



SELF- MASTERY



MASTER THESE
10 HABITS AND BE THE
MASTER OF YOUR WORLD



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*"Success is nothing more than a few
disciplines, practiced every day.*

*Failure is nothing more than a few errors,
repeated every day."*

- Jim Rohn

Introduction

If you're like most success-oriented people, you dream of gaining control over yourself and your life. That would be the ultimate accomplishment for many.

Habits are an important part of this process.

Successes and failures are primarily the end result of habits.

Your habits will also determine the long-term results you achieve.

The things you do repeatedly matter. The way you handle stress and uncertainty matter. How you plan your day matters.

There are many things that matter when you do them day after day over a long period of time.

Why Habits Are Important

Habits are the biggest cause of your success or lack of success. **Habits are vitally important, but few people recognize their importance or understand how to create or manage them.**

Most people think of habits in a negative light. Drinking, drugs, gambling, and overeating are what pops into the mind of most of us when habits are mentioned.

However many habits are positive, such as:

- Exercising
- Meditating
- Brushing your teeth
- Taking a shower
- Paying your bills on time

Those who lack success have habits, too, and they contribute to their lack, such as:

- Procrastination
- Social media
- Surfing the internet
- Late night snacking

These habits provide you with some sort of rewards that make these habits stronger over time.

You are a bundle of habits - both good and bad.

Habits make life possible. There's only so much our brains can deal with each day. Imagine if you had to concentrate and be thoughtful about taking a bath, getting dressed, making your coffee, starting the car, and choosing a path to work. You'd be worn out before 8:00 AM.

Habits are automatic behaviors that lessen our cognitive load and save time. It's easy to

see how certain positive habits could make your life amazing, and negative habits could make it very challenging.

Choosing and implementing effective habits can change your life in incredible ways. What are your daily habits?

"Excellence is an art won by training and habituation. We do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but we rather have those because we have acted rightly. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit."

- Aristotle

Why Self-Mastery is Important

Self-mastery is a worthy goal. **Many believe that self-mastery is the ultimate achievement.** Consider the challenges you have in your life. The average person is overweight, doesn't have enough money, and has unfulfilling relationships.

Let's just take one of those issues, losing weight. Everyone knows how to lose weight. It's not a secret. There's nothing you need whispered in your ear from some guru. You already know everything you need to know.

In fact, there's a plethora of free information available for you to solve nearly any challenge you have. Between the library and the internet, you can find out anything you need to know. Knowledge isn't the problem.

Self-mastery is the problem.

If you could just get yourself to do the things that you know you should do, your life would be completely transformed. But most of us have little mastery over ourselves.

This has a multitude of repercussions, such as:

- Poor results
- Feeling stuck
- Poor self-esteem
- Poor self-confidence
- Living a life that's just a mere shadow of what it could be

Self-mastery may be life's greatest challenge, but it also provides life's greatest reward: the ability to choose your destiny.

Self-mastery is really only about one thing: mastering your emotions. That means learning to control your emotions and to make the best decisions regardless of your emotions. When you can choose and

perform effective actions, you can create whatever habits you need in order to achieve your goals.

You might be thinking, “Easier said than done.”

Perhaps.

But, it is possible. The most successful people in the world are proof of this.

"If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude."

- Colin Powell

How to Create and Maintain Habits

Most of our habits were developed without any intention on our part. **Have you ever intentionally created a habit and maintained it?** Few people have. We seem to have a variety of habits, some good and some bad. All of them seem to have just happened on their own.

However, you can create the habits you desire. If you want to match the results of someone else, find and duplicate their habits.

All habits have three components:

1. **Habits begin with a cue.** A habitual behavior isn't a random event. There is something that sets it off, and this is the cue.

- The cue for brushing your teeth might be going into the bathroom just before bed.
 - The cue for eating chips late at night could be sitting on the couch alone, in the dark, with the TV turned on.
 - The cue for letting the dogs out in the morning is your alarm clock.
 - The cue for drinking alcohol might be thinking about your poor prospects for the future.
 - **Habits are triggered by your surroundings, people, thoughts, and emotions.** Think about a few of your positive and negative habits and determine the cues for each one.
2. **The habit itself.** After the cue has occurred, the habitual behavior happens. It's like magic.

3. **The reward.** Every habit provides a reward on some level. Otherwise, the habit wouldn't continue. The rewards aren't always easy to see, but you can bet that the habit makes you feel better in some way, most often in the short-term.
- You might be furious with yourself later for eating a bag of candy, but it sure feels good while you're doing it.
 - Procrastination feels better in the moment than getting started on your work.
 - Habits either provide a temporary positive emotional or physical sensation, or they allow you to minimize or eliminate a negative feeling.
 - **Bad habits have short-term advantages and long-term disadvantages.** This is a recipe for disaster.

Habits are very simple. Our brains are wired to recognize what happens right before something good or something bad happens. The good versus bad judgement is based on our physical and emotional sensations.

When something “good” happens, that behavior is likely to occur again. When something “bad” happens, we’re likely to avoid repeating that behavior. You’re simpler than you think!

We all like to believe that we make intelligent, rational decisions, but that’s rarely the case. Our habits overrule our cognition in most cases.

“Humans are creatures of habit. If you quit when things get tough, it gets that much easier to quit the next time. On the other hand, if you force yourself to push through it, the grit begins to grow in you.”

- Travis Bradberry

7 Strategies to Create Habits That Serve Your Purpose

Creating a habit is something we're not taught by our parents or schools. Not much has been mentioned about habit establishment until recently.

Habits have become a hot topic and for good reason. **The right habit can change your life.** With enough time and attention, nearly any habit can be created.

Use these seven strategies to create habits that serve your purpose:

1. **Make a list of the habits you'd most like to create.** Prioritize your list so

you'll be getting the most benefit from your effort.

2. **Limit yourself to one habit at a time.**

Odds are you haven't created a new positive habit in the last year, so even creating a single habit is a major accomplishment. Create one habit and then feel free to add another and another.

- Let's imagine that the habit you want to create is to do 25 push-ups each day. And let's also assume that you have the physical ability to do all 25 of them.

3. **Find a cue that will work for your habit.** There are many things to consider when choosing a cue.

- At what time of day do you want the habit take place?

- Where are you most likely to be when you perform the habit?
 - What are the things you do every day? It doesn't work to choose a cue that only happens once a month if you're trying to create a daily habit.
 - Or perhaps your habit is dependent on someone doing something, such as acting disrespectful to you.
 - For our push-up example, let's choose brushing your teeth at night as the cue.
4. **Start small.** When you think about doing 25 push-ups, you might be less than enthused. **Make it so easy you can't possibly fail.** How about two push-ups? That's an easy goal for someone that can do 25.
- You might be thinking that doing two push-ups is worthless. And it is, from a results standpoint. But the point in

only doing two isn't to build your arm strength. It's to build a habit.

- Getting down on the floor is the challenging part.
 - Whatever your desired habit happens to be, **focus on making a habit of the first step.** Make it simple and easy to experience success.
5. **Build your habit.** Move from two pushups to five to 10. Eventually, work your way to 25. Move your habit along slowly. When you absolutely dread the idea of performing your habit, you've moved too quickly. Back up to a more comfortable version.
 6. **Reward yourself.** Pick a reward that isn't harmful. Eating a candy bar drinking a beer isn't a suitable reward. At the very least, feel happy that you've made a change in your behavior. Jump around and make some

noise.

7. **Be persistent.** It's unlikely that things will go perfectly. Resolve to do your best and keep going until you have a full-blown habit on your hands. It can take anywhere from 10 days to several months, depending on the habit.

Creating habits takes time, patience, and intention. Avoid hoping that you'll develop good habits.

Choose the habits you want to have and create them intentionally. If you can do this, you can conquer yourself and the world.

While creating new habits can be challenging, it's even more challenging to break bad habits. But you can do this, too! Continue on to discover how.

"If you want to cultivate a habit, do it without any reservation, till it is firmly established. Until it is so confirmed, until it becomes a part of your character, let there be no exception, no relaxation of effort."

- Mahavira

How to Break a Bad Habit

It's not enough to know how to create good habits. **It's necessary to know how to break your bad habits, too.**

If you've ever tried to stop smoking, playing video games, surfing the internet, or eating Rocky Road ice cream, you know how challenging it can be to eliminate a negative habit from your life.

The neural pathways habits develop over time become very strong, especially if the reward is significant.

You must be intelligent and diligent if you want to be successful. Breaking bad habits is one way to master yourself and your world.

Try this proven process to break a bad habit:

1. **Limit yourself to one habit at a time.**
Breaking bad habits requires some willpower. You don't have enough to spare to take on several habits at once. It might feel frustrating to work at such a slow pace, but getting rid of 10 habits this year would likely be a huge improvement. Be patient.
 - Give yourself 30 days and focus on dealing with one bad habit. If you need 60 or 90 days, then you need 60 or 90 days. Do whatever it takes.
2. **Be happy with progress.** Perfection really is the enemy of the good. If you normally smoke 20 cigarettes each day, lowering that to 15 a day is great progress. Track your results and be thrilled with progress. **Regular progress is all you need to overcome your habit.**

3. **Understand your triggers.** A trigger can be any sensory input, thought, or physical sensation. Think about these things with regards to your triggers:

- **Location.** Where are you when your habit kicks in? In your car? On your couch? Sitting at your desk? At your friend's house? At a bar? Where?
- **Time of day and day of week.** You might find that your trigger times are late at night or on the weekends. Understand when you're likely to slip.
- **Other people.** Many habits, such as drinking, smoking, drug use, and promiscuity occur in the presence of certain people. Think about your own habits and determine if you're likely to do them alone or with certain people.
- **Current activity.** What are you usually doing when your habit strikes? You might find that watching TV triggers your junk food habit or drinking leads

to smoking.

- Become an expert on your triggers.

4. **Interrupt or avoid the cues that trigger your habits.** If you can avoid triggering your habit in the first place, you've won the game. This isn't possible in all cases, but you can make some real progress in your battle against a bad habit with this simple step.

- If you only drink with your friend, Steve, avoid spending time with Steve.
- If you only smoke in bars, stay away from bars.
- If you only eat junk food when you're alone at night, either spend time with others or get the junk food out of the house.
- If driving by McDonalds after work triggers you to purchase an unhealthy

dinner, avoid that route home from work. Find a new route that doesn't pass by a McDonalds.

5. **When you do feel yourself triggered, stop!** Literally freeze and don't make another move. When you first feel the urge to smoke, overeat, or plop yourself in front of the TV, all is not lost. Instead, **sit, breathe, and relax your body.**
 - Relaxing will help to dissipate the negative feeling that is driving you to indulge in your bad habit.
 - By stopping any further action, **you're interrupting your pattern of behavior** and giving yourself time to choose a different course of action.
6. **Consider the reward you receive from the bad habit.** Negative habits occur to relieve a negative feeling and create a positive feeling. For instance, you might overeat when you're alone

because you're lonely. You might smoke to relieve stress.

- Examine your negative habit and figure out what you get from it. There is a reward for every bad habit.
7. **Adopt a new behavior in place of the habit.** It may take some trial and error to find a behavior that will work for you. Find something that will create a positive feeling for you without causing harm.
- When you have the urge to smoke, go for a walk.
 - When you have the urge to eat junk food, eat an apple.
 - When you want to surf the internet, read a book for 15 minutes.
 - Find some positive, or at least neutral, behaviors that can take the place of

the behavior you wish to extinguish.

8. **Punish yourself for indulging in the habit.** Imagine if every time you smoked, a heavyweight boxer punched you in the stomach. Smoking would be much less appealing! While it might not be practical to hire a professional boxer to follow you around, there are several websites and apps that can do something similar.

- Two such services are StickK.com and Beeminder.com. There are several others.
- All work on the same premise. You pledge money that is taken from you if you indulge in your negative habit or fail to complete a new habit you're working to develop.
- These services can be tied to various apps that track diet, exercise, and other behaviors. If you mess up, you lose money. That money typically goes

to an organization of your choosing. This can be an organization that you love, or one that you despise. It's up to you. The service keeps a small percentage as a transaction fee.

- Of course, you can do something similar yourself. You could promise yourself that you'll send money to an organization you don't support or post an embarrassing photo of yourself on Facebook. You might snap yourself with a rubber band or go to work with your hair uncombed.
 - Give yourself a real consequence for not following through!
9. **Take care of yourself. Your willpower is at its highest when you are well-rested, well-nourished, and receive moderate exercise.** Get enough sleep and eat well to keep your energy and mood high. A little exercise will help to burn off any negative energy you're

carrying around.

10. Be persistent. This is the most important step to achieve any goal. You're going to have good days and bad. Keep with it and be happy with even a little progress. You can do it!

Breaking bad habits is more challenging than creating good habits. **Bad habits can be very detrimental to your success.** Do all you can to eliminate them. There is a process but be prepared for challenges along the way.

"You need to put what you learn into practice and do it over and over again until it's a habit. I always say, 'Seeing is not believing. Doing is believing.' There is a lot to learn about fitness, nutrition and emotions, but once you do, you can master them instead of them mastering you."

- Brett Hoebel

10 of the Best Habits to Master Yourself and Your World

While there are many positive habits with far-reaching consequences, these are several of the best. If you're looking to make a positive impact on your life and to improve your influence over yourself and your world, consider these habits. Choose one or create your own that matches your situation and get busy.

Meditation

One of the most common habits among highly successful people is engaging in meditation or some type of spiritual practice.

Meditation is dismissed by many success-minded people as a waste of time, but that is a mistake. Meditation gives you a much

better understanding of yourself and more control over your behavior.

There are numerous benefits to meditation:

1. **Emotional health.** Your self-image and outlook on life improve. Meditation has also been found to decrease symptoms of depression. The incidence of positive thoughts also increases.
2. **Attention span is enhanced.** The intensity and duration of your concentration is increased. You'll be able to stay on task longer and get more accomplished.
3. **Meditation helps your brain in your later years.** Memory, mental quickness, and attention are enhanced in seniors that meditate regularly. Even those with dementia show

improvement.

4. **Lowers stress and reduces anxiety.**

Meditation has been shown to reduce the symptoms of social anxiety, phobias, panic attacks, and obsessive-compulsive disorder. It also reduces the general level of anxiety you experience each day.

5. **Self-awareness.** You learn much about yourself and your thoughts when you meditate regularly. The importance of this can't be overemphasized.

There are two general styles of meditation for our purposes: seated and walking. Most people think of seated meditation when pondering the topic of meditation. This is the traditional style of sitting on a cushion with the eyes closed or only partially open.

Seated meditation focuses on the breath. Feel the air moving in and out of your nose. When thoughts pop into your head, return

your attention to your breath. Notice how thoughts just randomly come into your awareness. **The key is to not engage with them, just let them go and return to your breath.**

Walking meditation involves doing an activity while you focus 100% on the task at hand. You could be walking, washing dishes, mowing the grass, or driving to work. **Meditation isn't about zoning out and daydreaming.** In fact, it's the exact opposite. When you're meditating, you're focused.

Just keep returning your attention to your breath or your task.

"Feeling sorry for yourself, and your present condition, is not only a waste of energy but the worst habit you could possibly have."

- Dale Carnegie

This process will help you create and sustain a meditation habit:

1. **Create cues.** Like any habit, your meditation habit will require one or more cues. Pick a time and place for your meditation practice and choose appropriate cues. A few ideas include:
 - Putting the kids to bed
 - Getting in the shower
 - Hitting the snooze button on the alarm clock
 - Driving the car
 - Eating your lunch
 - Changing out of your work clothes
2. **Start small.** You might want to do a little studying on meditation or take a course, but our simple description is enough to become very good at meditating. It's quite simple, but not necessarily easy.

- Start small. Meditate for one minute.
 - Increase the duration of your meditation over time. **Eventually, you'll want to have a single session that lasts at least 20 minutes.** If you meditate more than once each day, the other sessions can be shorter.
3. **Reward yourself.** You might find that the meditation itself is enough reward but consider doing more for yourself at first. You might want to reflect on how awesome it is that you successfully meditated. Or, you might allow yourself to play Tetris for 10 minutes. Remember not to use a reward that is bad for you!

Meditation is one of the most important habits you can develop. It is also a wonderful way to interrupt your bad habits.

When you feel yourself triggered to perform a negative behavior, meditate instead. It's one of the best ways to short-

circuit your bad habits, and you'll feel better, too.

"We can use decision-making to choose the habits we want to form, use willpower to get the habit started, then - and this is the best part - we can allow the extraordinary power of habit to take over. At that point, we're free from the need to decide and the need to use willpower."

- Gretchen Rubin

Reading / Learning

If you want to become successful, it's important to learn and continue learning.

Reading is an excellent way to accomplish this. Thirty to sixty minutes of reading each day is enough. Reading allows you to increase your knowledge of the world and any subject that's important to you.

Think about what you could do better or how your mind would expand if only you had more knowledge. You might want to know more about online sales tactics, public speaking, or why the steel industry failed in the United States. Perhaps you have an interest in learning how to write so you can create your masterpiece novel.

The information is out there. You just need a habit to get that knowledge into your brain. A daily reading habit will accomplish that.

Use these ideas to create a reading habit that will serve you for the rest of your life:

1. **Determine what you want to know.**
What information would help your success the most? Make a list of everything you wish you knew. Keep your goals in mind while compiling your list.

2. **Create a time and trigger for your reading habit.** Will you get up 30 minutes early and read? Will you do it right before bed?
 - Know your trigger. It might be after putting your socks on in the morning or brushing your teeth at night. Find something you already do each day and link your reading habit to that.
3. **Start small.** If you're not a fan of reading, go for just a few minutes at first.
4. **Make it easy.** Have a comfortable place to read and keep your book nearby.
5. **Reward yourself.** Hopefully, the knowledge you gained or the thrill of changing your behavior will be enough. Maybe you need a little more at first.

The best gift you can give yourself is the habit of reading something helpful each day.

There's no limit to what you can learn or become if you read regularly. Determine what you need to know and allow your reading habit to make it happen.

"I will form good habits and become their slave. And how will I accomplish this difficult feat? Through these scrolls it will be done, for each scroll contains a principle which will drive a bad habit from my life and replace it with one which will bring me closer to success."

- Og Mandino

Learn From Your Mistakes

Mistakes and failures are regular occurrences in the lives of anyone that's working on big goals. Ideally, you're not

repeating the same mistakes! To do so would be madness. **Unfortunately, this madness afflicts nearly everyone.** Life is challenging enough without making it harder for yourself over and over again.

You'd have far fewer mistakes in your life if you only made new mistakes!

Leverage your mistakes and make the most of them:

1. **Set aside a time to Identify your mistakes each day.** Sit down once each day and review your day. List everything that went wrong. You may have:
 - Eaten an unhealthy lunch
 - Arrived late to work
 - Lost a big customer
 - Unintentionally insulted a coworker
 - Forgotten to get gas in your car
 - Missed your child's baseball practice

- Stepped on a nail in the garage
 - List everything that wasn't the way you wanted it to be.
2. **Find a better way.** Go through your list and develop one or more solutions to each mistake.
 3. **Put your plans into action.** Life isn't an intellectual exercise. Nothing happens until you do something.
 4. **Create a habit of this process.** You already know how to do this. Remember to have a cue/trigger and a reward. Be consistent.

Avoid the tendency to keep repeating your mistakes. Use them to adjust your approach and results. **You're going to make mistakes. Just ensure that you make the most of them.** In time, you'll learn that failures and mistakes are actually helpful.

"If you create an act, you create a habit. If you create a habit, you create a character. If you create a character, you create a destiny."

- Andre Maurois

Maintain a Vision of the Future

How do you want your life to be? If you don't know, how can you expect to get there? Having a direction for your life is important.

Goals serve the purpose of moving your life from where it is to where you want to be.

Reviewing those goals daily will keep you on track.

If you don't already have a few goals, make them.

Keep the future you desire clearly in mind:

1. **At least once each day, pull out your goals and review them.** Visualize the achievement of each goal. Notice the details. What do you see? Who else is there? How do you feel?
2. **Whenever you feel like giving up, review your goals again.** We give up on our goals when the short-term discomfort becomes too great. This is the result of having a short-term focus. Reviewing your goals reminds you of your long-term why.

This habit will keep your goals fresh in your mind. Your motivation will stay higher, and you'll be less likely to quit or to procrastinate. **Maintain your awareness of the future you desire.** You'll find it easier to maintain your purpose and direction.

Eat Healthy and Exercise

Life is much easier when you're fit and healthy. There are many diets and exercise programs to choose from. Determine a healthy diet that works for you and allows you to maintain a healthy body weight.

Find a form of exercise that you enjoy that challenges your heart and your muscles. Some people like to mix running with weight lifting. Others enjoy a good game of tennis.

This is one of the more challenging habits to create. The urge to eat unhealthy foods is especially strong. The keys to sticking with an exercise habit are making the time and finding something you enjoy.

"The real key is to live in an environment where the mind feels free to choose the right thing instead of being compelled by habit and inertia to choose the wrong thing."

- Deepak Chopra

Control Impulses

We've all made unwise decisions during times of stress or fatigue. When you have the urge to do something, it's best to take a moment and reconsider. How many times have you:

- Eaten something you shouldn't have?
- Said something you wish you hadn't?
- Spent money you wish you had saved?
- Quit something you wish you had maintained?

We all have impulses to do things that we shouldn't. A habit to control your impulses is similar to taking a moment when you feel triggered to engage in a bad habit.

Use these strategies to control your impulses and stop sabotaging yourself:

1. **Notice that you're feeling out of sorts.** We generally don't behave impulsively while we're cool, calm, and collected. We're impulsive when we're stressed, anxious, overwhelmed, or feeling excited or euphoric.
 - Notice when you're not feeling calm and comfortable. The first step to controlling impulsiveness is knowing when you're likely to make an impulsive decision. This triggers the next step.
2. **Take a long pause.** Avoid taking any action until you've had time to cool your jets. Take a walk or meditate. **Find a way to relax before making a decision.**
3. **Be logical and thoughtful.** Ask yourself what the smart decision is in this circumstance. Ignore your emotions and be logical. You know what you should do rather than what

you feel the urge to do.

4. **Take the appropriate action.** All that's left is taking the smart action and feeling good about it.

Can you control your impulses? **This is one of the most important habits because it allows you to avoid making those big mistakes that can be impossible to recover from fully.** You've made a few huge mistakes in the past. Creating this habit will help you to avoid them.

"The truth won't set us free - until we develop the skills and the habit and the talent and the moral courage to use it."

- Margaret Heffernan

Listen

Listening well does a lot for you. It increases your communication skills tremendously. Listening is half the battle, and it isn't always easy.

Being able to listen also takes your charisma to a whole other level. **People love it when you pay attention to them**, and charisma is largely about making others feel good in your presence.

Developing the habit of listening intently will enhance your life in many ways!

Try these techniques to develop effective listening skills:

1. **When someone is speaking to you, give them your full attention.** This means that you're not looking around the room or thinking about something

else. It's like meditating, but the subject of your meditation is your communication partner.

2. **Wait for your turn to speak.** That also means you're not spending your listening time just thinking about what you want to say. It's better to listen well and then take a moment to craft your reply.
3. **Ensure that you understand the other person.** Ask questions and be certain that you're getting the correct message.

This habit will help your communication skills in several ways and enhance your level of likeability. **Those that listen well are popular.** Build this habit. You have plenty of opportunities to practice. Everyone you speak to is another opportunity to hone this habit.

"Habit is something you can do without thinking, which is why most of us have so many of them."

- Frank A. Clark

Create a To-Do List

If you get up each day without a list of priorities, how will you ensure that the most important things will be addressed? You can't.

A great habit to have if you want to master your world is to spend some time each evening making a list of what you want to accomplish tomorrow. Then you'll know exactly what needs to be done.

Do your planning at night and attack during the day.

Learn how to make an effective to-do list and get the most out of each day:

- 1. Sit down each evening and plan for tomorrow.** What needs to be accomplished? Are there bills that need to be paid? What's going on at work? What errands need to be run?
 - **Pay particular attention to your goals.** What needs to be done to bring you closer to your goals?
- 2. Prioritize those items.** There's a good chance you have a longer list than you can manage. Eliminate what you can and keep the tasks that are most important to you.
- 3. Keep your to-do list manageable.** You can be incredibly successful without killing yourself. **Consistency is the key.** If you're putting in the necessary time each day and focus your energy on the most critical tasks, you will be

successful.

4. **Enjoy checking those items off your list each day.** Know that you're getting closer to mastering yourself and your life.

This seems like a simple idea that might not matter, but you'd be wrong to believe that.

It's easy to get off-track and waste time if you don't have a plan for your day. It only takes a few minutes and can make a huge difference in the results you create in your life. Give it a try.

"Consciousness is a phase of mental life which arises in connection with the formation of new habits. When a habit is formed, consciousness only interferes to spoil our performance."

- William Ralph Inge

Be a Finisher

Most of us are good at planning out the path to achieving our big goals. Some people are also good at getting started and making some real progress. **Far fewer are experts at crossing the finish line.**

Developing the habit of finishing what you start can be a watershed moment for many. It's common to quit before reaching a goal. We're good at doing a lot of things 90% of the way, but not completing them.

Learn to finish what you start:

1. **Finish everyday tasks consistently.**
For example, if you're washing the dishes, wash all of the dishes. Don't leave the greasy fry pan soaking with the intention of dealing with it tomorrow. Do the entire job.

- You'll feel resistance creeping in when you get toward the end. Use this as a cue to get determined. Really dig into the task and power your way to the end.
- Whether you're cleaning the garage, writing an email, or going shopping for groceries, complete the task and avoid allowing yourself to finish it "tomorrow" or "later."

2. **Enjoy the feeling of completing that task.** This habit will largely take care of itself after a while. Most people learn to enjoy the relief and sense of accomplishment that comes from completing a job 100%. Feel free to set up a reward system if necessary.

It's not nearly enough to be a good planner and starter. You must learn to be a good finisher, too. Master the art of finishing what you start. **You'll be shocked by how much this habit influences your life.** Finishing is a necessary part of success and self-mastery.

"The best restriction I learned was getting into the habit of doing something, even if I didn't feel like it, instead of running away from it. Sometimes good work needs to be earned, and when you can overcome yourself, the muse notices and celebrates."

- Damien Rice

Get Up Early

Getting up early doesn't mean that you shortchange your sleep. **While many successful people are known to sleep relatively little, there are just as many highly successful people that sleep nine or more hours each night.**

Get up early and get started on your day. Few things feel better than getting something meaningful accomplished while everyone else in the neighborhood is still sleeping.

Studies repeatedly show that everyone performs better in every imaginable way if they receive at least seven hours of sleep each night. You're not the exception. Allow yourself enough time to get a full night of sleep. This will mean going to bed earlier if you're going to get up early.

Most people don't do anything productive in the couple of hours leading to bed. You don't need to watch TV or play around online. Get to bed and get up early. **The most common wake up time for the highly successful seems to be 5:00 AM.**

This might seem early, but it's only early if you go to bed late!

Up and at 'em!

Conclusion

Many believe that the purpose of life is to learn how to master yourself, and by extension, master your world. Habits are an important part of this process. We all have habits. **Some of those habits serve us, while others can inhibit our success or even destroy us.**

The power of habits can't be overstated.

Your health, physique, educational success, and career have all been developed primarily through your habits. You can look at someone and predict many of their habits.

Habits have been studied by many of the great philosophers. Habits have been a source of amazement and frustration for thousands of years. The intellectuals of the past were aware of the power of habits and their importance in learning to master yourself. If you can't manage your habits, you

can't truly manage yourself.

New habits can be created with intention and effort. Bad habits can be eliminated, though it can be quite challenging.

Some habits have the power to transform your life for the better. While doing 25 push-ups each day is great for your arms and shoulders, it doesn't have the same far-reaching impact as making the most of your mistakes.

Over time, you can implement and remove a lot of habits, but your ability to handle more than one at a time is limited. **Prioritize the habits you want to create and destroy.** You can eventually get to all of them but be intelligent in your approach. Have patience.

Master the necessary habits and you'll master yourself and your life. The world is your oyster if you can use the power of habits to your advantage.