

INTRODUCTION: 19 Tiny Habits That Lead To Huge Results

“The beginning is always the hardest. But you’ll get better—as long as you stick with it.”

HABIT #1 Do What You Say You’re Going To Do

1. Every time we make a promise to ourselves, we are setting a goal
2. Take this to heart: if you cannot keep your daily promise, you will never keep your lifetime promise.
3. When we set big, audacious lifetime goals for ourselves—“I want to run a marathon, I want to become an author, I want to quit my job and start my own business”—we are simultaneously setting small, daily goals
4. In order to start a business, you need to get a client, and then another client, and then another client.
5. The moment you stop keeping that small, daily promise to yourself, you are no longer moving in the direction of your lifetime goal.
6. When people say “success is a habit,” this is what they mean.
7. Success is a daily choice—just like being average is a daily choice.
8. People who succeed in life are people who keep their promises.
9. And every day, moment by moment a tiny, faint voice in your head reminds you of what you need to do, or what you had said you were going to do. Start listening to that voice. Step 1 with anything is always: less talk, more action.

HABIT #2 Journal Once Per Day

1. I’ve been journaling since I was a kid, but I started journaling on a daily basis when I was 19 years old.
2. That trip, but specifically the daily exercise of journaling, fundamentally changed my life.
3. Journaling is a dedicated moment in your day to ask the question, “How am I feeling?”
4. Questions you should ask yourself when journaling: Why did I make that decision? What was the real underlying reason—the “root of the root?” How did that experience make me feel? What can I learn about myself through those feelings? What did I do today? Did I do the things I said I was going to do? If not, how come? How many days in a row will I accept these excuses? What’s something I wish would stop happening? More importantly, what am I bringing to the table to cause it? What does my behavior say about me? To change any narratives I don’t like, what new behaviors can I practice? What would I like to do differently next time/tomorrow? What action can I take to remind myself to behave differently? How do I truly feel about that person/that situation/that experience?
5. At the end of each year, right after Christmas, I read through my entire journal, front to back.

HABIT #3: Don't Lie About Your Intentions

1. Every time we lie, we practice the art of lying.
2. I learned, the hard way, “what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive.”
3. What I learned—in meditating, in changing the direction of my life, and in successfully changing myself—was that in order to manifest your reality, you must live what you speak, and speak what you live. And the more your actions align with what you say, the more connected you will be to the path you truly desire for yourself.

HABIT #4 Practice Your Craft As If It's The Purpose Of Your Life

1. But “Do what you love” is bad life advice. “Do what makes you a better YOU” is better.
2. “What do I love that will make me a better ME?”
3. In order to “do what you love” in life, you need to practice your craft like it's the purpose of your life.
4. The truth is, nobody owes you happiness. Nobody owes you fulfillment. The idea that a job you love, that pays you a great salary, feeds your soul, and makes you a better YOU is just going to magically fall into your lap is the definition of entitlement. By living your life this way, you are deferring responsibility for your own journey, placing your purpose in the hands of someone else—a boss, a friend, a family member—expecting them to give what you the thing you ultimately need to give yourself
5. So, if you want to live that craft, if you want this “thing” you love to become the primary thing you DO, then it can't just be treated as a small maybe-it'll-happen-maybe-it-won't part of you. It needs to become you.

HABIT #5 Use The Gym To Cross-train Your Mind

1. The real reason I'd started lifting weights was because I didn't have any other social activity in my life.
2. We lifted together that next day, and ended up becoming lifting partners for almost two years.
3. “You can't be scared of the weight. You gotta trust yourself,” and that mantra slowly bled over into other areas of my life.
4. Huge parts of my personality were changing, not because I felt like some cocky asshole who had biceps all of a sudden—but because my only friend in the city treated the gym like a monk, and constantly reinforced to me the importance of focus, dedication, and a “maniac” mindset that can do whatever it sets its mind to.
5. “Iron sharpens iron,”: *“I make you better, you make me better.”*
6. The lessons I learned lifting with Chris ended up paving the way for the entire rest of my 20s
7. That's how I learned that staying true to the process is more important than obsessing over the destination.

HABIT #6 Surround Yourself With People That Represent Who You Ultimately Want To Become

1. Of all the things I wanted to learn from Ron, balancing creativity and business was at the absolute top of the list.
2. Over time, as if by osmosis, I couldn't help but start to be like Ron.
3. The single fastest way to grow is to spend time around people that represent who you ultimately want to become.
4. So, if you aren't happy with where you are or where you're going in life, then take a hard look at the people around you. Chances are, they're in a similar boat. And as long as you stay in that situation, with those same people, none of you are going to get moving anytime soon.

HABIT #7 Read. A Lot

1. The unfortunate reality is people stop reading as soon as they graduate college.
2. But reading does something very different to your brain.
3. Reading forces you to juggle various pieces of information in your head at the same time. Reading asks you to use your imagination, and to visualize what's being explained. Reading is a puzzle, and in order to follow along, you need to be mentally engaged.
4. Reading is hard—which is why most people give it up.
5. Reading doesn't only make you smarter. The habit of reading makes you more disciplined.

HABIT #8 Don't Just Set Goals—Track Them

1. The first time I really saw the importance of this habit in action, I had just started writing on Quora.
2. After a year of writing an answer per day on Quora, I became the #1 most-read writer on the entire platform.
3. Setting a goal for yourself is the easy hard. The hard part is determining how you're going to measure your progress.
4. Once you realize the power of data, and how you can measure the progress (or lack of progress) of every single area of your life, you will become more aware of the choices you make in each and every moment. With awareness comes choice. And with choice comes power over the direction of your life.

HABIT #9 Never Eat Alone

1. One of the books I read during this whirlwind of a chapter was called "Never Eat Alone" by Keith Ferrazzi.
2. Every single week, I connected with new people, who opened new doors of opportunity, which allowed me to connect with new people, who opened new doors of opportunity—and so on and so forth.

3. Now, don't get it twisted. This is not a habit reserved for the wealthy and successful.
4. If I had the opportunity to go back, I would have started this process when I was younger. I would have used my knowledge of the internet to build more meaningful connections local to Chicago

HABIT #10 Dress For Success (In Your Own Way)

1. "Dress for success" is bad advice. Better advice would be: "Dress how you wish to be seen."
2. And you want to be seen as you. When you show up somewhere looking like you're trying to be someone you're not, it shows.
3. Make it a habit to portray your best self.
4. What do you need to wear to feel good? What's going to make you feel most comfortable in the moment?

HABIT #11 Make Time To Meditate And Reflect

1. After I moved out to LA, one of the biggest mistakes I made building my first company was I stopped meditating.
2. Eventually, I ended up in the hospital with shingles.
3. I continued running our company for a month while lying in bed in excruciating pain.
4. Tried journaling for at least five minutes each day
5. Stopped working on Sundays, trying to dedicate at least one day per week to my own well being.
6. And slowly but surely, over time, these small steps made all the difference.

HABIT #12 Always Make Time For Your Closest Friends

1. On your own path to success, always make time for your closest friends. They're the ones who will keep you grounded.
2. Remember: you are a reflection of the people you spend the most time with. You are also a reflection of the company you keep. Choose your friends wisely.

HABIT #13: Teach Others—It's The Single Greatest Way To Build Yourself Into A Leader In Your Industry

1. I have built my entire career as a writer off one very simple principle: Give 99% away for free.
2. The more I gave, the more I received.
3. For three years, I wrote every single day on Quora. And for three years, I made \$0 as a writer. Every so often, a paid opportunity would come my way.
4. And every time, I said no. I had a limited amount of time in my day, and while Quora wasn't paying me in dollars, it was certainly paying me in exposure.
5. During this entire journey, I received contradicting wisdom from nearly every person around me.

6. It wasn't until I started my company, Digital Press, that everything had come full circle. The reason our business was able to grow so quickly was largely because of the three and a half years I'd invested in myself and my writing online
7. The reward of giving 99% away for free is that it gives you a massive competitive advantage in terms of insight.
8. We now live in a world where growth and insight are more valuable than your current status or even profitability
9. The more you give away for free, the faster you learn, the faster you grow.

HABIT #14 Spend Time With People Of Different Ages

1. Instead, I spent all my time in the gym, where my friends became guys in their 30s, 40s, and even 50s who loved lifting every day.
2. Standing nearby, the youngest one in the group, I would hit my sets and listen intently, soaking up all the life advice they shared.
3. Spending time with people older than me, more experienced than me, and wiser than me became a habit
4. By exclusively working with founders, C-level executives, investors, and so on, my entire life became the process of talking to and learning from people much further along in their careers. At 27 years old, I was spending 5-8 hours per day talking to CEOs of publicly traded companies, venture capitalists responsible for hundreds of millions of dollars, and founders of high-growth, multi million-dollar startups
5. Everyone says they want a mentor. What they fail to realize is that mentors exist everywhere—all you have to do is ask.
6. Ask them a question. Two questions. Five questions. Ten questions. Soak up as much knowledge as you possibly can. And when it's clear they are no longer capable of teaching you more, it's time to look for the next person to learn from.
7. The same can be said for people who are younger than you, less experienced than you, and not quite as far along as you.
8. And if you can make these conversations a habit, then you'll find yourself outgrowing your peers—to the point where you actually prefer spending time with people much older, much more experienced, and much wiser, than you do sitting in your age group's echo chamber.

HABIT #15: Don't Forget To Play. It's The Best Way To Feel Alive

1. One of the worst habits we adopt as we get older is the compulsion to only to things that make actionable, tangible progress.
2. For example, when a parent spends time with their newborn child, the entire focus is on "play."

3. But as someone who has played the game, obsessed over the game, and mastered the game several times over, let me tell you something: “beating the game” isn’t what makes you feel fulfilled. Maintaining a healthy, positive relationship with your inner child is what makes you feel fulfilled.
4. It wasn’t until I took a trip to Mexico with my girlfriend that I realized how I had effectively stopped “playing.”
5. Three weeks into the trip, we went off the grid and drove into the jungle. And by the end of the year, 2019, everything was different. I was working two hours a day, opposed to twelve. We had ten clients instead of sixty. And most importantly, I started writing again. I had time to play with words, to explore story ideas, to make things simply because I wanted to make them—opposed to obsessively chasing the next milestone for our business. I felt happy.
6. I love the game of life. But the whole idea is to “play” it. But the moment you begin to lose yourself in the process is the moment “the game” is no longer a game. It’s now a compulsion. An escape. A way of living that encourages you to detach from yourself—which, over time, leads to serious consequences. Wanting to succeed in life, wanting to be able to buy nice things and have financial freedom, and wanting to climb to the top of your industry are all fair and even worthwhile ambitions. So long as they do not cost you the relationship you have with yourself. Take care of that inner child of yours, and always make time to play.

HABIT #16 Eat Healthy, And Take Care Of Yourself Along The Way

1. First of all, preparing my food in advance saved me a ton of time during the week.
2. Second, buying groceries in bulk saved me a ton of money.
3. Third, I was in the best shape of my life.
4. It’s far easier to take care of yourself along the way, than it is to try to fix all the damage you’ve done after the fact.

HABIT #17 See Art And Get Inspired

1. Your output is only as good as your input.
2. When you take the time to expose yourself to new ideas, you change.
3. So go out, and get inspired.

HABIT #18 Wake Up When You Say You’re Going To Wake Up

1. “And this might sound a bit dramatic,” he said, “but then you get in the habit of not keeping other promises in your life.”
2. And immediately, I noticed something interesting start to happen.
3. We are a reflection of the promises we keep. We are what we eat, what we consume, and the “input” we allow into our lives. We are who we spend time with, and the relationships we prioritize. We are what we do, repeatedly, on a daily basis.

4. And so, if you can't wake up when you say you're going to wake up, what other promises are you regularly making and breaking?

HABIT #19 Read Your Chief Aim Aloud Every Morning, And Every Night

1. Importance of planting your "Chief Aim" firmly in your mind's eye. He suggested doing this by writing down all that you desired for your life, as well as what you needed to do in order to obtain those desires, and then to read your Chief Aim out loud every morning and every night until those desires became your reality.
2. My goals were very specific
3. For two years straight, I practiced this habit.
4. The reason Hill instructs readers to say their Chief Aim out loud every morning and every night is so the words become so deeply ingrained in the subconscious that you can't help but see pathways to your desires everywhere.