

Agency Project

✓ Published

 Edit



Ethics isn't just about abstract arguments and judging other people. So we're going to take steps to also make this personal. This assignment has you:

- A. **identify a habit** (of action or mind) that you'd like to change (e.g., reduce plastic use, quit smoking, eat less meat, exercise more, be less angry/negative/irritable, reduce anxious racing thoughts)
- B. in order to **become a better person**, broadly construed (e.g., be more compassionate, more present, less self-centered, nicer to others, more pleasant to be around)
- C. by executing a specific **plan for how to exercise your agency** to make the change (e.g. scaffolded agency, transformative experience, sense of self/identity, responsibility without blame, dopamine and its relation to cues and habits, cognitive behavioral therapy, dual process theory, motivated reasoning).



Implement the plan over the course of **3-5 days**, then write a short essay about your experience and how exercising your agency in this way relates to some material discussed in this class.

Some General Ideas

- Meditate every day (to be more compassionate).
- Delete social media apps from your phone (to be more present).
- Learn and implement the skills of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (to reduce anxiety).
- Exercise regularly (to be happier, less depressed).
- Stop texting and driving (to risk less harm to others).
- Go vegetarian or vegan (to support better treatment of animals).
- Eat only local, non-industrially farmed food (to reduce your carbon footprint).
- Quit smoking (to improve your health, the environment).
- Reduce plastic use (to treat the environment better).

- Travel to school/work by bike, carpool, etc. (to reduce your carbon footprint),

These projects are all pre-approved. Other projects require approval from the professor.

Rules

1. Don't do anything unsafe or unwise.
2. Give it an honest attempt. If you fail on day 2, start again on day 3.
3. Permit yourself reasonable exceptions. Most of these are covered by Rule 1. For example, if you injure yourself exercising, start over again once you've healed, if you have time---or start a different project.

Short Essay

In about **500 words** (+/- 10% is OK):

- I. **Describe** what you did and why, how you managed, and what you learned. (Write in paragraphs, like a short essay, not types up notes. Pictures of your project are not required but are welcome!)
- II. **Connect** your project to a specific concept, idea, or theory covered in the course (and ideally connect it to a relevant author/theorist from our readings). E.g., if you used the idea of scaffolded agency to execute your plan, explain the idea briefly and how your experience relates to one of our author's discussions of it.

Your grade will be determined by how well your essay meets these criteria.

Due Date

Pick any 3-5 days in Weeks 4-8 of class. The essay is due in Week 9. We will aim to briefly discuss everyone's projects in class.

Points 100
Submitting a file upload

Due	For	Available from	Until
Mar 9	Everyone	-	-

+ **Rubric**