



CHAPTER ONE



**The best way to start a new
habit**



Chapter Summary

This chapter emphasizes the importance of planning when and where to perform new habits through strategies known as implementation intentions and habit stacking.

Research suggests that people who make specific plans are more likely to succeed in developing new habits than those who rely solely on motivation. By defining a clear action plan—such as filling out the sentence 'I will [BEHAVIOR] at [TIME] in [LOCATION]'—individuals can eliminate ambiguity and improve commitment. Habit stacking allows individuals to link new behaviors with existing ones, creating a momentum that facilitates habit formation. Overall, specificity and planning are vital for turning intentions into actions and achieving lasting change.



The Power of Planning

Success in developing new habits relies heavily on having a concrete plan. In a study, those who specified when and where they would exercise significantly outperformed those without a plan. Implementation intentions create a clear pathway for action, increasing the likelihood of success.

Defining Implementation Intentions

An implementation intention focuses on forming a plan about when and where you will act. For example, specifying 'I will exercise at 5 PM in my gym' directs your efforts and reduces the uncertainty that often leads to procrastination.

The Impact of Time and Location

Time and location are two of the most common cues that can trigger your habits. Making them a part of your plan increases clarity and ensures you are prepared to act at the right moment.



"Good habits can only be built on a foundation of good planning."

The Diderot Effect

Obtaining a new possession can lead to additional purchases, highlighting the interconnectedness of our behaviors. One change can trigger a chain reaction, which is not only relevant in shopping but also in habit formation.

"When one behavior changes, it can set off a chain of events leading to more significant changes."

Harnessing Habit Stacking



Habit stacking allows you to build new habits by linking them to existing ones. For example, 'After I pour my coffee, I will meditate for one minute.' This connection helps to design obvious cues for follow-through.

Creating Effective Habit Stacks

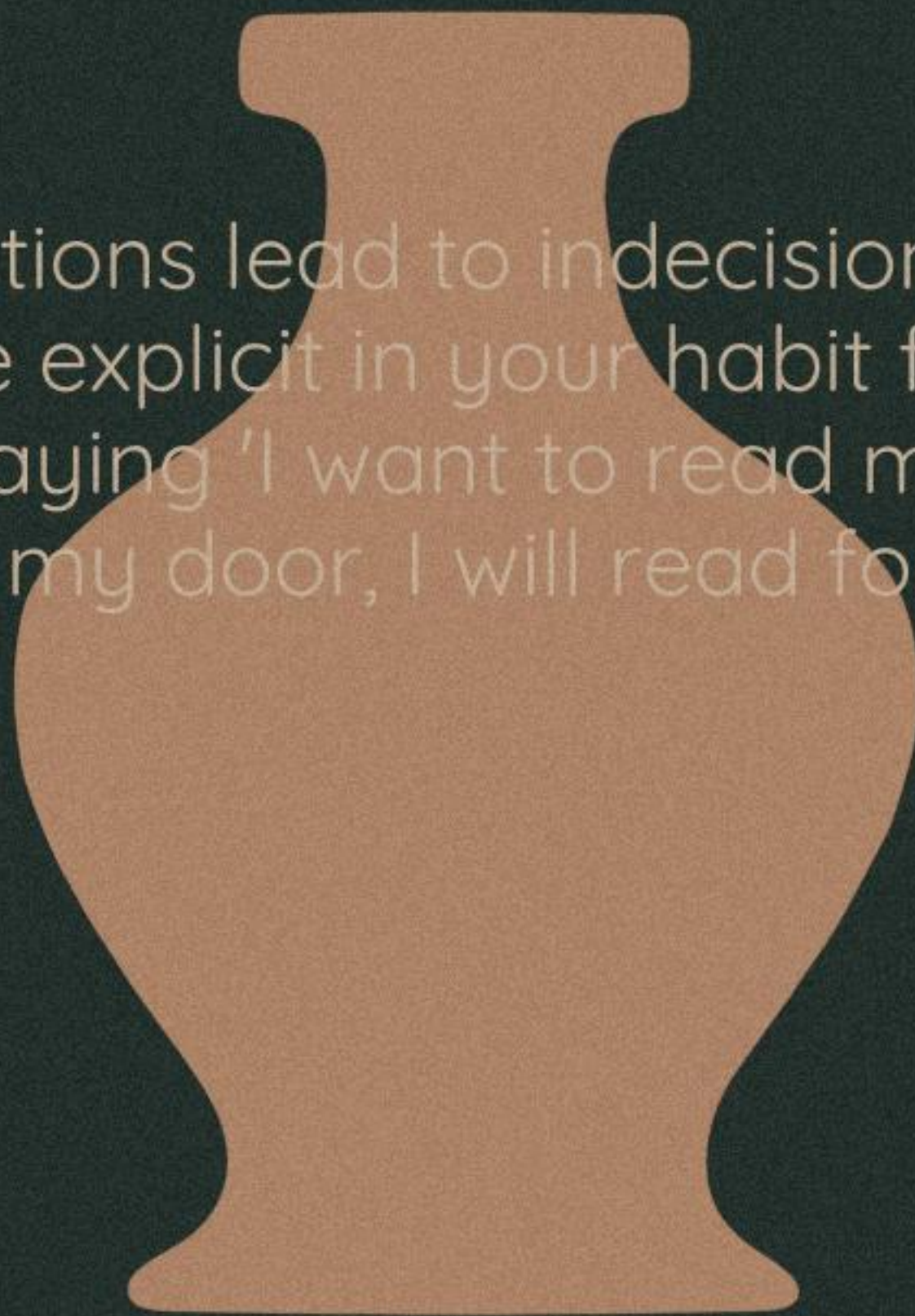


To create effective habit stacks, identify current habits and link them with new ones that support your goals. This builds natural momentum and increases the chances of maintaining the new habit.

The Importance of Specificity



Vague intentions lead to indecision and lack of action. Be explicit in your habit formation: instead of saying 'I want to read more,' specify 'After I close my door, I will read for 20 minutes.'



Identifying Trigger Cues

Finding the right trigger for your habits and routines is crucial. Use a clear, specific cue to guide you; make the habits actionable and integrated into your daily life.

Avoiding Ambiguity

Ambiguity can derail your habit formation. A well-defined habit stack should eliminate uncertainty about when and where new habits will occur, paving the way for consistency and success.



The 1st Law of Behavior Change



Remember, the first law of behavior change is to make it obvious. Implementation intentions and habit stacking are practical strategies to design prompts that are clear and impactful.



Recap

- "People who make specific plans for when and where they will perform a new habit are significantly more likely to follow through."
- "When you leave your habits up to chance, motivation tends to fade."
- "After [CURRENT HABIT], I will [NEW HABIT] becomes a powerful tool for coherence in your routines."
- "Each action triggers the next; design your habits to flow seamlessly into one another."
- "The more clearly you define your actions, the easier it is to follow through."



Thank You

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