We are faced with temptations on a daily basis. The temptation to press the snooze button and have just another 10 minutes in a warm bed, the temptation of a sugary treat, a tipple of something alcoholic, another one click purchase from Amazon and so on. These temptations will often increase when we are tired, stressed, bored, angry, sad, overwhelmed or in any other dysregulated state. These temptations are always there, so how do we generate the willpower or mind control to stop ourselves indulging or procrastinating?



Mel Robbins  is a renowned motivational and keynote speaker, a CNN legal and social commentator, the creator of The 5 Second Rule, and a best-selling book on the topic. For more info go to [www.melrobbins.com](http://www.melrobbins.com)

Based on science, learning and applying this simple rule you can access more Choice over how you respond to temptation!

**Here are the basics on the rule and how to apply it.**

**Instinct**

An instinct is an impulse, pull, or knowing that you should or should not do something because you can feel it in your body, usually your heart or gut, but it could be elsewhere. Your body remembers what is important to you and when you learn to tune into sensations in your body you will notice the moment when your body speaks to you. Your instincts are these physiological feelings. They are the “knowing” that lives in the part of your brain that is in your body telling you to do something even if another part of you doesn’t want to do it.

**Action towards a goal**

The second element of the rule that is critical to understand is that you act on an instinct that’s tied to a goal. The clearer you are on your goals the more effective the 5 Second rule will be.

Research has shown that our gut is part of our brain. We get “gut feelings” when our less conscious brain is trying to tell us something. And usually, these gut impulses are tied to our goals. Our Reticular Activating System (RAS) has filed away what we have decided is important to us and this instinct is our (RAS) picking up on this opportunity to do something that will help us make progress on what is important (Our goals).

Even though we have these goals, it’s so simple to brush off the actions that will lead us toward achieving these things, especially if taking action on them feels difficult.

You will start to notice gut feelings related to your goals throughout the day. Especially now that you have let your RAS know you want your gut to notice them ☺

**The Launch**

When the moment comes. You feel the instinct. You know that action is required to progress towards your goal. This is your window of opportunity. However, if to act is uncomfortable or difficult in some way, your brain will want to shut down this instinct. You cannot allow the part of your brain that wants to make life easy for you to kick in and start giving you all the reasons why it is okay to stay in bed, eat that cream donut or have another glass of wine, put off writing that report or push your running shoes under the sofa and turn the TV on instead.

**In this moment, you have 5 seconds to take control, to make the right choice.**

The 5 Second Rule is simple. But it is not easy. You must start your countdown. Push yourself to start at 5. Countdown, 5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1 – GO. Move, take action.

The 5 Second Rule enables you to make progress on your goals every time you use it, which in turn leads to a better mood and increased productivity–which makes you more likely to keep using the Rule. This is because when you make progress you get a spike of dopamine and dopamine is addictive. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that makes us feel good when we release it into our system, hence the addiction. Using the 5 second rule will help you become addicted to the habits that enable you to achieve your goals rather than those that will get in the way.

**For the 5 Second Rule to work effectively:**

1. Set clear and compelling goals and values – be clear on what you want and what is important to you.
2. Make sure you count backwards not forwards – essential in tricking your brain to stop it giving you excuses.
3. Move on GO!
4. Celebrate your success, your good Choice to reinforce the positive habit. Not with cake or win but with a “Well done me”, a mental ‘High Five’.

**What are your top 5 temptations that tend to trip you up on a regular basis?** Identifying these and writing them down will help you to tune and notice next time your instincts are telling you to apply the 5 second rule. Write them down here…