

## ***The Power of Habit* by Charles Duhigg**

Discussion questions from the publisher

1. Why was E.P. described as “a man who would upend much of what we know about habits”? What did researchers learn from him?
2. What ability do patients with basal ganglia damage lose?
3. Thinking back to the example of McDonald’s restaurants presented on page 26 in the book, how does this company use cues and rewards to trigger habit loops in its customers?
4. What cues and rewards can you identify when you’ve been to fast food restaurants? What about other settings, like movie theaters, or clothing stores?
5. Using the graph on page 19 as a guide, diagram your own habit loop for entering a password on your email account or your pin number at the ATM. Identify the cue, routine, and reward for this habit.
6. Can you diagram the habit loop for when you go into the cafeteria, or have a meal at home?
7. Do you think it was ethical for psychologists to study E.P.? Was he able to consent to research conducted on his memory and habits? Explain why (or why not) the benefits of this research outweigh the negative effects it may have had on his life.
8. On page 21 the author writes, “Habits are often as much a curse as a benefit.” What are examples of habits that are beneficial or detrimental in your own life?
9. The author writes that it is possible to reawaken a habit, and that habits never disappear, but are changed by new cues, routines, or rewards. Describe a habit of yours that has been changed or replaced. Do you agree or disagree that this habit can be reawakened? Why? What would it take to reawaken your habit?
10. Psychologists have learned a great deal about habit and memory from studying individuals who have memory deficits. How are lessons from people like E.P. and H.M. relevant to your life?
11. Make a plan for a new habit you would like to develop. Identify what you can use as a cue, the steps involved in creating a routine and the reward this new habit will deliver.