

It's Time to ACT

Energy Savers Blog

In my [November 29, 2010](#) [1] and my [February 15, 2011](#) [2] blog postings, I described some tools and strategies based on behavioral psychology that some companies and organizations are using to encourage people to use less energy and purchase clean energy. Here's another one.

I was reading an article the other day in which University of Nevada, Reno, psychologist Steven Hayes gave his explanation of why we Americans are so reluctant to adjust our thermostats. He believes our culture has conditioned us to avoid all discomfort. In other words, we believe that we should feel good all the time.

The funny thing is that I heard multiple times essentially the same message at religious services I attended. The common thread in these messages and that of Professor Hayes is that although there are advantages of only saying positive things to everyone around you, it's not always healthy. We need to hear the truth sometimes—even when it's not palatable—and accept our responsibilities.

Some of the latest advances in behavioral psychology are helping addicts beat their addictions. Individuals are taught to observe and experience, yet keep this apart from their thoughts, feelings, sensations, and memories. In other words, observe, but don't get too involved. These individuals are then helped to identify their personal values and to take action on them.

Observe, Accept, and Commit

Just think of the enormous benefits our nation could reap if we all applied some of these behavioral psychology principles in our own lives.

For example, the United States imports too much oil. We are addicted to oil, which is causing many inherent problems. Our dependence on foreign oil has serious national security concerns. By one account, the U.S. spent more than a quarter of a trillion dollars last year on foreign oil, contributing to our burgeoning trade imbalance. When Americans buy more than we sell, it puts pressure on the U.S. dollar. When the value of the dollar drops, the price of imported goods goes up, hurting consumers. Sending dollars overseas to buy oil takes away valuable resources that could be put to good use here at home, such as rebuilding our aging infrastructure and creating more local jobs.

If we step back and objectively observe that our society is addicted to oil, then accept that our current path is not healthy for a sustainable future, we can begin committing to resolve this problem. Are there things that each of us can do to help? Absolutely! Will they be painless? Probably not!

It's Time to ACT

Published on Electronic Component News (<http://www.ecnmag.com>)

Actions We Can Take

- [Purchase and drive a vehicle that is more fuel-efficient](#) [3] or that uses an [alternative fuel](#) [4], including [electricity](#) [5].
- Telecommute if this is allowable.
- Walk, bike, and take public transportation instead of driving, when possible.
- When it is necessary to drive, plan routes to save on the number of trips we take, and drive in a fuel-efficient manner (gently, avoiding jack rabbit stops and starts).
- Take unnecessary items out of the car; more weight means more fuel needed to move it.
- Keep the tires inflated at the manufacturer's suggested pressure.

Let's do our part to secure the future for ourselves and future generations. Make our country safer. Assure America's future economic prosperity. Clean the air and put Americans back to work in the process.

There are plenty of actions we can take to reduce oil consumption. Let's start accepting and committing.

What do you think? Is it time to act? And if so, what are YOU doing to help reduce oil consumption?

John Lippert is an employee of Energy Enterprise Solutions, a contractor for EERE. He assists with technical reviews of content on the Energy Savers Web site.

[SOURCE](#) [6]

Source URL (retrieved on 09/21/2014 - 5:45pm):

<http://www.ecnmag.com/blogs/2011/05/its-time-act>

Links:

[1] <http://www.eereblogs.energy.gov/energysavers/post/Are-You-Keeping-Up-with-the-Joneses.aspx>

[2] <http://www.eereblogs.energy.gov/energysavers/post/Hey-There-Would-You-Like-to-Buy-a-Thneed.aspx>

[3] <http://www.eereblogs.energy.gov/energysavers/post/2011-Fuel-Economy-Guide-Now-Available.aspx>

[4] <http://www.afdc.energy.gov/afdc/vehicles/index.html>

[5] <http://www.afdc.energy.gov/afdc/fuels/electricity.html>

[6] <http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/EnergySavers/~3/JUSJ8XRl9lg/post.aspx>