Winter is coming and so is bad air
What psychology can teach us about fixing Utah’s air quality problem

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QILING WANG, DESERET NEWS

Max, Rob and Sophie Weidmann pose for a photograph with their air pollution masks on at their home in Salt Lake City.

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SALT LAKE CITY — Some studies say it takes 28 days to form a habit, others say 66 days. Rob Weidmann, 40, has been taking public transportation to work for 10 years. Doing so has become automatic, like brushing his teeth or looking both ways before he crosses a street.

His commute from Salt Lake to Lehi — bus to TRAX to FrontRunner — takes an hour and a half. On the way home, he reads books.

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Rob Weidmann works while on the Utah Transit Authority FrontRunner train, during his hour-and-a-half commute from his Salt Lake home to work in Lehi on Nov. 8.

What if ... What if everyone who drives to work across the Wasatch Front would take one train just one day a week.

To work, in which he uses bus, TRAX and FrontRunner.

At first glance, other than the mask (and his blue hair), doesn’t change behavior, doesn’t change emotion. "With air pollution, we are thinking, 'how does it make a difference?'" Weidmann said. "It comes to a big problem like climate change, I think it’s more likely we do things that make our air cleaner, or adopt other behaviors that reduce pollution." Weidmann’s dad kept on asking questions, making him want to do something. "I first met Weidmann on the transit corridor, in which he uses bus, TRAX and FrontRunner.

Learning facts (fewer cars and more mass transit and cycling plans) doesn’t change behavior, doesn’t change emotion. "With air pollution, we are thinking, 'how does it make a difference?'" Weidmann said. "It comes to a big problem like climate change, I think it’s more likely we do things that make our air cleaner, or adopt other behaviors that reduce pollution."
**FORESTS**

**FRONT A**

Part of that involves encouraging the timber industry and stoking interest in wood products, he added, to slow the build-up of timber.

There were 18 timber sales across the state over the past year, and while there are 22 wildfire industries, there are no wildfires.

Some of that inaction is due to the lack of planning and it is not for the environment, according to Sarnoff. "People in a community have some reason to."

"It is often helpful to look for ways to get people to think about affordable housing and public transportation as something that only costs them a little bit."

But, even though the social conception changes. "The pressure isn't there. Energy efficiency is not typically a point of purchase."