

Atomic Habits

An Easy and Proven Way to
Build Good Habits and Break Bad Ones

Introduction • My Story



Atomic

1. ə'tämik — an extremely small amount of a thing; the single irreducible unit of a larger system.
2. the source of immense energy or power.

Habit

1. 'habət — a routine or practice performed regularly; an automatic response to a specific situation.

"Experience has taught me a critical lesson: changes that seem small and unimportant at first will compound into remarkable results if you're willing to stick with them for years." ⁷

"We all deal with setbacks but in the long run, the quality of our lives often depend on the quality of our habits. With the same habits, you'll end up with the same results, but with better habits, anything is possible." ⁷

"Human behavior is always changing: situation to situation, moment to moment, second to second—but this book is about what doesn't change. It's about the fundamentals of human behavior; the lasting principles you can rely on year after year, the ideas you can build a business, a family, a life around." ¹⁰

*Men are born soft and supple;
dead, they are stiff and hard.
Plants are born tender and pliant;
dead, they are brittle and dry.*

*Thus, whoever is stiff and inflexible
is a disciple of death.
Whoever is soft and yielding
is a disciple of life.*

*The hard and stiff will be broken.
The soft and supple will prevail.*

—Lao Tzu ²⁴⁹

Atomic Habits

Chapter 1 • The Surprising Power of Atomic Habits

If you're having trouble changing your habits, the problem isn't you. The problem is your system.

1. Getting one percent better every day counts for a lot in the long run.

"It is so easy to overestimate the importance of one defining moment and to underestimate the value of making small improvements on a daily basis. Too often, we convince ourselves that massive success requires massive action. Whether it's losing weight, building a business, writing a book, winning a championship, or achieving any other goal, we put pressure on ourselves to make some earth-shattering improvement that everyone will talk about." ¹⁵

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2. Habits can work for you or against you, so understanding the details is important.

"It is only when looking back two, five, or ten years later that the value of good habits and the cost of bad habits becomes strikingly apparent." ¹⁶

"Good habits make time your ally. Bad habits make time your enemy." ¹⁸

"You get what you repeat." ¹⁸

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3. Small changes often appear to make no difference. The most powerful outcomes are delayed. Be patient.

"Habits often appear to make no difference until you cross a critical threshold and unlock a new level of performance." ²⁰

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4. An Atomic Habit is a small part of a larger system. Just as atoms are the building blocks of molecules, they are also the building blocks of remarkable results.

"Breakthrough moments are often the result of many previous actions, which build up the potential required to unleash a major change." ²⁰

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5. If you want better results, forget about setting goals—focus on systems, instead.

"Winner and loser have the same goals." ²⁴

"Goals create an either-or conflict: either you are successful or you fail and are a disappointment." ¹⁸

"When all of your hard work is focused on a particular goal, what is left to push you forward after you achieve it?" ²⁶

"The problem with a goal-first mentality is that you're continually putting off happiness until the next milestone. When you fall in love with the process rather than the product, you don't have to wait to be happy. You are satisfied any time your system is running." ²⁶

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6. You do not rise to the level of your goals, you fall to the level of your systems.

"An atomic habit is a regular practice or routine that is not only small and easy to do, but also a source of incredible power." ²⁷

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Chapter 2 • How Your Habits Shape Your Identity (and Vice-Versa)

It's only natural to wonder why you said or did x. That is, it's all in your nature. The real question is, who do you want to become?

1. There are three levels of change: outcome, process, and identity change.

*"Outcomes are about what you get. Processes are about what you do. Identity is about what you believe."*³¹

*"All levels of change are useful in their own way. The problem is the direction of change."*³¹

*"Building better habits isn't about littering your day with life hacks."*⁴¹

*"It's hard to change your habits if you never change the underlying beliefs that led to your past behavior."*³³

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2. The most effective way to change your habits is to focus not on what you want to achieve, but on who you wish to become.

*"The ultimate form of intrinsic motivation is when a habit becomes part of your identity."*³³

*"The goal is not to read a book or run a marathon, but to become a reader or to become a runner."*³⁴

*"Improvements are only temporary until they become a part of who you are."*³³

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3. Your identity emerges out of your habits. Every action is a vote for the type of person you wish to become.

*"Many people walk through life in a cognitive slumber, blindly following the norms attached to their identity. 'I'm terrible with directions, I'm not a morning person, I'm horrible at math...' and a thousand other variations. In time, you begin to resist certain actions because 'that's not who I am.'"*³⁵

*"The more deeply a thought or action is tied to your identity, the more difficult it is to change it. The biggest barrier to positive change at any level—individual, team, society—is identity conflict."*³⁵

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4. Becoming the best version of yourself requires you to continuously edit your beliefs, and to upgrade and expand your identity.

*"We do not change by snapping our fingers and deciding to be someone entirely new. We change bit by bit, day by day, habit by habit. We are continually undergoing micro-evolutions of the self."*³⁷

*"First, decide who you want to be."*³⁹

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5. The real reason habits matter is not because they can get you better results, but because they can change your beliefs about yourself.

*"Every action you take is a vote for the person you wish to become."*³⁸

*"Each habit not only gets results but also teaches you to trust yourself."*³⁸

*"You have the power to change your beliefs about yourself. You can choose the identity you want to reinforce today with the habits you choose today."*⁴¹

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Chapter 3 • How to Build Better Habits in 4 Simple Steps

When you feel like you can't do it, don't look outside, but inside yourself. What's really going on?

1. A habit is a behavior that has been repeated enough times to become automatic.

"This is the feedback loop behind all human behavior: try, fail, learn, try differently. With practice, the useless movements give way to the useful ones." ⁴⁵

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2. The ultimate purpose of habits is to solve the problems of life with as little energy and effort as possible.

"Habits do not restrict freedom—they create it. People who don't control their habits often have the least amount of freedom." ⁴⁶

"When you have your habits dialed in and the basics of life are handled and done, you're free to focus on new challenges and master the next set of problems. Building habits in the present allows you to do more of what you want in the future." ⁴⁷

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3. Any habit can be broken down into a feedback loop that involves four steps: cue, craving, response, and reward.

"Your mind is continuously analyzing your internal and external environment for hints of where rewards are located. The cue triggers a craving, which motivates a response, which provides a reward, which ultimately, becomes associated with the cue... [and a habit is formed]." ⁴⁸⁻⁵⁰

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4. The Four Laws of Behavior Change are a simple set of rules we can use to build good habits OR eliminate bad ones. They are (1) make it obvious OR invisible, (2) make it attractive OR unattractive, (3) make it easy OR difficult, and (4) make it satisfying OR unsatisfying.

"Every goal is doomed to fail if it goes against human nature." ⁵⁵

"The key to creating good habits and breaking bad ones is to understand these fundamental laws and how to [use them to your advantage]." ⁵⁵

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Chapter 4 • The Man Who Didn't Look Right

If you feel like you've lost control, you have. Look out the window and grab the steering wheel.

1. With enough practice, your brain will pick up on the cues that predict certain outcomes without consciously thinking about it.

"You don't need to be aware of the cue for a habit to begin. This is what makes habits useful. It's also what makes them dangerous." ⁶¹

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2. Once our habits become automatic, we stop paying attention to what we are doing.

"Over time, the cues that spark our habits become so common that they are essentially invisible: the treats on the kitchen counter, the remote control next to the couch, the phone in our pocket. Our responses to these cues are so deeply embedded that it may feel like the urge comes out of nowhere. So, we must begin the process of behavior change with awareness." ⁶²

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3. The process of behavior change always starts with awareness. You need to be aware of your habits before you can change them.

"Like Karl Jung once said, 'Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate.'" ⁶²

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4. Pointing-and-Calling raises your level of awareness from a non-conscious habit to a more conscious level by verbalizing your actions.

"The first step to changing a habit is to be on the lookout. Say out loud the action that you're thinking of taking and what the outcome will be: 'I'm about to eat this cookie, but I don't need it. It will cause me to gain weight and hurt my health.'" ⁶⁶

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5. The Habits Scorecard is a simple exercise you can use to become more aware of your behavior.

"There are no 'good' habits or 'bad' habits... all serve you in some way—even the bad ones—which is why you repeat them. [To become more effective], categorize your habits by how they will benefit you in the long run. Smoking a cigarette might reduce stress right now, but it's not a healthy long-term behavior." ⁶⁵

"Ask yourself: 'Does this behavior help me become the person I want to be?' Habits that reinforce your desired identity are usually good. Those that conflict with it are usually bad." ⁶⁵

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Chapter 5 • The Best Way to Start a New Habit

Do your resolutions often turn out to be self-sabotage? You're a complicated being. Time to un-complicate things.

1. The 1st Law of Behavior Change is make it obvious.

"If you aren't sure [how or] when to start your new habit, try the first day of the week, month, or year. People are more likely to take action at those times because a fresh start feels motivating." ⁷¹⁻⁷²

"Give your habits a time and space in the world. Make the time and place so obvious that, with enough repetition, you'll get an urge to do the right thing at the right time." ⁷²

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2. The two most common cues are time and location.

"The cues that can trigger a habit come in a wide range of forms—the feel of the phone buzzing in your pocket, the smell of chocolate chip cookies, the sound of ambulance sirens—but the two most common are time and location." ⁷⁰

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3. Creating an **Implementation Intention** is a strategy you can use to pair a new habit with a specific time and location.

"Many people think that they lack motivation when what they really lack is clarity. It's not always obvious when and where to take action. Some people spend their entire lives waiting for the time to be right to make an improvement." ⁷¹

"We tell ourselves 'I'm going to write more,' but never say when or where this is going to happen. We leave it up to chance. An implementation intention sweeps away foggy notions like 'I want to work out more' and transforms them into a concrete plan of action." ⁷¹

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4. The implementation intention formula is: I will [BEHAVIOR] at [TIME] in [LOCATION].

"Leverage both [time and location] cues: when situation X arises, I will perform response Y." ⁷⁰

"Once an implementation intention has been set, you don't have to wait for inspiration to strike. When the moment of action arrives, there's no need to make a decision. Simply follow your predetermined plan." ⁷¹

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5. **Habit Stacking** is a strategy you can use to pair a new habit with a current habit.

"Many human behaviors follow this cycle: you decide what to do next based on what you just finished doing. Going to the bathroom leads you to wash and dry your hands, and so on. No behavior happens in isolation. Each action becomes a cue that triggers the next." ⁷³

"Build a new habit by identifying a current habit you already do each day and then stack your new behavior on top. This method can be used to design an obvious cue for nearly any habit." ⁷⁴

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6. The habit stacking formula is: After I [CURRENT HABIT], I will [NEW HABIT].

"The key is to tie your desired behavior to something you already do. Once you've mastered the new structure, you can create larger stacks by chaining habits together." ⁷⁴

"The secret to creating a successful habit stack is selecting the right cue to kick things off. If you're trying to add meditation into your morning routine, but mornings are chaotic, then that might be the wrong place and time. Consider when you are most likely to be successful. Your cue should also have the same frequency as your desired habit. If you want to do a habit every day, but stack it on top of a habit that only happens on Monday, it's not a good choice." ⁷⁷

"Habit stacking works best when the cue is highly specific and immediately actionable. Habits like 'read more' are worthy causes, but do not provide instruction on how and when to act. Be specific: after I brush my teeth, after I sit at the table... The more tightly bound your new habit is to a specific cue, the better the odds are that you will notice when the time comes to act." ⁷⁸⁻⁷⁹

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Chapter 6 • Motivation is Overrated; Environment Often Matters More

When you're shooting for success, aim carefully then pull the trigger. Don't let the trigger pull you.

1. Small changes in context can lead to large changes in behavior over time.

*"Environment is the invisible hand that shapes human behavior. Despite our unique personalities, certain behaviors tend to arise again and again under certain environmental conditions. In church, people tend to talk in whispers. On a dark street, people act wary and guarded. Every habit is context dependent."*⁸²

*"Habits thrive under predictable circumstances."*⁹⁰

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2. Every habit is initiated by a cue. We are more likely to notice cues that stand out.

*"The most powerful of all human sensory abilities is vision. The human body has about eleven million sensory receptors. Approximately ten million of those are dedicated to sight. Given that we are more dependent on vision than on any other sense, it should come as no surprise that visual cues are the greatest catalysts of our behavior."*⁸⁴

*"The more obviously available a product or service is, the more likely you are to try it. Items at eye level tend to be purchased more than those down near the floor. For this reason, you'll find expensive brand names featured in easy-to-reach locations on store shelves because they drive the most profit, while cheaper alternatives are tucked away in harder-to-reach spots."*⁸³

*"People often choose products not because of what they are, but where they are. If I walk into the kitchen and see a plate of cookies on the counter, I'll pick up half a dozen and start eating, even if I hadn't been thinking about them beforehand and didn't necessarily feel hungry."*⁸²⁻⁸³

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3. Make the cues of good habits obvious in your environment.

*"You don't have to be a victim of your environment, however. You can also be the architect of it. Creating obvious visual cues can draw your attention toward a desired habit."*⁸⁴⁻⁸⁵

*"If you want to make a habit a big part of your life, make the cue a big part of your environment. The most persistent behaviors usually have multiple cues."*⁸⁶

*"Make sure the best choice is the most obvious one. By sprinkling triggers throughout your surroundings, you increase the odds that you'll think about your habit throughout the day."*⁸⁶

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4. Gradually, your habits become associated not with a single trigger but with the entire context surrounding the behavior. The context becomes the cue.

*"Most people live in a world others have created for them, but you can alter the spaces where you live and work to increase your exposure to positive cues and reduce your exposure to negative ones. Environmental design allows you to take back control and become the architect of your life."*⁸⁷

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5. It is easier to build new habits in a new environment because you are not fighting against old cues.

*"Our behavior is not defined by the objects in our environment but by our relationship to them. Stop thinking about your environment as filled with objects. Start thinking about it as filled with relationships. Think in terms of how you interact with the spaces around you. For one person, the couch is a place to read for an hour each night. For someone else, it is where you watch television and eat a bowl of ice cream after work. The good news is that you can train yourself to link a particular habit with a particular context."*⁸⁷⁻⁸⁸

*"Habits can be easier to change in a new environment. It helps to escape the subtle triggers and cues that nudge you toward your current habits. Go to a new place—a different coffee shop, a bench in the park, a corner of your room that you seldom use--and create a new routine there.... [or] redefine or rearrange your environment."*⁸⁸⁻⁸⁹

*"If your space is limited, divide your room into activity zones: a chair for reading, a desk for writing, a table for eating. You can do the same with your digital spaces. Every habit should have a home. One space, one use."*⁸⁹⁻⁹⁰

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Chapter 7 • The Secret to Self-Control

Ever feel like you're stuck in the middle of a horror movie? If so, remember: stay out of the basement.

1. The inversion of the 1st Law of Behavior Change is make it invisible.

"This is the secret of self-control: make the cues of your good habits obvious and the cues of your bad habits invisible." 95

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2. Once a habit is formed, it is unlikely to be forgotten.

"The urge to act follows environmental cues. If you're not careful, you can cause the very behavior you want to stop." 93

"You can break a habit, but you're unlikely to forget it. I've never seen someone stick to a positive habit in a negative environment." 94

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3. People with high self-control tend to spend less time in tempting situations. It's easier to avoid temptation than resist it.

"Research shows that... individuals who appear to have tremendous self control aren't all that different from those who are struggling—they're just better at structuring their lives in a way that doesn't require heroic willpower and self-control. In other words, they spend less time in tempting situations." 92-93

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4. One of the most practical ways to eliminate a bad habit is to reduce exposure to the cue that causes it.

"When the context changes, so does the habit." 92

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5. Self-control is a short-term strategy, not a long-term one.

"You may be able to resist temptation once or twice, but it's unlikely you can muster the willpower to override your desires every time. Instead of summoning a new dose of willpower whenever you want to do the right thing, your energy would be better spent optimizing your environment." 95

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Chapter 8 • How to Make a Habit Irresistible

We have the brains of our ancestors, but temptations they never had to face. Beat temptation at it's own game: make the alternative better.

1. The 2nd Law of Behavior Change is make it attractive.

"Look around. Society is filled with highly engineered versions of reality that are more attractive than the world our ancestors evolved in. If history serves as a guide, the opportunities of the future will be more attractive than those of today. The trend is for rewards to become more concentrated and stimuli to become more enticing." ¹⁰⁴

"If you want to increase the odds that a behavior will occur, you need to make it attractive." ¹⁰⁴

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2. The more attractive an opportunity is, the more likely it is to become habit-forming.

"Every behavior that is highly-habit-forming—taking drugs, eating junk food, playing video games, browsing social media—is associated with higher levels of dopamine. The same can be said for our most habitual behaviors like eating food, drinking water..." ¹⁰⁶

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3. Habits are a dopamine-driven feedback loop. When dopamine rises, so does our motivation to act.

"Dopamine is released not only when you experience pleasure, but when you anticipate it. Whenever dopamine rises, so does your motivation to act." ¹⁰⁶

"Desire is the engine that drives behavior. It is the craving that leads to the response." ¹⁰⁸

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4. It is the anticipation of a reward—not the fulfillment of it—that gets us to take action. The greater the anticipation, the greater the dopamine spike.

"Premack's Principle: more probable behaviors will enforce less probable behaviors." ¹¹⁰

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5. Temptation bundling is one way to make your habits more attractive. The strategy is to pair an action you want to do with an action you need to do.

"Employ temptation bundling by linking an action that you want to do with one that you need to do. You're more likely to find a behavior attractive if you get to do one of your favorite things at the same time." ¹⁰⁹

"Engineering a truly irresistible habit is a hard task, but this simple strategy can be employed to make nearly any habit more attractive than it would be otherwise."

*After [CURRENT HABIT], I will [HABIT I NEED] or
After [HABIT I NEED], I will [HABIT I WANT]."* ¹¹⁰

Atomic Habits

Chapter 9 • The Role of Family & Friends in Shaping Your Habits

As the old proverb goes: *dime con quién andas y te diré quién eres.*

1. The culture we live in determines which behaviors are attractive to us.

"Whatever habits are normal in your culture are among the most attractive." 114

"We want to fit in, bond with others and earn the respect and approval of our peers. Such inclinations are essential to survival. In the human history, those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed." 115

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2. We tend to adopt habits that are praised and approved of by our culture because we have a strong desire to fit in and belong to the tribe.

"We don't choose our earliest habits, we imitate them. We follow the script handed down by our family and friends, our church and school, our local community and society at large. Each of these... comes with its own set of expectations and standards... that, in many ways, guide your behavior each day." 115

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3. We tend to imitate the habits of three social groups: the close (family and friends), the many (the tribe), and the powerful (those with status and prestige).

"Behaviors are attractive when they help us fit in." 116

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4. One of the most effective things you can do to build better habits is to join a culture where (1) your desired behavior is the normal behavior and (2) you already have something in common with the group.

"When you join a book club, a band, or a cycling group... your identity becomes linked to those around you. Growth and change is no longer an individual pursuit. The shared identity begins to reinforce your personal identity." 118

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5. The normal behavior of the tribe often overpowers the desired behavior of the individual. Most days, we'd rather be wrong with the crowd than be right by ourselves.

"When we're unsure how to act, we look to the group to guide our behavior." 120

"Remaining part of a group after achieving a goal is crucial to maintaining your habits. Its friendship and community help behaviors last over the long run." 118

"You can choose to ignore the group or stop caring what others think, but it takes work. Running against the grain of your culture takes extra effort." 121

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6. If a behavior can get us approval, respect and praise, we find it attractive.

"We're also motivated to avoid behaviors that would lower our status. We trim our hedges and mow our lawns because we don't want to be the slob of the neighborhood." 122

"We don't want to be judged. We continually wonder 'what will others think of me' and alter our behavior based on the answer." 122

Atomic Habits

Chapter 10 • How to Find and Fix the Causes of Your Bad Habits

Where there's a will, there's a way. Where there's no will, talk yourself into doing better. Fake it 'til you make it.

1. The inversion of the 2nd Law of Behavior Change is make it unattractive.

"I know this idea might sound overly simplistic. Just change your mind and you can quit [a bad habit]." 126

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2. Every behavior has a surface level craving and a deeper underlying motive.

"Somewhere, deep down, I am motivated to eat tacos because I need food to survive. The underlying motive is to obtain food and water even if my specific craving is for a taco." 127

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3. Your habits are modern-day solutions to ancient desires.

"Your brain did not evolve with a desire to smoke cigarettes or check Instagram or play video games. At a deep level, you simply want to reduce uncertainty and relieve anxiety, to win social acceptance and approval, or to achieve status." 127

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4. The cause of your habits is actually the prediction that precedes them. The prediction leads to a feeling.

"Your habits [are] new versions of old vices... The specific habits we perform differ based on the period of history. You see a cue, categorize it based on past experience, and determine the appropriate response... in an instant." 128-29

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5. Highlight the benefits of avoiding a bad habit to make it seem unattractive.

"The key to finding and fixing the causes of your bad habits is to reframe the associations you have with them." 133

"Friends. It always starts with your friends. One friend smokes, then you try it. [Say] 'Stop lying to yourself. You don't actually want to smoke. you know you don't really enjoy it.' [Saying this] helps you feel like you're not the victim, anymore. You start to realize that you don't need to smoke." 126

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6. Habits are attractive when we associate them with positive feelings and unattractive when we associate them with negative feelings. Create a motivation ritual by doing something you enjoy immediately before a difficult habit.

"When [a man who uses a wheelchair] was asked if it was hard being confined, he responded, 'I'm not confined by my wheelchair—I'm liberated by it. If it wasn't for my wheelchair, I'd be bed-bound and never able to leave my house.'" 131

"Reframing [better] habits to highlight their benefits rather than their drawbacks is a fast and easy way to reprogram your mind and make a habit seem more attractive." 131

"If you want to take it a step further, create a motivation ritual. You simply practice associating [a new habit] with something you enjoy, then use that cue whenever you need more motivation." 132

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Chapter 11 • Walk Slowly, but Never Backward

They say that "those who fail to plan, plan to fail." Maybe going in without a plan is actually better.

1. The 3rd Law of Behavior Change is make it easy.

"The best is the enemy of the good." ¹⁴²

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2. The most effective form of learning is practice, not planning.

"[There's a] difference between being in motion and taking action. Sometimes [being in] motion is useful, but it will never produce an outcome by itself." ¹⁴²

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3. Focus on taking action, not being in motion.

"Motion allows us to feel like we're making progress without running the risk of failure... and that's why you slip into motion rather than taking action: you want to delay failure." ¹⁴²

"When preparation becomes procrastination... change something." ¹⁴³

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4. Habit formation is the process by which a behavior becomes progressively more automatic through repetition.

"The more you repeat an activity, the more the structure of your brain changes to become efficient at that activity. Neuroscientists call this long-term potentiation, or the strengthening of connections between neurons in the brain. [...] With each repetition, cell-to-cell signaling improves and neural connections tighten." ¹⁴³

"In learning to speak a new language, to play a musical instrument, or to perform unaccustomed movements, great difficulty is felt because the channels through which each sensation has to pass have not become established; but no sooner has frequent repetition cut a pathway, than this difficulty vanishes." ¹⁴⁴

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5. The amount of time you have been performing a habit is not as important as the number of times you have performed it.

"Learning curves reveal an important truth about behavior change: habits form based on frequency, not time." ¹⁴⁵

"What people should really be asking is, 'how many [times does it take] before forming a new habit?' That is, how many repetitions are required to make a [behavior] automatic?" ¹⁴⁶

"Your current habits have been internalized over the course of hundreds, if not thousands, of repetitions. New habits require the same level of frequency. You need to string together enough successful attempts until the new behavior is firmly embedded in your mind." ¹⁴⁷

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Chapter 12 • The Law of Least Effort

Today you don't feel like doing anything? Let your space work for you.

1. Human behavior follows the Law of Least Effort. We will naturally gravitate toward the option that requires the least amount of work.

"Conventional wisdom holds that motivation is the key to habit change. Maybe if you really wanted it, you'd actually do it. But the truth is, our real motivation is to be lazy and do what is convenient. And despite what the latest productivity best seller will tell you, this is a smart strategy, not a dumb one. Energy is precious and the brain is wired to conserve it whenever possible." ¹⁵¹

"The less energy a habit requires, the more likely it is to occur. Habts like scrolling on our phones, checking mail, and watching television steal so much of our time because they can be performed almost without effort." ¹⁵²

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2. Create an environment where doing the right thing is as easy as possible.

"What you really want is the outcome the habit delivers. The greater the obstacle—that is, the more difficult the habit—the more friction there is between you and your desired end state." ¹⁵²

"Make your habits so easy that you'll do them even when you don't feel like it... it's crucial to have as many things working in your favor as possible so that you can overcome the challenges life naturally throws your way." ¹⁵²

"The idea is to make as easy as possible in the moment the things that pay off in the long run." ¹⁵²

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3. Reduce the friction associated with good behaviors. When friction is low, habits are easy.

"We try to write a book in a chaotic household. We try to concentrate while using a smartphone filled with distractions. It doesn't have to be this way. We can remove the points of friction that hold us back." ¹⁵⁴

"Successful companies design their products to automate, eliminate, or simplify as many steps as possible. They reduce the number of fields on each form. They pare down the number of clicks required to create an account. They deliver their products with easy-to-understand directions or ask their customers to make fewer choices." ¹⁵⁵

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4. Increase the friction associated with bad behaviors. When friction is high, habits are difficult.

"You can prime the environment to make bad behaviors difficult. If you find yourself watching too much television, for example, then unplug it after each use. [...] If that doesn't do, unplug the television and take the batteries out of the remote after each use... [or] move the television out of the living room and into a closet." ¹⁵⁷

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5. Prime your environment to make future actions easier.

"Whenever you organize a space for its intended purpose, you are priming it to make the next action easy." ¹⁵⁶

"Want to draw more? Put your pencils, pens, notebooks, and drawing tools within easy reach." ¹⁵⁷

"Imagine the cumulative impact of making dozens of these changes and living in an environment designed to make the good behaviors easier and the bad behaviors harder." ¹⁵⁸

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Chapter 13 • How to Stop Procrastinating by Using the Two-Minute Rule

The journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step.

1. Habits can be completed in a few seconds but continue to impact your behavior for minutes or hours afterward.

"Researchers estimate that forty to fifty percent of our actions on any given day are done out of habit." ¹⁶⁰

"Habits are like the entrance ramp to a highway... before you know it, you're speeding toward the next behavior. It seems easy to continue what you're already doing than to start doing something different. You sit through a bad movie. You keep snacking even when you're full. You check your phone for 'just a second' and soon you've spent twenty minutes staring at the screen. In this way, the habits you follow without thinking often determine the choices [that follow]." ¹⁶⁰

* * *

2. Many habits occur at decisive moments—choices that are like a fork in the road—and either send you in the direction of a productive day or an unproductive one.

"Every day, there are a handful of moments that deliver an outsized impact... decisive moments [which] set the options available to your future self." ¹⁶⁰⁻⁶¹

"For instance, walking into a restaurant is a decisive moment because it determines what you'll be eating for lunch. Technically, you're in control of what you order, but in a larger sense, you can only order an item if it's on the menu. Your options are constrained by what's available." ¹⁶²

"We are limited by where our habits lead us. This is why mastering the decisive moments throughout your day are so important. Each day is made up of many moments, but it is really just a few habitual choices that determine your path." ¹⁶²

* * *

3. The Two-Minute Rule states, "When you start a new habit, it should take less than two minutes to do.

"Read before bed each night becomes read one page... Study for class becomes open my notes... Run three miles becomes tie my running shoes." ¹⁶²

"The idea is to make your habits as easy as possible to start. Anyone can meditate for one minute, read one page, or put one item of clothing away, [and] once you start doing the right thing, it is much easier to continue doing it." ¹⁶³

* * *

4. The more you ritualize the beginning of a process, the more likely it becomes that you can slip into the state of deep focus that is required to do great things.

"If the two-minute rule seems forced, try this: do it for two minutes, then stop. Go for a run, but you must stop after two minutes." ¹⁶⁴

"Journaling provides another example. Nearly everyone can benefit from getting their thoughts onto paper; but most people give up after a few days or avoid it entirely because journaling feels like a chore. The secret is to always stay below the point where it feels like work." ¹⁶⁴

"Strategies like this work for another reason: they reinforce the identity you want to build. If you show up at the gym for five days in a row, you're casting votes for your new identity." ¹⁶⁵

* * *

5. Standardize before you optimize. You can't improve a habit that doesn't exist.

"The point is to master the habit of showing up. A habit must be established before it can be mastered. If you can't learn the basic skill of showing up, then you have little hope of mastering the finer details." ¹⁶³

"Nearly any larger life goal can be transformed into a two-minute behavior. I want to live a long and healthy life > I need to stay in shape > I need to exercise > I need to change into my workout clothes." ¹⁶⁷

Atomic Habits

Chapter 14 • How to Make Good Habits Inevitable and Bad Ones Impossible

Always late? Derailed by distractions? Surrounded by skeptics? End the blame game. Stop wasting time. The perfect moment will never come. Put your inner nerd to work: hack your life.

1. The inversion of the 3rd Law of Behavior Change is make it difficult.

"If you find yourself continually struggling to follow through on your plans... make your bad habits more difficult by creating what psychologists call a commitment device [which] enables you to take advantage of good intentions before you fall victim to temptation. Ask the waiter to split the meal and box half of it to go before the meal is served." ¹⁷⁰

"Commitment devices increase the odds that you'll do the right thing in the future by making bad habits difficult in the present." ¹⁷¹

* * *

2. A commitment device is a choice you make in the present that locks in better behavior in the future.

"The best way to break a bad habit is to make it impossible to do. Increase the friction until you don't even have the option to act." ¹⁷²

* * *

3. The ultimate way to lock in future behavior is to automate your habits.

"There are many ways to automate good habits and eliminate bad ones. Technology can transform actions that were once hard, annoying, and complicated into behaviors that are easy, painless, and simple." ¹⁷³

"Of course, the power of technology can work against us as well. Binge watching becomes a habit because you have to put more effort in to stop looking at the

screen than to continue doing so. Instead of pressing a button to advance to the next episode, Netflix or YouTube will autoplay it for you. All you have to do is keep your eyes open." ¹⁷⁴

* * *

4. One-time choices—like buying a better mattress or enrolling in an automatic savings plan—are single actions that automate your future habits and deliver increasing returns over time.

"Buy a water filter to clean your drinking water [and] use smaller plates to reduce caloric intake. Buy a good mattress, get blackout curtains, and remove the television from your bedroom. Unsubscribe from emails. Turn off notifications and mute group chats. Set your phone to silent [and] delete games and social media apps..." ¹⁷⁵

* * *

5. Using technology to automate your habits is the most reliable and effective way to guarantee the right behavior.

"During the year I was writing this book... every week, my assistant would reset the passwords on all my social media accounts, which logged me out on each device. All week I worked without distraction. On Friday, she would send me the new passwords." ¹⁷⁶

"One of the surprises was how quickly I adapted. Within the first week of locking myself out of social media, I realized that I didn't need to check it nearly as often as I had been [and] once my bad habit became impossible, I discovered that I actually did have the motivation to work on more meaningful tasks." ¹⁷⁷

Atomic Habits

Chapter 15 • The Cardinal Rule of Behavior Change

Stick to your task 'til it sticks to you. Beginners are many—enders few.

1. The 4th Law of Behavior Change is make it satisfying.

"Feelings of pleasure—even minor ones like washing your hands with soap that smells nice and lathers well—are signals that tell the brain: 'This feels good. Do this again.' Pleasure teaches your brain that a behavior is worth repeating." ¹⁸⁵

* * *

2. We are more likely to repeat a behavior when the experience is satisfying.

"Conversely, if an experience is not satisfying, we have little reason to repeat it. [There was] a woman who had a narcissistic relative that drove her nuts. [So] she acted as dull and as boring as possible whenever he was around. Within a few encounters, he started avoiding her because he found her so uninteresting." ¹⁸⁶

* * *

3. The human brain evolved to prioritize immediate rewards over delayed rewards.

"The shift to a delayed-return environment likely began around the advent of agriculture... when farmers began planting crops in anticipation of a harvest months later." ¹⁸⁷

"The world has changed much in recent years, but human nature has changed little... [we] value the present more than the future. A reward that is certain right now is typically worth more than one that is merely possible in the future." ¹⁸⁸

"Usually, this tendency serves us well [but] occasionally, our bias toward instant gratification causes problems. [for instance] smoking might kill you in ten years, but it reduces stress and eases your nicotine cravings now." ¹⁸⁸

* * *

4. The Cardinal Rule of Behavior Change: What is immediately rewarded is repeated. What is immediately punished is avoided.

"You learn what to do in the future based on what you were rewarded (or punished) for doing in the past... positive emotions cultivate habits. Negative emotions destroy them." ¹⁸⁶

"The costs of your good habits are in the present. The costs of your bad habits are in the future... [so] as a general rule, the more immediate pleasure you get from an action, the more strongly you should question whether it aligns with your long-term goals." ¹⁸⁹

"The brain overestimates the danger of anything that seems like an immediate threat but has little likelihood of actually occurring: your plane crashing during a bit of turbulence, a burglar breaking in while you're home alone, a terrorist blowing up a bus you're on. Meanwhile, it underestimates what appears to be a distant threat but is actually very likely: the steady accumulation of fat from eating unhealthy food, the gradual decay of muscles from sitting at a desk, the slow creep of clutter when you fail to tidy up." ¹⁸⁹

"As the saying goes, the last mile is always the least crowded. People who are better at delaying gratification have higher SAT scores, lower levels of substance abuse, lower likelihood of obesity, better response to stress, and superior social skills." ¹⁸⁹

* * *

5. To get a habit to stick you need to feel immediately successful even if it's in a small way.

"You need to work with the grain of human nature, not against it. Add a little bit of immediate pleasure to the habits that pay off in the long run and a little bit of immediate pain to ones that don't." ¹⁹⁰

"Habit stacking... ties your habit to an immediate cue, which makes it obvious when to start. Reinforcement ties your habit to an immediate reward, which makes it satisfying when you finish." ¹⁹¹

"Select short-term rewards that reinforce your identity rather than ones that conflict with it... if your reward for exercising is eating a bowl of ice cream, then you're casting votes for conflicting identities and it ends up being a wash. Instead, maybe your reward is a massage, which is both a luxury and a vote toward taking care of your body. Now the short-term reward is aligned with your long-term vision of being a healthy person." ¹⁹²

* * *

6. The first three laws of behavior change—make it obvious, make it attractive, and make it easy—increase the odds that a behavior will be performed this time. The fourth law of behavior change—make it satisfying—increases the odds that a behavior will be repeated next time.

"Eventually, intrinsic rewards like a better mood, more energy, and reduced stress kick in [and] the identity itself becomes the reinforcer. You do it because it's who you are and it feels good to be you. The more a habit becomes part of your life, the less you need outside encouragement to follow through. Incentives can start a habit. Identity sustains a habit." ¹⁹²

Atomic Habits

Chapter 16 • How to Stick with Good Habits Every Day

What what was that bit about failing to plan? Maybe it would be more accurate to say that "those who fail to track are on track to fail." Planning is about potential energy. Tracking is about the kinetic.

1. One of the most satisfying feelings is the feeling of making progress.

"Visual progress—like moving paperclips, haripins or marbles [from one container to another]—provides clear evidence of it. As a result, they reinforce your behavior and add a little bit of immediate satisfaction to any activity." ¹⁹⁶

* * *

2. A habit tracker is a simple way to measure whether you did a habit-like marking an X on a calendar.

"Jerry Seinfeld reportedly uses a habit tracker to stick with his streak of writing jokes. In the documentary Comedian, he explains that his goal is simply to "never break the chain" of writing jokes every day. In other words, he is not focused on how good or bad a particular joke is or how inspired he feels. He is simply focused on showing up and adding to his streak." ¹⁹⁶⁻⁹⁷

* * *

3. Habit trackers and other visual forms of measurement can make your habits satisfying by providing clear evidence of your progress.

"Research has shown that people who track their progress on goals like losing weight, quitting smoking, and lowering blood pressure are all more likely to improve than those who don't." ¹⁹⁷

"Habit tracking also keeps you honest. Most of us have a distorted view of our own behavior. We think we act better than we do. Measurement offers one way to [...] notice what's really going on each day." ¹⁹⁷

"The most effective form of motivation is progress... plus, the empty square that you see [on the calendar] each morning can motivate you to get started because you don't want to lose your progress by breaking the streak." ¹⁹⁸

"Habit tracking can also become its own reward. It is satisfying to cross an item off your to-do list." ¹⁹⁸

"Habit tracking also helps keep your eye on the ball: you're focused on the process rather than the result... and provides visual proof that you are casting votes for the type of person you wish to become." ¹⁹⁸⁻⁹⁹

* * *

4. Don't break the chain. Try to keep your habit streak alive.

"Don't break the chain is a powerful mantra... habit tracking is powerful because it leverages multiple laws of behavior change. It simultaneously makes a behavior obvious, attractive, and satisfying." ¹⁹⁷

"Tracking isn't for everyone and there's no need to measure your entire life. But nearly anyone can benefit from it in some form—even if it's only temporary." ¹⁹⁹

"Whenever possible, measurement should be automated [and] limited to your most important habits... record each measurement immediately after the habit occurs. The completion of the behavior is the cue to write it down." ¹⁹⁹⁻²⁰⁰

* * *

5. Never miss twice. If you miss one day, try to get back on track as quickly as possible.

"Missing once is an accident. Missing twice is the start of a new habit... lost days hurt you more than successful days help you." ²⁰¹

"Too often we fall into an all-or-nothing cycle with our habits. The problem is not slipping up; the problem is thinking that if you can't do something perfectly, then you shouldn't do it at all." ²⁰¹

"It's not always about what happens during the workout. It's about being the type of person who doesn't miss workouts. It's easy to train when you feel good, but it's crucial to show up when you don't feel like it. Going to the gym for five minutes may not improve your performance, but it reaffirms your identity." ²⁰²

* * *

6. Just because you can measure something doesn't mean it's the most important thing.

"This pitfall is evident in many areas of life... we focus on working long hours instead of getting meaningful work done. We care more about getting 10,000 steps than we do about being healthy. We teach for standardized tests instead of emphasizing learning, curiosity, and critical thinking. In short, we optimize [only] for what we measure [and] when we choose the wrong measurement, we get the wrong behavior." 203

"When a measurement becomes the target, it [misses the larger point]." 203

Atomic Habits

Chapter 17 • How an Accountability Partner Can Change Everything

Ever wonder why people marry? Here's one reason.

1. The inversion of the 4th Law of Behavior Change is make it unsatisfying.

"Just as we are more likely to repeat an experience when the ending is satisfying, we are more likely to avoid an experience when the ending is painful." 206

"Pain is an effective teacher. If a failure is painful, it gets fixed.. if relatively painless, it gets ignored. The more immediate and costly a mistake is, the faster you will learn from it." 206

* * *

2. We are less likely to repeat a bad habit if it is painful or unsatisfying.

"We repeat bad habits because they serve us in some way. The best way... to overcome this predicament is to increase the speed of the punishment associated with the behavior. There can't be a gap between the action and the consequences..." 206

"If you're going to rely on punishment to change a behavior, then the strength of the punishment must match the relative strength of the behavior it is trying to correct. To be productive, the cost of procrastination must be greater than the cost of action." 207

"In general, the more local, tangible, concrete, and immediate the consequence, the more likely it is to influence individual behavior." 207

* * *

3. An accountability partner can create an immediate cost to inaction. We care deeply about what others think of us, and we do not want others to have a lesser opinion of us.

"At the bottom of the [weight loss] contract, Harris, his wife, and his trainer all signed. My initial reaction was that a contract like this [with consequences for non-compliance] seemed overly formal and unnecessary, especially the signatures. But Harris convinced me that signing the contract was an indication of seriousness. 'Any time I skip this part,' he said, 'I start slacking almost immediately.' Below that... Harris laid out a road map for achieving his ideal outcome. [...] Even if you don't want to create a full-blown habit contract, simply having an accountability partner is useful." 208-10

* * *

4. A habit contract can be used to add a social cost to any behavior. It makes the costs of violating your promises public and painful.

"Just as governments use laws to hold citizens accountable, you can create a habit contract to hold yourself accountable... a verbal or written agreement in which you state your commitment to a particular habit and the punishment that will occur if you don't follow through. Then you find one or two people to act as your accountability partners and sign off on the contract with you." 208

* * *

5. Knowing that someone else is watching you can be a powerful motivator.

"You are less likely to procrastinate or give up because there is an immediate cost. If you don't follow through, perhaps they'll see you as untrustworthy or lazy. Suddenly, you are not only failing to uphold promises to yourself, but also failing to uphold promises to others." 210

"We are always trying to present our best selves to the world... because [it] is we know these habits are likely to get a positive reaction. We want to get good grades and graduate from top schools to impress potential employers and mates and our friends and family. We care about the opinions of those around us because it helps if others like us." 210

Atomic Habits

Chapter 18 • The Truth About Talent

Talent is overrated. The simple truth is: winning means work.

1. The secret to maximizing your odds of success is to choose the right field of competition.

"Habits are easier to perform and more satisfying to stick with when they align with your natural inclinations and abilities." 218

"Embracing this strategy requires acceptance of the simple truth that people are born with different abilities. Some people don't like to discuss this fact... but this is a shortsighted view of the influence of genes on behavior." 218-19

"The people at the top of any competitive field are not only well trained, they are also well-suited to the task. If you want to be truly great, selecting the right place to focus is crucial." 219

"Genes do not determine your destiny. They determine your areas of opportunity. As physician Gabor Mate notes, 'Genes can predispose, but they don't predetermine.' The areas where you are genetically predisposed to success are the areas where habits are more likely to be satisfying." 219

"The key is to direct your effort toward areas that both excite you and match your natural skills, to align your ambition with your ability." 219

* * *

2. Pick the right habit and progress is easy. Pick the wrong habit and life is a struggle.

"The most common approach is trial and error. Of course, there's a problem with this strategy: life is short." 223

"In the beginning of a new activity, there should be a period of exploration. In relationships, it's called dating. In college, it's called liberal arts... try out as many possibilities, research a broad range of ideas, and cast a wide net." 223

"In the long run, it is probably most effective to work on [what] seems to deliver the best results about 80 to 90 percent of the time and keep exploring with the remaining 10 to 20 percent." 223

"[Ask yourself the following questions.] What feels like fun to me but work to others? What makes me lose track of time? Where do I get greater returns than the average person? What comes naturally to me?" 224-25

* * *

3. Genes cannot be easily changed, which means they provide a powerful advantage in favorable circumstances and a serious disadvantage in unfavorable circumstances.

"Your personality is the [one] set of characteristics that is consistent from situation to situation." 220

"Our deeply-rooted preferences make certain behaviors easier for some people than for others. You don't have to apologize for these differences or feel guilty about them, but you do have to work with them." 221

* * *

4. Habits are easier when they align with your natural abilities. Choose the habits that best suit you.

"You don't have to build the habits everyone tells you to build. Choose the habits that best suit you, not the ones that are the most popular." 222

"There is a version of every habit that can bring you joy and satisfaction. Find it. Habits need to be enjoyable if they are going to stick." 222

* * *

5. Play a game that favors your strengths. If you can't find a game that favors you, create one.

"When you can't win by being better, win by being different. Combine your skills to reduce the level of competition and stand out. You can shortcut your need for a genetic advantage (or for years of practice) by rewriting the rules. A good player works hard to win the game everyone else is playing. A great player creates a new game that favors their strengths and avoids their weaknesses." 225-26

* * *

6. Genes do not eliminate the need for hard work. They clarify it. They tell us what to work hard on.

"Genes can't make you successful if you're not doing the work." 227

"Biological differences matter. Even so, it's more productive to focus on whether you are fulfilling your own potential than comparing yourself to someone else. People get so caught up in the fact that they have limits, that they rarely exert the effort required to get close to them." 227

"Yes, it's possible that the ripped trainer at the gym has better genes, but if you haven't put in the reps, it's impossible to say... until you work as hard as those you admire, don't explain away their success as luck." 227

Atomic Habits

Chapter 19 • The Goldilocks Rule: How to Stay Motivated in Life and Work

How to be in the zone all the time.

1. The Goldilocks Rule states that humans experience peak motivation when working on tasks that are right on the edge of their current abilities.

"One of the most consistent findings is that the way to maintain motivation and achieve peak levels of desire is to work on tasks of manageable difficulty." 230

"The human brain loves a challenge, but only if it is within an optimal zone of difficulty. If you love tennis and try to play a serious match against a four year-old, you will quickly become bored... if you play a pro tennis player, you will quickly lose motivation. Now consider playing against someone who is your equal... your focus narrows, distractions fade away, and you find yourself truly invested in the task at hand." 231

* * *

2. The greatest threat to success is not failure but boredom. As habits become routine, they become less interesting and less satisfying. We get bored.

"You need to regularly search for challenges that push you to the edge while continuing to make enough progress to stay motivated. Behaviors need to remain novel in order to be attractive and satisfying. Without variety, we get bored... and boredom is perhaps the greatest villain on the quest for self-improvement." 233

"Variance leads to the greatest spike of dopamine, enhances memory recall, and accelerates habit formation." 235

"Once a habit has been established... it's important to continue to advance in small ways. These little improvements and new challenges keep you engaged. If you hit the Goldilocks zone, you can achieve a flow state." 231-32

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3. A flow state—being "in the zone"—occurs when you're fully immersed in an activity and requires you to maintain a delicate balance between where you are and want to be.

"Flow... resides on the razor's edge between fully using all of your automatic and implicit knowledge related to the task while also working hard to rise to a challenge beyond your ability. Both brain modes are fully engaged: the conscious and non-conscious are working perfectly in sync." 231-32

* * *

4. Anyone can work hard when they feel motivated. It's the ability to keep going when work isn't exciting that makes the difference.

"[There's] genetics, luck, talent—but—at some point, it comes down to who can handle the boredom of training every day, doing the same lifts over and over, and over." 233

"People talk about getting amped up to work on their goals... you hear people say things like 'it all comes down to passion' or 'you really have to want it.' As a result, many of us get depressed when we lose focus or motivation because we think that successful people have some bottomless reserve of passion... [when, in fact] they feel the same lack of motivation as everyone else. The difference is that they still find a way to show up despite the feeling of boredom." 234

* * *

5. Professionals stick to the schedule; amateurs let life get in the way.

"Variable rewards or not, no habit will stay interesting forever. At some point, everyone faces the same challenge on the journey of self-improvement: you have to fall in love with boredom." 235

"Professionals know what is important to them and work toward it with purpose; amateurs get pulled off course by the urgencies of life." 236

"There have been a lot of sets that I haven't felt like finishing, but I've never regretted doing the workout... there have been a lot of days I've felt like relaxing, but I've never regretted showing up and working on something that was important to me." 236

"The only way to become excellent is to be endlessly fascinated by doing the same thing over and over. You have to fall in love with boredom." 236

Atomic Habits

Chapter 20 • The Downside of Creating Good Habits

After the long, steep climb comes a plateau. After the drenching rain comes a drought. In any event, bring an umbrella—you'll need it.

1. The upside of habits is that we can do things without thinking. The downside is that we stop paying attention to little errors.

"Usually, this minor dip in performance is no cause for worry.. with habits [like brushing your teeth], good enough is usually good enough... However, when you want to maximize your potential and achieve elite levels of performance, you need a more nuanced approach: a combination of automatic habits and deliberate practice." 240

"A lack of self-awareness is poison. Reflection and review is the antidote." 248

* * *

2. Habits + Deliberate Practice = Mastery.

"The process of mastery requires that you progressively layer improvements on top of one another, each habit building upon the last until a new level of performance has been reached and a higher range of skills has been internalized." 241

* * *

3. Reflection and review is a process that allows you to remain conscious of your performance over time.

"Reflection and review enables long-term improvement of all habits because it makes you aware of mistakes and helps you consider possible paths for improvement. Without reflection, we can make excuses, create rationalizations, and lie to ourselves. We have no way to know whether we are performing better or worse than yesterday." 244

"Reflection can... bring perspective. worrying about every daily choice is like looking at yourself in the mirror from an inch away: you can see every imperfection and lose sight of the bigger picture... [but] never reviewing your habits is like never looking in the mirror; [being unaware] of easily fixable flaws—a spot on your shirt, a bit of food in your teeth." 246-47

* * *

4. The tighter we cling to an identity, the harder it becomes to grow beyond it.

"The more sacred an idea is to us—that is, the more deeply tied to our identity—the more strongly we defend it against criticism." 247

"One solution is to avoid making every single aspect of your identity an overwhelming portion of who you are." 247

"When you cling too tightly to one identity, you become brittle. Lose that one thing and you lose yourself." 248

"The key to mitigating these losses of identity is to redefine yourself such that you get to keep important aspects of your identity even if your particular role changes... 'I'm an athlete' becomes 'I'm the type of person who is mentally tough and likes a physical challenge.'" 248

Atomic Habits

Chapter 21 • The Secret to Results that Last

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step... followed by many, many more steps... which is better than no steps.

1. The Holy Grail of change is not a single, one-percent improvement, but a thousand such improvements.

"Gradually, as you continue to layer small changes on top of each other, the scales start to move. Each improvement is like adding a grain of sand to the positive side of the scale, slowly tilting things in your favor." ²⁵²

* * *

2. Success is not a goal to reach or a finish line to cross. It is a system to improve, and endless process to refine.

"Bad habits repeat themselves again and again, not because you don't want to change, but because you have the wrong system for change." ²⁵²

"This is a continuous process... there is no permanent solution. Whenever you're looking to improve, you can rotate through the four laws of behavior change: Make it obvious. Make it attractive. Make it easy. Make it satisfying. Round and round, always looking for the way to get one percent better." ²⁵³

* * *

3. You have a set of tools and strategies that you can use to create better systems and shape better habits.

"Sometimes a habit will be hard to remember and you'll need to make it obvious. Other times, you won't feel like starting and you'll need to make it attractive. In many cases, you may find that a habit will be too difficult and you'll need to make it easy. And sometimes, you won't feel like sticking with it and you'll need to make it satisfying." ²⁵²

* * *

4. It's remarkable what you can achieve if you just don't stop.

"It's remarkable the business you can build if you don't stop working. It's remarkable the body you can build if you don't stop training. It's remarkable the knowledge you can build if you don't stop learning. It's remarkable the fortune you can build if you don't stop saving. It's remarkable the relationships you can build if you don't stop caring. Small habits don't add up. They compound." ²⁵³

* * *

5. With a big enough why, you can overcome any how.

"If your motivation and desire are great enough, you'll take action even when it is difficult. Great craving [drives] great action." ²⁶¹

* * *

6. Suffering drives progress.

"The source of all suffering is the desire for a change in state. This is also the source of all progress... it is what empowers you to take action. It is wanting more that drives humanity to seek improvements, develop new technologies, and reach for a higher level." ²⁶²

* * *

Push behaviors that you want to increase to the left side of the spectrum below and behaviors that you want to decrease to the right side.

Obvious		Invisible
Attractive		Unattractive
Easy		Hard
Satisfying		Unsatisfying