

Good Intentions Are Not Good Enough

**“Intend: Having something in mind
as a purpose, plan, or design.”**

*Webster’s New World Dictionary of the American Language,
Second College Edition*

Did you ever *intend* to get something done, but somehow it just didn’t happen? Maybe you had a good intention. Maybe you really *meant* to do it. Maybe you thought about it and even *wanted* to do it; but other things distracted you, or you got busy and just forgot.

This happens to everyone. Our lives are already full of needs, activities, demands from other people and things that happen that we don’t expect. Just because we have good intentions does not mean that we will actually do something.

**“The road to ruin is paved
with good intentions.”**

Unknown

★ **What do you think the author of this quote was suggesting?**



Get It Done

All the good intentions in the world will not make something happen. You may want to travel the road to success and intend to do great things. However, if you find more excuses than you do solutions, if you do not persist until you succeed, your good intentions may still lead you down the road to ruin.

In order to succeed a person needs to be able to bring a positive intention into action. This is why the Nike Slogan is so powerful, so popular, and so to the point.

“Just do it.”

Nike Slogan

The purpose of this training is to give you a tool for doing just this – building a positive habit out of a good intention.



What Exactly Is A Habit?

“Habit: A pattern of action that is acquired and has become so automatic that it is difficult to break. A tendency to perform a certain action or behave in a certain way. A thing done often and, hence, usually done easily.”

*Webster’s New World Dictionary of the American Language,
Second College Edition*

We all have habits. As Webster’s New World Dictionary states, these are behaviors we do automatically and often, so that they become unconscious. This means we do not stop and ask ourselves, “Will I do this?” We just do it without thinking about it.

Think about it. What are some of your habits? The funny thing is that many of the habits you have you probably do not know about because you don’t really think about them!

Try this – what is the first thing you do when you arrive at home from work? Imagine yourself walking up to your house. Visualize yourself opening the door and stepping inside. Now, what is the first thing you see yourself doing? Do you put your keys or bag down somewhere? Do you turn on a light? Do you hang your clothes up or throw them on the floor?! Do you go to your bedroom, the bathroom, or to the kitchen? Do you look for someone to hug?

★ Write your habit in the space below.

The first thing I do when I get home after work is:

The first literal thing you do when you arrive at home may be so automatic that you don’t stop each day to ask yourself whether you are going to do it. You just do it. That is why it is a habit.

*A habit is a repetitive behavior
you do not decide
whether or not to do.*

From Intention To Action

*You have to take action
for a behavior to become a habit.*

Take a moment to think about this: What is the difference between a good *intention* and a good *habit*?

Both are positive. Both are things you want to do.

A good habit is something you actually do. A good intention is something you think you want to do, you just don't do it. A good habit is not something you just wish for. You don't just think it. It doesn't happen to you. No one else can do it for you. You do it without thinking about it in advance.

To consciously build a good habit you must combine the purpose, plan, and design of a good intention with the action of a habit. And you have to do it repeatedly. It's not a habit if you just do it once, or even 20 times.

Intention (what you already have)
+ Plan (what you will create today)
+ Action (what you do tomorrow)
+ Repetition (and the next day)
= Habit (have for life!)



Six Steps To Build A Positive Habit

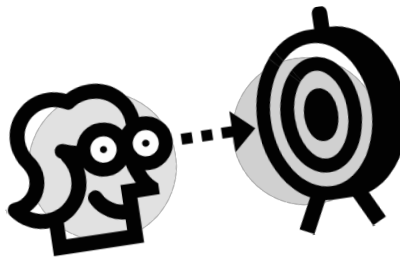
Habits don't just happen. They require a goal (intention), a plan (specific time), self-discipline (building on good habits), and practice (repetition) to develop. The following worksheets will lead you through a six-step process for choosing a positive habit you would like to have (your goal), and building the plan that will make your new habit possible. Disciplining yourself and practicing are then all up to you!

Here is a brief overview of the six steps that will help you build a positive habit. The next few pages will lead you step by step through this process.

Six Steps To Building A New Habit		
Summary		
Six Steps	Description	Example #1
<u>Step One</u> Set a goal	Clearly describe one thing you want to do or one quality you want to have. (See pg 6, 7)	I want to exercise more regularly.
<u>Step Two</u> Consider possibilities	Before deciding exactly what to do, generate as many possible actions as you can. (See pg 9-10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do stretching in morning. • Join a gym - and go! • Play basketball more. • Have "walking" meetings. • Use exercise equipment.
<u>Step Three</u> Be specific (day, time, place)	Be very specific about exactly what you will do, where, when, how often, and with whom. (See p 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Use exercise equipment</u> While watching TV in the evening I will use exercise equipment for 10 minutes, 3xs a week (small steps can lead to large strides)
<u>Step Four</u> Connect to an existing habit	Think of a habit you already have that you will use to remind you that it is time to do this new behavior, so you do not forget. (See pg 11)	I will set an alarm on my cell phone, which I have a habit of having with me, to go off each evening at 8:15pm
<u>Step Five</u> Repeat 21 times	Keep track of each time you do this new behavior. Repetition will help it become an unconscious habit. (See pg 12)	When my cell phone alarm rings, I will use the exercise equipment at least 10 minutes. I will do this at least 3x a week.
<u>Step Six</u> Reward yourself	When you have succeeded at repeating this new behavior 21 times, give yourself a reward. Then begin again with a new habit. (See pg 12)	I will buy the extended version of the Gladiator DVD. In the meantime I'll have my phone alarm play the Gladiator theme @ 8:15pm.

Six Steps To Build A Positive Habit

Step One: Set a Goal



1. Set a goal
2. Consider possibilities
3. Be specific (day, time, place)
4. Connect to an existing habit
5. Repeat 21 times
6. Reward yourself

★ Put a check next to any of these inner resources you think could help you achieve a goal.

Inner Strengths

- Caring
- Confidence
- Good listener
- Emotional maturity
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Respect for others
- Self respect, esteem
- Self discipline
- Resilience
- Responsibility
- Understanding

Write your own choices here:

- _____
- _____
- _____

★ Put a check next to any of these goals that you might want to consider.

Goals

- Stay calm in the middle of a conflict or crisis.
- Be more tolerant of people.
- Feel confident about myself.
- Be more effective with those in authority.
- Make better decisions when I am emotional.
- Reduce other people's resistance to my ideas.
- Get more respect.
- Be a better communicator.
- Develop leadership skills.
- Make new friends.
- Handle stress better.
- Be healthier.
- Other: _____
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

Building A Positive Habit: Step One, Cont.

Focus On One Goal

It would be nice if you could build all of those inner strengths as positive habits. However, if you do not already possess these habits, it would probably be too much of a goal to expect to do all of these things right away. When you are consciously building a positive new habit, it is important to focus on only one new habit at a time.

★ Choose one of the items you checked that you would like to build as a positive habit. This will be your goal. Write it on the line below in your own words.

My New Goal

Begin At The End

You are only at the beginning of building this goal into a habit. The next step to take Stephen Covey’s advice and “begin at the end”. That’s a strange thought, isn’t it?

Imagine what your life will be like when you have turned this goal into a habit. Imagine what you will be able to do then, that you cannot

do now. What will you be like as a person? What will you accomplish?

In the space provided below, ★ describe completely what you want to accomplish, why you want this goal, and what your life will be like when you have succeeded in making it a habit.

What I want to accomplish is _____

The reason I want this goal for my life

This is a description of what my life will be like when I succeed in making my goal a habit.

Steps to Positive Habit, cont.

Step Two: Consider Possibilities

Now you might think that you have a pretty good idea of what this new habit is like. But consider this: You have never been there. If this habit is like a goal, and a goal is a place you are trying to reach, this is a place you have never actually been. You have thought about it, but you have not actually been there.

If you have not actually been there, you may not be the expert on how to get there. So there might be ways of getting there that you do not know about. This is why it is helpful to brainstorm possibilities - before you decide on what you will actually do.

Brainstorming is the unrestrained

offering of ideas or suggestions to seek solutions to problems or, in this case, to seek ways to form a new habit. Brainstorming can be done in numerous ways like making a list of ideas, putting ideas on a chart, mind mapping, etc.

Explore as many behavior possibilities as you can think of that could take you even one step in the right direction. Think of someone else who has this quality. What might this person do? How could you imitate this person's behavior? From whom could you get some ideas or suggestions to help you build your plan? Below is an example of using the mind-mapping tool that organizes behavior possibilities for forming a new habit.

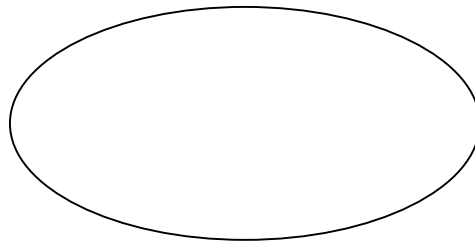


Ideas For Building A Positive Habit

Mind-Mapping

Now it is your turn to mind map some behaviors that will assist you in deciding what strategies you might use to accomplish your goal.

★ Write your new habit in the oval in the center of the page and draw connecting circles to all the actions (behaviors you could do) you can possibly generate.



Step Three: Be Specific

It is great to have as many possibilities as you can. But possibilities are like intentions. As long as they remain possibilities, they do not actually happen. Now you need to ★ choose one of those possibilities, and get very specific about how you are going to do it. The chart below can help you determine some steps to define exactly, specifically what you will do to begin to practice

What: The specific action I will take is: _____

When: Choose a specific day(s) and time(s) of day that this will most likely fit into your life.

Day(s): _____

Time(s): _____

How often: Daily? Four times a week? This depends a lot on what type of action you are going to take. Here is a hint – you may think you want to try to do it every day, but consider setting a goal of doing it only three or four times a week. If you miss a day, you can still make it up without “failing” to reach your goal.

I plan to use this strategy _____ times a _____

Where: Where are you most likely to be able to do this new thing? The location I plan to exercise my new habit:

Place: _____

Who: It is not always true that when you want to do your new behavior that there is some one there, at that specific time and place, who is there and can help. But if there is, their presence could be a huge support. Is there a person with whom you could practice this behavior regularly?

The person who will support me and hold me accountable for practicing my new habit is:

Person: _____

Step Four: Connect To An Old Habit

What existing habit are you already doing that your new habit could follow? This could become your reminder to practice the new habit. Think about the time(s) and place when and where you decided to do this new habit (see the previous page). Remember exactly what you do at that time and in that place. Come up with a behavior that you already are doing at that time and place that is already a habit and use that to remind you to put this new behavior into action. Let your old habit help you develop a new habit.

Example

Maybe you have chosen the habit of improving your diet or increasing your exercise. Maybe your regular routine is to walk in the door, drop your stuff, change your clothes, get a snack and read your mail. Those are existing habits.

Your new plan would be to come home, walk in the door, drop your stuff, change your clothes, get a snack – and then stop! Before you let yourself read your mail, you will do your exercise routine. You put a sign on the refrigerator door to remind you that after you change clothes to finish your exercises *before* you read the mail. Maybe you can even have your checklist on one of those signs.

★ In the space below describe your regular routine, and then write exactly when you will perform your new behavior, and how you will remind yourself to carry out this new behavior.

Old Routine:

New Routine:

My reminder is: _____

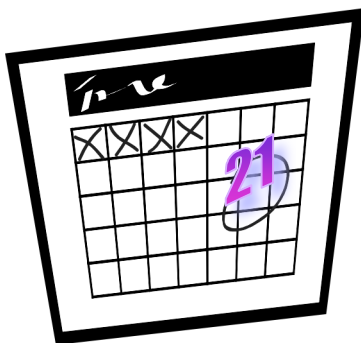
Step Five: Repeat 21 Times

Repeat your new habit at least 21 times and expect to struggle with the temptation to go back to your old habit - each time.

Let your family and friends know what you are going to do if you have taken on a tough habit to break or a new habit that you feel is going to be extremely challenging to you. Your family and good friends will be more than happy to support and encourage you because they want the best for you. Work out a way that you can keep a record so that when you have succeeded in repeating your new habit 21 times, you can celebrate with your reward.

★ Make a note here about how you will keep that record.

★ I plan to keep a record by:



Step Six: Reward Yourself

Choose a reward you would really like. Do not wait until you have finished before you figure this out. Just wait until you finish before you give yourself the reward! Decide now what your reward will be.

The reward might be something you would already give yourself, but you will withhold it until you have completed 21 repetitions of this new behavior. It will be a celebration!

★ My reward will be: _____



My New Habit Summary

★ On this sheet, summarize all of the steps you have completed on pages 4-12 in order to outline your plan for building a new habit.

Six Steps	My Example
<u>Step One</u> Set a goal (pg 6, 7)	
<u>Step Two</u> Consider possibilities (pg 8, 9)	
<u>Step Three</u> Be specific (pg 10)	
<u>Step Four</u> Connect to an existing habit (pg 11)	
<u>Step Five</u> Repeat 21 times (pg 12)	
<u>Step Six</u> Reward yourself (pg 12)	

Practice, Practice, Practice

You might need help in order to remember this. The following are a few suggestions:

- ⇒ Cut out pictures of your reward and put them in your locker, in your room, on the refrigerator, etc.
- ⇒ Tell your family to remind you.
- ⇒ Ask a friend to call you and remind you
- ⇒ Write yourself a reminder and put it in a prominent place
- ⇒ Put a note in your wallet or in your purse
- ⇒ Discuss with your supervisor how this new habit will help you in your job and ask for feedback on your progress.



Creating a plan is just the second step. However, it is a step in the direction you want to go. The only way you will get there is to persist until you succeed.

The key to success is not intelligence or luck, it is exclusively persistence.

Remember this is just one habit. If you practice this technique with other habits, you will be able to focus on any goal you choose and achieve it. That is what self-discipline is all about.

Stay focused. Use self-discipline. Be determined.

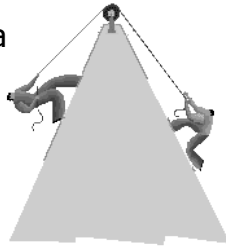
★ Pick one reminder.

YOU WILL DO IT!

Why We Fail

Every one has made some New Year's resolution or set some goal that they did not achieve. They meant to, they really did. But it just didn't happen. There may be lots of reasons why this occurs.

Take minute to make a list of all the reasons you can think of why you might fail to achieve the goal you have spent the last hour working to define.



The longer your list the better:

Good Intentions Are Not Good Enough. The more you are aware of the stumbling blocks you might face, the better you will be at moving through them.

What you are unaware of controls you what you become aware of you can change.

Learning to look ahead and plan for challenges is just good project management. You know how to do this at work. Now do the same for your self. And for each negative, see if you can come up with a positive alternative, i.e., something you will do instead of the negative.

Imagine Success

You have two brains, not one. Your one brain is actually divided into two halves, with a little connection between the two. We speak of this organ as if it is one but actually it is two, close together. If both your kidneys were in the same space as your liver we would speak of one kidney though there would actually be one taking care of one side of your body and another kidney taking care of your other side.

Each part of your brain takes care of one side of your body as well. But it does much more. One brain is devoted to processing information about your physical senses. Another is devoted to processing information from a subtler set of senses, what we call your imagination. You have a complimentary set of senses in your imagination for each physical sense.

For instance, you can imagine what a strawberry looks like. You can imagine touching its surface with all the little seeds and you can imagine tasting the strawberry and feel that burst of flavor.

The power of your imagination is huge. In fact your body does not easily recognize the difference between what you vividly imagine and what is actual reality. You will

respond physically to what you think is real, even if it is not.

For example, you worry about something happening (that hasn't) and your stomach tightens. You imagine an argument (with someone **not** in the room) and you find your jaw tightening. You imagine being in a beautiful peaceful place and your muscles relax. Actually, relaxation is a key, not just to a better body but to helping you imagine more consciously.

This inner world of imagination is a creative one. In fact, most everything you see around you began in someone's imagination - including you!

You have no choice about being creative. It is your essential nature. You are creative every moment.

Interestingly, you can even create the belief that you are not very creative! How creative is that!



Let's use your creative imagination to help you produce a new habit!

Balanced Relaxation Exercise

Move from Tensing Muscles to Relaxing Completely

It is difficult for the mind to be calm, relaxed, and focused when the body is tense. We need to regularly practice techniques for relaxing the body if we are going to be effective at overcoming worries, and at problem solving stressful situations.

Because most of our tension is unconscious, we can't just stop doing it. We must do it deliberately, so we can deliberately undo it. The Balanced Relaxation exercise is a step-by-step process that trains your muscles to relax deliberately, and uses deep breathing to establish a trigger mechanism to help build a positive habit.

You can use this as a method for establishing a positive mindset to begin your day, or to prepare for a deep and restful night of sleep. With practice you can produce a deeply profound state of relaxation in as little as one or two minutes.

The following link will take you to a page at which you can register for online Internet access of the Balanced Relaxation exercise.

<http://www.resource-i.com/RegisterAudiosBR.html>

Remember these steps

Preparation

1. No interruptions
2. Set your purpose
3. Sit comfortably
4. Establish a reference point between tension and relaxation
5. Take a deep breath
6. Close your eyes

Dynamic Tension

1. Tense the muscles; note & compare sensations with relaxed muscles.
2. Deliberately release and let go of tension.
3. Breathe slowly and deeply, thinking, "I am relaxed."
4. Notice the difference between tension and relaxation.
5. Relax deeper and deeper. (left hand and arm, right hand and arm, left foot and leg, right foot and leg, hips-buttocks-sphincter, lower back and abdomen, chest, upper back, shoulders and neck, face)
6. Feel circulation increase (warm, liquid, soothing smile).
7. Notice the difference between tension and relaxation.

Relax your Body - Focus your Mind

When your body is relaxed you can have a more positive effect on relaxing your mind. A relaxed mind is powerful.

"Quiet minds cannot be perplexed or frightened, but go on in fortune or misfortune at their own private pace like clocks in a thunderstorm."

- Robert Louis Stevenson

To help you handle the inevitable mental resistances that will come as you go through the process of achieving your goal(s), it is important to be able to practice in the world of your imagination first.

If you can't hold your mind on a simple image in your mind for 30 seconds, how are you going to be able to make a change in a behavior that lasts forever?

The first step is to create a stage, a place for your mind to focus. It needs to be a place that has good feelings associated with it. It could

be a mountaintop, or a beach or a meadow. It can be a real place you remember (another form of imagining) or a totally made up place.

What matters is that you take the time to imagine it in detail. Imagine where the trees are, and what kind of trees. You could have a bubbling brook where you hear the water and see the pebbles on the bottom and even taste the pure mountain water. Imagine what flowers you would like in this and what colors. Imagine life, like butterflies and birds and squirrels (if you like squirrels). Whatever represents a peaceful place is what you want to create.

And from this stage, from this practiced backdrop of creativity you will be able to focus your mind on imagining a successful result.



My New Habit Summary

★ Use this sheet as a form from which to build more new habits.

Six Steps	My Example
<u>Step One</u> Set a goal	
<u>Step Two</u> Consider possibilities	
<u>Step Three</u> Be specific	
<u>Step Four</u> Connect to an existing habit	
<u>Step Five</u> Repeat 21 times	
<u>Step Six</u> Reward yourself	