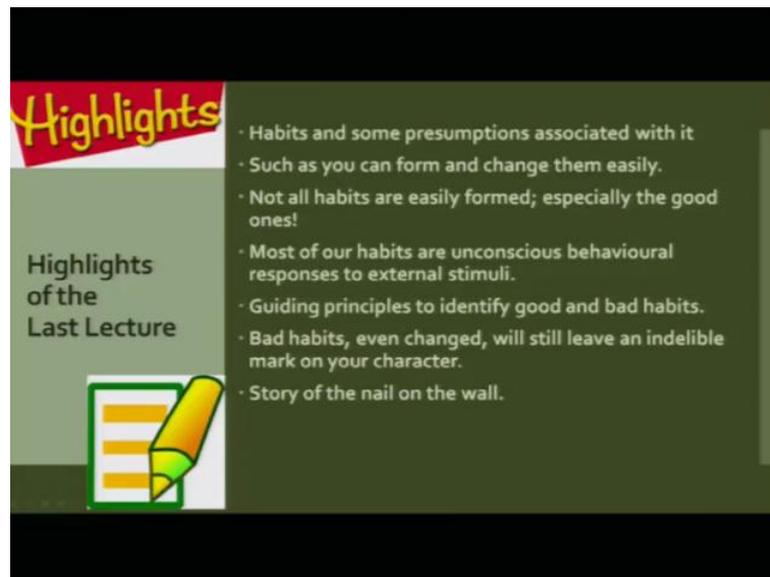
Hi! hello there. Welcome back to my course on Developing Soft Skills and Personality.

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I am Ravichandran from Department of Humanities and Social Sciences IIT, Kanpur. So, this course has been given to you part of NPTEL MOOCs project. We are on the third week module 2 and then this lecture number 14. In the previous lecture I talk to you about habits and then I initiated the discussion on identifying good and bad habits, towards identifying that I started giving you some guidelines. And let me give you a quick highlight of what we discussed in the previous lecture.

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Highlights

Highlights of the Last Lecture

- Habits and some presumptions associated with it
- Such as you can form and change them easily.
- Not all habits are easily formed; especially the good ones!
- Most of our habits are unconscious behavioural responses to external stimuli.
- Guiding principles to identify good and bad habits.
- Bad habits, even changed, will still leave an indelible mark on your character.
- Story of the nail on the wall.

I tried to make you understand that whenever you think about habits, you are taking for granted so many things. You have lot of presumptions associated with such as you have the wrong impression that you can form any habit easily and more than that you also have the impression that you can change it easily. With that wrong presumption you let bad habits accumulate.

In fact, I gave the example of how bad habits accumulate it is just like the cloth that you keep throwing on your cot or table until it becomes a big (Refer Time: 01:29). Just like the paper you throw or the dust that accumulates on the fan, initially you do not notice it slowly it becomes a very big unmanageable (Refer Time: 01:38) and then you start panicking and try to do something about it. Now, not all habits as you think are easily found, especially the good once - the good once are very difficult to form and most of our habits are unconscious behavioral responses to external stimuli. They are stimulated by some kind of external thing, but internally in our brain it is triggered and then we are made to respond in a certain manner. We look at this aspect more in detail, in this on the coming lecture, but then after talking about this I started telling you about the guiding principles to identify good and bad habits.

So, towards the end I told you about the story of the a father hitting nails on the wall and then the lesson that we can derive from that story is that bad habits even if you change it, it will still leave an indelible mark on your character. It is safe and better all the time to

work on habits which are good, especially if you think of developing your personality try to completely remove bad habits and try to develop as many good habits as possible because as I said even at a later stage when you think that you will give up some bad habit, sometimes it becomes too late and sometimes even if you change it people are not going to forget that you had those habits during your early days. So, keep that in mind as it was told by the father to the son. So, remember the moral that it is better to avoid it so that you develop a strong personality and nobody points that to you even at later stage.

Now, coming back to our discussion as I said that this week is full of stories and then at the beginning also I said I am found of telling stories. I am going to tell you another story, this story about a patient, and then when the story begins it is in the ICU of a hospital.

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In the hospital a patient is lying and then next to the patient is wife is there she is so worried and then she has a very small baby in her hand and then two kids are standing next to her and then they are so worried because its look like this guy has got some kind of terminal disease and obviously, from the face and all that it looks like he suffering from cancer and then the fact that he is in ICU it look like he just waiting for giving his last breadth and then he may die any time. So, this is the movement and then they are hoping that there is a doctor, a special doctor and then he is able to do something about it

and they are hoping that if this doctor comes and then takes him for a surgery accepting there is some hope.

Now, this doctor has gone to America and then he made his world tour and he is a very busy person and they were waiting for the doctor and fortunately that day the doctor has said he would be coming and then they are just legally waiting the doctor with the hope that the doctor will come and then save this patient who is suffering from cancer and who may die any movement and he is with the family and nears three kids and then the wife and the mother of the three kids she is so worried about this situation, so much stress. And then the doctor enters, so very happy to see the doctor and then the doctor has been briefed about the case that this person has been suffering from cancer and they are waiting for him to do some kind of surgery so that he can be saved or at least he can leave for some more time.

Now, the doctor reads the name of the person then quite puzzled and then he looks deeply into the eyes of the other person that is the patient and the patient also looks at the doctor and slowly they start recognizing each other and then there is let us see a flash back and then they go to the childhood of the patient and in the childhood he is close with the friend and then with this friend they are growing up.

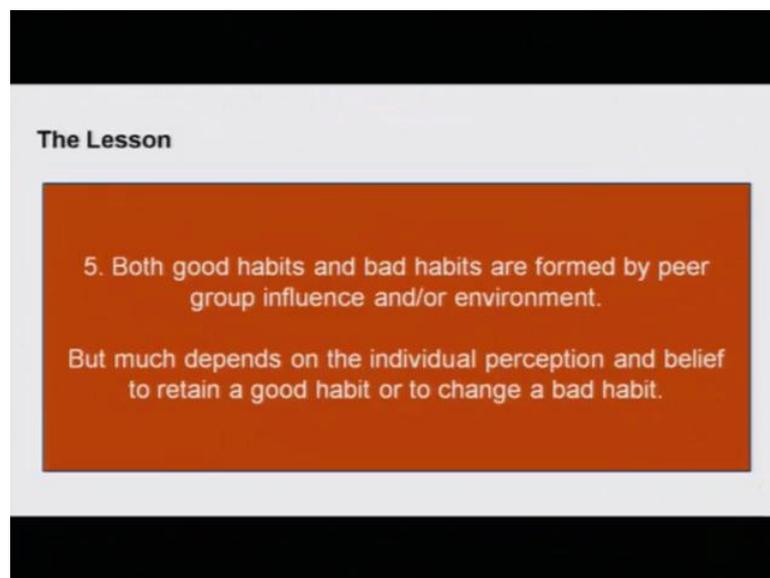
So, one day when they go to the school. So, this friend says that – hey, common yaar you are just still like a kids let us behave like grown up adults, Then this person asked him like would you mean that I should become a grown up guy. He said that look at this, I have started smoking cigarette and then I feel like a man and why not you start this. This guy was too much afraid, and then he was thinking - no, I will not start smoking a cigarette and then my father is very conservative and then we are not that kind of family and its really bad and all that. He said, all this scrap you just leave it, it is just fun and if you are a friend you should have it and I am your friend and I am not telling you bad things.

Now this guy started smoking that is in the flashback and we come back to the current scenario that he is in ICU surrounded by his wife and kids and it is a same patient who is suffering from cancer is the one who as very much afraid of a starting a smoking. But then who is the doctor? As most of you might have guessed it by this time the doctor is his friend who actually made this guy develop this habit of smoking by telling him that

he is his friend and then he should be a man and he should behave like an adult and then this guy was completely taken a back to see this doctor, so healthy, so popular, so wealthy and priced by everybody for saving people, entire humanity and then his surgeries are so popular and what happened.

So, then he says - hey you, then he says - is it you and then they were, so surprised and at the same time then the patient in a kind of stammering, voice struggling and then he wanted to ask him just one thing what about you, are you still smoking. To which the doctor just laughed and then he said that - oh, come on. So, that was just for a childhood fun. So, I just gave it up even the time I went to college and then when I am serious about my medical profession, I knew that it is not good for a doctor, I just give it up long before the day I got a medical seat I just gave it up and I never knew that you would have continued like this. It looks like your become a chain smoker and then you are not able to stop this habit and look were you have come to. So, I did not expect this from you.

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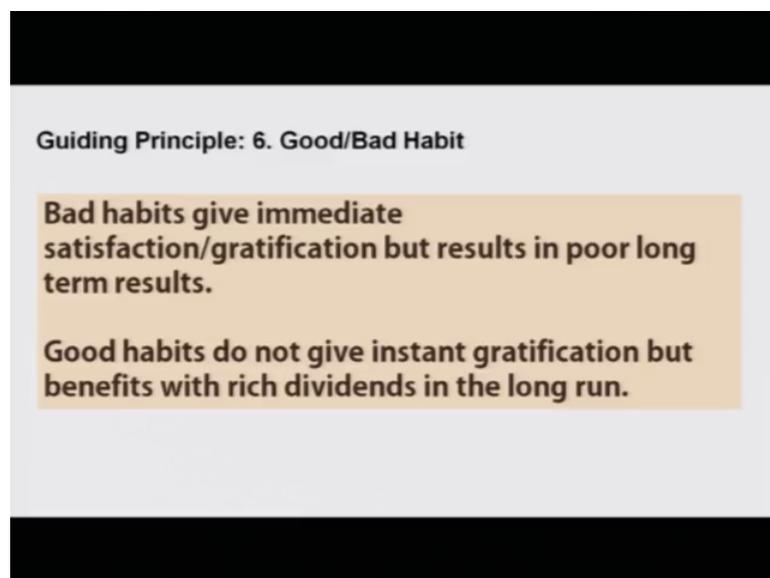


Now, what is the lesson that you learned from this, the lesson is both good habits and bad habits are formed by peer group influence or the environment it is the people around us or the surrounding that is actually giving us stimulus to do something and then form a habit, it may be good habit it may be bad habit. But as said in the story much depends on the individual perception and belief to retain a good habit or to change a bad habit. Now look at the same environment in both the doctor as well as the patient started smoking. In

fact, it is the person who became the famous doctor later was the actual culprit, was the one who was responsible for making this patient develop the bad habit, right. But at the same time if you look at them as individually what are the perceptions and believes.

Now whereas for the doctor, he realizes that once he becomes a doctor or even before that once he started joining the medical college itself he thought that it is a very unhealthy practice and then it does not become of a doctor to continue that way and then he just gave it up. Whereas for the other person who has become the patient his perception of that was that it is something that I started with my friend and then he got trapped, he became (Refer Time: 10:47), he got entrapped in that and then he is not having a believe or a value system by which he can come out of it. So, that is the lesson that one needs to learn from the story that it is really risky in terms of bad habits because so much will power is required to come out of it or so much change has to come from your own believe and value system, so that your able to make positive change in terms of changing your bad habit.

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Now, the next guiding principle to identify whether something is a good or bad habit I just wanted to highlight this point. Bad habits give immediate satisfaction, gratification, but results in poor long term results. So, how do you identify that it is a bad habit? When you enjoy that habit it gives you utmost satisfaction immediately. Again I can go to the example of drinking alcohol. So, evening there is a party you drink and then you enjoy

the party, you danced and then you just freaked out, fine, but then next day morning the hangover or even that late night when you started vomiting and when you felt sick till the morning. So, that previous day was OK, but in terms of even the immediate result it was not healthful. But if you look at good habits they do not give instant gratification, but benefits with rich dividends in the long run, any good habit will benefit you with rich dividends in the long run. For example, doing things in time, so, I need not tell you that it will give you rich rewards in the long run. When I said that I want you to give you some examples of what we can generally consider in the terms of principles that we talked about, what can be consider as the good, bad and the ugly habits.

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Bad	Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Sleeping late night· Delaying· Disinterest in health and hygiene· Gossiping, criticising others· Any excessive, addictive habits (drinking, drugs)· Whiles away time in watching TV, surfing the net· Eats untimed, junk food· Stealing things	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Getting up early· Doing it in time· Maintaining fitness and keeping the surroundings clean· Says only good things about others; develops self· Enjoys things in moderation; avoids harmful ones· Uses time discreetly· Eats in time, healthy food· Being honest and trustworthy

Now, do we really have ugly habits? I just put that; just to indicate to you bad habit when it is again taken to an excessive extreme it will become ugly. Again going back to the example drinking alcohol in the party so somebody drunk just to a limited quantity that is fine, but in that same party the person went over about took lot of excessive amount of the liger and then he was not able to drive the car, he hit somebody, so that becomes ugly or he was not able to walk properly, he fell on the road on the mud and then people saw him and make fun of him. Now the same bad habit can become ugly. So, if it is not checked and then controlled, if it is allowed to go to the extreme situation it can become ugly.

Look at some simple, once bad habit this side and good habit this side. Sleeping late night, it is a bad habit. Getting up early, good habit; delaying, pro-castigation is bad; doing it in time is good. Now disinterest in health and hygiene, now thinking that I will haw my body, I am very strong nothing will happen to me. So, that is bad you slowly found this kind of habit a take for example, in terms of becoming over weight you do not develop that one day, may be your fondness for sweet or your disinterest on doing exercise even doing small walk or your attitude that I do not care, I will eat junk food and then a I enjoy being fat and plumpy, so I do not care about what people tell about me. So, that is you general disinterestedness in terms of health and hygiene. But on the good habits side maintaining fitness and keeping the surroundings clean, bad habit - gossiping you start slowly and then its develop gradually, criticizing others.

Now this side if you want to develop a good habit the person says only good things about others and all the time focused on developing self, growth of oneself. Bad habit this side any excessive, any addictive habits, whether it is drinking or drugs or just even spending time excessively in terms of social networking and forgetting that there are some really important jobs to do and then you were completely lost in this then you missed very important activities. So, anything that is excessively controlling you, make you slave, so that is bad. Now, this side it is not that a person with good habit is completely avoiding all these things, the person enjoys these things in moderation and especially the person avoids harmful wants. Take for example, drugs. So, one philosophy says that if really want to know what life is you should experienced everything. So, eat, live and be merry. So, you even taste what you can say as even something like a bad habit in terms of drinking, they say that even you taste it, taste little bit.

But in terms of bad habit tasting something like a very a addictive drug it is going to harm you, harm your people who are around you, your family, even to your work place and then you just start with one addiction and then will you end of with forming lot of other a bad habits - such as telling lies, such as even stealing money, such of even thinking about some criminal activities in order to sustain the bad habit. So, one thing leads to other and then it becomes very powerful chain which you realize that you cannot break it so easily it has become so powerful.

Now, this side, simple thing like wiling away time in watching TV, or the surfing the internet that slowly piles up, so I have seen students initially starting with two windows

one window actual academic work the other window facebook or some other social networking site is open. Now initially nothing happens, suddenly a message comes it pops up, he is just tempted to see who is sending that he responds and then the guy says I have put this post take a look he goes to the post from the post there are other links and then he thinks he browse further he gets a feeling that, oh I missed so much. So, what is he doing then he sends another thing, other 5 all other guys also come, they say that why not we all chat together they keep on chatting and by the time they realize. So, it is like 3 o'clock, 4 o'clock early in the morning when they started sometime around 7-8 in the previous day evening. So, time just passes only in veiling away, just wasting.

Now, this side the person who is interested in developing good habit, he or she uses time discreetly time is seen as a rare commodity, it is planned, it is used in terms of rationing and time is utmost not wasted. This time, this side the bad guy the bad habit formed person it's untimed food, suddenly 3 o'clock he or she wants something they go and glance at whatever there that is kept in the kitchen or in the fridge and most of the time it is in the junk food. Now this is time the person who is trying to develop good habit each in time each healthy food, so many examples we can give. So, bad habit one more thing is stealing things, but then a good habit that one of us to develop is to create those habits which will create a kind of you image that this person is honest and trust worthy.

We will look at more examples later, but I just want to give you break by giving you one more story and then coming out with one more lesson and a guideline based on the story. This is story I read when I was a kid and then it left very lasting impression about why I should not develop bad habits.

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Now look at this it is actually about a mother who loved her son so much. So, if you ask me whether this mother loves his son less than any other mother, no perhaps she is the one who loved his son so much. But how does the story unfolds for us, this time the story unfolds just on the last day in which a prisoner is about to be hanged, death sentence has been given to him. So, he is about to be hang and then just before that. So, few hours before that they come and tell the person that a visitor has come and then she wants to meet you she is swabbing, she is crying and then she is desperate.

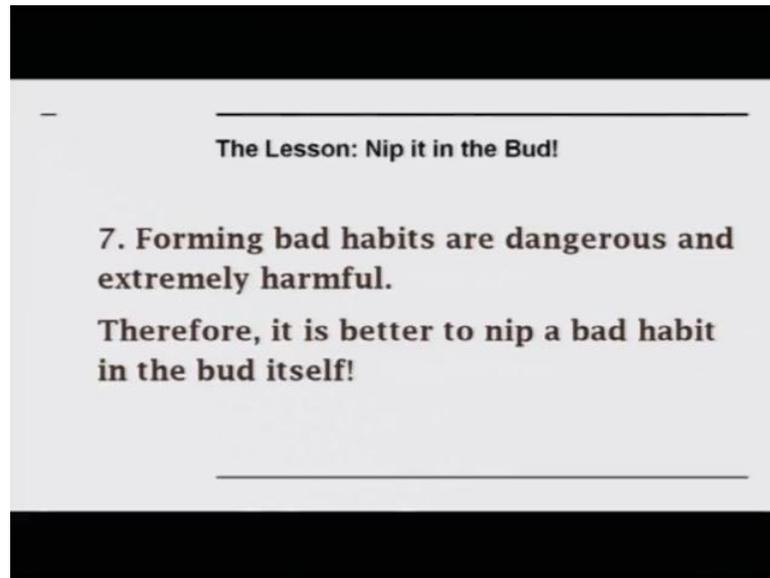
So, the prisoners tells the jailer the warden he says that sir that is my mother. So, then the jailer things that; obviously, the son would be interested in meeting the mother, he says that I will just bring her he says wait sir stop why I do not want to see her. So, the jailer was very surprised see this is the last day last few hours, few movements in your life and then it is your mother and who would not like to see once mother just before the point of death and she has come and she is so desperate to see you, why not you a give her a chance. To which the son says you will not believe that I am here because of her. Again the jailer knows entire story he says no I remember that you just went to rob a bank and then the manager there was a resisting and then he did not want to give you the money. So, in a fit of the movement in anger you took that revolver and then shoot him dead. By the time police came, they caught you and then since it was a murder and then just before every body's eyes, so now, you are punished. So, that was the most important criminal activity that you did and how can you blame your mother for that.

He said, sir you do not know but I would like to tell you my story. This was when I was in LKG, I just looked at a small pin that was kept by my classmate and then I just took the pin because I want to use that pin for (Refer Time: 23:18) some papers. That day I told my mother, mother I just stole the pin from the girl who was sitting next to me in the class. My mother did not say anything. The next day I took a rubber, eraser that was kept by another boy and then I showed it to my mother she did not say anything because she was loving me so much and then I went to first standard I started stealing pencils my mother did not say anything; second standard, third standard I started continuing - I took sharpeners. When I reached fifth standard I started stealing pencil boxes completely. And then slowly I was stealing their books, I was stealing other items. When I reached 8th standard I like the watch somebody was using. So, when he kept it just for some time and went for washing the face I just stole it I showed it, so my mother did not say anything.

Now it went on like that and then I started stealing money from other places like I was, during college I used to steal money from outside places, night I used to go and then I steal some money and people did not catch me. But then I thought that I will just go for a big thing like actually going on robbing a bank. So, that was the time I went then took the money, but then the manager saw me and then he caught me and then in the struggle between me and the manager, so I had to kill him.

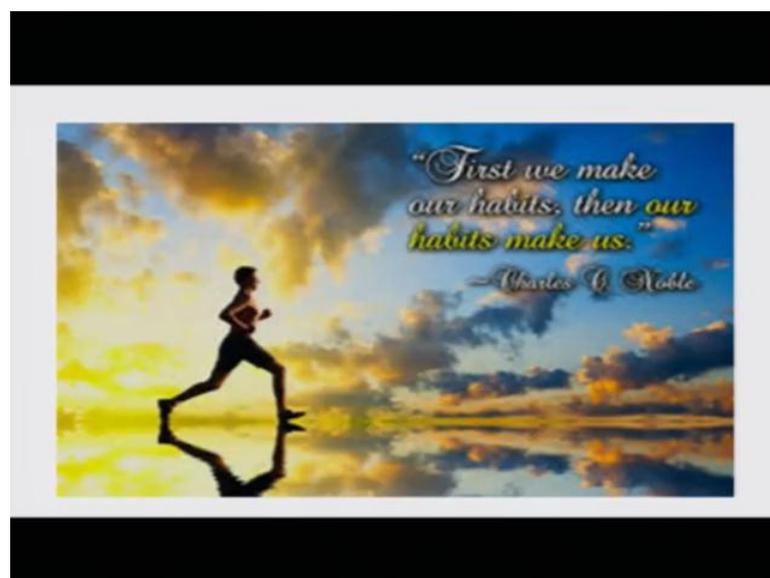
Now, if my mother had stopped to me at the first time when I stole that small pin for (Refer Time: 25:22) some papers, if she had told me at that time son stealing is not good you go say sorry and returned this pin I will get you. So, many pins for you or the next day, when I took that a eraser if she had told me I will give you much more better once, but returned it and say sorry. So, I would have stopped that habit at that time and I would not have reached this level and become a criminal where I have to be hanged. Now do you tell me would you like be to see her or do you thing that I am justified in this. So, the jailer was speech less and then when he narrated the story, but what is the lesson that you get. With regard to bad habits nip it in the bud.

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Forming bad habits are dangerous and extremely harmful therefore, it is better to nip a bad habit in the bud itself. That is in the story if the mother had stopped him just when he took the pin he would not reached the level of becoming a criminal of shooting somebody, murdering him and because of that he was hanged and he lost his life. More than that, look at the grievous situation between son and mother, the mother who love so much the son became the worst person that the son did not want to face at all, look at all. So, this can be avoided if you try to nip any bad habit in the bud itself.

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Now, I would like to conclude this lecture. With this note of thought from Charles Noble, who says that first we make our habits then our habits make us. So, whether good habits or bad habits first we make them, but slowly they make us. If it is bad habit they make us bad people, if they are good habits they really make us good people; now again think about that.

In the last lecture I asked you to identify your good, bad habits. Now in this again you try to reassess what bad habits you need to nip at the bud itself and then what good habits we can develop further. I will come back to you with one more story, one more instances in which you can learn some more guidelines about how you can identify good and bad habits in the next lecture.

Thank you, bye.