

# Atomic Habits

- **Chapter 1**

- Dave Brailsford changed the fate of British cycling.
- By changing minor habits such as changing seats, having doctors to help you create a habit like hand washing have created a significant shift in their winning streak.
- By Improving 1 percent each and every day, you will get 37 times better than you were done.
- Conversely the other derogates.
- Habits is Directly proportional to compound interest of money.

- ◆ **Productivity Compounds**

- ◆ **Knowledge Compounds**

- ◇ **Reading new book not only teaches you something new but also opens up different ways of thinking about old ideas.**

- ◆ **Relationship compounds**

- ◇ People reflect your behavior back to you.
- ◇ **The more you help others, the more others want to help you.**

- Break through moments are the results of many previous action items.
- Plateau of **latent potential**:
  - ◆ **When you are working towards anything you work is not getting wasted, it is being stored until plateau of latent potential is reached.**

- Focus on your system your goals will follow.
- Habits are the compound interests of self improvement.
- Your 100 stroke might not cut you the wood, but 101 stroke can help you to cut the wood.

- **Chapter 2:**

- You have a goal, you have a plan but if you are not resonating with the identity of the goal then you will forget it.

- **Organized Person:**

- ◆ Every time you make bed, you are a creative person.
- ◆ Every day you write you are a creative person.
- ◆ Every day you meditate you are mindful practitioner.
- ◆ Every day you cook you are a chef.
- ◆ Each time you write you are a writer.
- ◆ Each time you workout you are an athlete.
- ◆ Each time you encourage your employees, you are a leader.

- ◆ **Three levels of change:**

- ◇ Outcome change
- ◇ process change
- ◇ Identity Change
- ◆ The most effective way to change your habits is to focus on not what you want to achieve, but one you wish to become.
- ◆ Your identity emerges out of your habits, every action is a vote for

the type of person you wish to become.

- ♦ The best version of yourself requires you to continuously edit your beliefs and to upgrade and expand your identity.

- **Chapter 3:**

- A Behavior that has been repeated enough times to become automatic.
- Ultimate purpose of habits is to solve the problems of life with as little energy and effort as possible.
- Four laws of Behavior change:
  - ♦ Make it obvious
  - ♦ Make it attractive
  - ♦ Make it easy
  - ♦ Make it satisfying.

- **Chapter 4:**

- **The man who didn't look right:**
  - ♦ A woman who spent several years working as a paramedic, attended family gathering, and told at her father in law and mentioned him she didn't like the way he look.
    - ◇ Her father in law jokingly replied, Well I don't like your looks either.
    - ◇ She insisted to go to the hospital.
    - ◇ A few hours later the man undergone a life saving surgery and was at an immediate risk of heart surgery.
    - ◇ Without her he might have died.

- ♦ How did the paramedic see?
  - ◇ When Major arteries obstructed, there will be a change in pattern on sending the blood to critical organs, a change can be observed with the face.
  - ◇ This lady somehow observed the pattern after working with many patients, although she couldn't explain but she knew.
- ♦ Similarly hair dressers should be able to tell whether a women is pregnant based on their hair touch.
- ♦ **There are certain things which our brain develops out of habits subconsciously we not might know the exact details how we predicted but our prediction is right, that's it.**
- **Some time it's your habit, that you finish other people sentences, dive in to the middle of the conversations, mention sorry before you even ask question.**
- **A preschool teacher who had switched her jobs used to ask employees whether they washed their hand after going to the rest rooms, habits 😊**
- **Pointing and calling:**
  - ♦ System designed to reduce mistakes.
  - ♦ It raises the awareness from subconscious level to a conscious levels.
- The first step to put a pause to bad-habits is:
  - ♦ Be on the lookout for them.
  - ♦ Follow pointing and calling if necessary.
  - ♦ If you want to cut your junk food habit:
    - ◇ Say out loud:

- I am eating this cookie, but I don't need it, Eating it will cause me to gain weight and hurt my health.

- **Chapter 5:**

- The Best way to start a new Habit:

- ◆ Habit Stacking:

- ◊ **Diderot effect:**

- Great French Philosopher:

- His financial status is poor and cannot afford her daughter's marriage.
- Queen of some kingdom who was a fan of his work offered a good lump sum for his personal dairy to help him relieve Financial Trouble.

- ▲ Diderot paid for her daughter's wedding.

- ▲ He also brought himself Scarlet robe.

- ▲ **With the arrival of scarlet robe**, he just felt his other **possessions** needs to be **upgraded** as well

- △ He replaced his **rug** with a more **fancy** one.

- △ Expensive **sculptures** all over the home

- △ Old straw chair was replaced with a leather one.

- Felt related?

- So if you are already having a good/bad habit you can use it for your advantage to create one more in its place.

- ◆ **Some examples:**

◇ **Exercise:**

- When I see stairs, I use them instead of taking elevator.

◇ **Social Skills:**

- When I walk into a party, I introduce myself to some one whom I don't know.

◇ **Finance:**

- Every time I need to spend \$100 or more I will wait for 24 hours.

◇ **Healthy eating:**

- If there are veggies, I will try to have them before taking something else.

◇ **Minimalism:**

- If I get one, I will give one.

◇ **Mood:**

- If phone rings, I will take one deep breath.

◇ **Forgetfulness:**

- When I leave a public place, I will check the table and chair and ensure that I didn't leave anything behind.

◆ **Make these habit stacking as granular as possible.**

• **Chapter 6:**

○ **Motivation is over-rated: Environment Often Matters More**

◆ **Anne Thorndike:**

- ◇ Primary care physician achieved a 11% decrease in soda-sales by just placing water in the refrigerators along with sodas.
- ◆ People often choose products not because of what they are, but because of where they are.
  - ◇ **So Don't keep the Junk food right in front of your eyes.**
- ◆ Most powerful of all the human sensory visibilities is:
  - ◇ Vision.
  - ◇ **Out of 11 million sensory receptors, 10 million are for vision.**
- ◆ A small change in what you see will bring a good shift in what you do.
- ◆ Sprinkle triggers of good habits all around you.
  - ◇ Place good books in-front of you.
  - ◇ place Apples in the front stack of fridge.
- ◆ **Habits can be easier to change in a new place** because you are not fighting with your old cues.

- **Chapter 7:**

- US soldiers who have been with Vietnam have been addicted to heroin because of high availability in that particular region.
- It worried the Government of states, and government ruled out a commission to control the addiction,
  - ◆ The commission mentioned that 9 out of 10 soldiers were not addicted once they reach back to the US which proves that habits radically change when there is a change in environment.
- **Self control is over-rated, getting yourself away from the cues**

**which indulge in bad-habits is the Key.**

○ **Famous Example:**

- ◆ A therapist from Austin have got habituated into smoking
  - ◇ she often lit up while riding horses.
- ◆ Eventually she quit smoking and avoided for years.
- ◆ Decades later she hopped on a horse and felt the craving for smoking.
  - ◇ Cues are still there with her, but they haven't got the right conditions during these years 😊

● **Chapter 8:**

- Herring gulls experiment:



- ◆ Adult gulls have a small red dot on their beak. Newly hatched chicks would peck this spot whenever they wanted food.



- ♦ Niko Tinbergen created a fake cardboard with red dots and handed it over to the Baby gulls when their mother is out for food.
- ♦ These gulls in excitement used to peck the red spots same way they used to do with their mother.
- ♦ It tells us that they have a clear preference for red-dots.
- ♦ We as humans, our brains are designed to seek more food whenever we can, as we came from a cultivation where humans have to search for their next food, although environment changed to rich calorie food, we still have the mindset, the food science is giving us the novelty like the scientist did to the Gulls to over stimulate us and as a result we over-eat.
- ♦ **With Natural and Unprocessed foods, you tend to experience the same sensation over and over.**
- ♦ After a few mins your brain feels full and you lose interest.
- ♦ So play your game nicely and make sure that you have nice things around you and use habit stacking to accelerate your growth.

- **Chapter 9:**

- **The role of family and friends in shaping your habits:**

- ♦ Hungarian man named Laszlo Polgar who was a firm believer of hard work, He believed hard work can do anything and he completely rejected the idea of Innate talent.
    - ♦ He claimed that deliberate practice and development of good habits a child could become genius in any field.
      - ◇ He is a strict believer of **Genius are made not born**
    - ♦ Laszlo decided Chess is his experiment, and would like to play his odds with his own children, and he was able to train all the children efficiently

- ◇ These three sisters setup the world record at an early age and finally they went on to become grand masters.
  - ◆ **Once Laszlo reportedly found Sofia playing chess in the bathroom in the middle of the Night. Encouraging her to go back to sleep, he said, Sofia, leave the peaces alone! To which she replied, Daddy, they wont leave me alone.**
- **Imitating the close:**
  - ◆ We pick up habits from people around us.
  - ◆ When your wife has a double checking that the door is locked before going to bed, You pick it up as well.
  - ◆ You automatically imitate your boss your co-workers unconsciously.
  - ◆ Person chances of becoming obese increased by 57 % if he or she had a friend who became obese.
  - ◆ **The most effective thing you can do to build better habits is to join a culture where your desired behavior is normal behavior.**
- **Imitating the Many:**
  - ◆ whenever we are unsure how to act, we look to the group to guide our behavior.
  - ◆ When changing habits means challenging the tribe, change is unattractive. When changing your habits means fitting in with the tribe, change is very attractive.
- **Imitating the Powerful:**
  - ◆ We always look for the people who we love and copy their habits.

- **Chapter 10:**

- James clear was surprised to knew how his friend quit smoking by reading a book called

- ◆ **Allen Carr's Easy Way to Stop Smoking.**

- ◆ Author systematically uses the phrases like:

- ◇ You think you are quitting something, but you are not quitting anything because do nothing for you.
- ◇ You think smoking is about relieving stress, but it's not, Smoking doesn't relieve your nerves, but it destroys them.

- ◆ If you are opening an Instagram or Linked In or any other social networking website, it's because you want to relive from some sort of anxiety or something else, Since phone is just available at a certain distance you pick it up, In case if Phone is faraway from you, then you might pick some other habit may be going for walk/ going out/ A small stretch ..etc.

- ◆ Reframing your habits to highlight their benefits rather than their drawbacks is a fast and lightweight way to reprogram your mind and aka a habit seem more attractive.

- ◆ **Exercise:**

- ◇ Many people associate exercise with being a challenging task and wears you down, You can just as easily view it as a way to develop skills and build you up, Instead of telling yourself, I need to go run in the morning, say It's time to build endurance and get fast.

- ◆ Ed Latimore:

- ◇ A boxer and writer from Pittsburgh benefitted from a similar strategy without knowing it, He Wrote

- " My focus and concentration goes up by putting my headphones while writing, I dont even have to play any music.

- **Chapter 11:**

- Walk slowly but never backward:

- ♦ **Whenever you have an option to put the action into place, place some sort of action into place, rather than spending time on finding the best option.**

- ◇ Best is the enemy of Good.

- ♦ If you want to master a Habit, the key is to start with repetition, not perfection, You just need to get your reps in.

- ♦ The more you repeat an activity the more the structure of your brain changes to become efficient at that activity.

- ♦ **Hebb's Law:**

- ◇ **Neurons That fire together wire together.**

- ♦ Each time you repeat an action, you are activating a particular neural circuit associated with the habit.

- ♦ Automacity:

- ◇ The ability to perform a behaviour without thinking about each step, which occurs when the non-conscious mind took-over.

- ♦ Not how many days, It's all about how many repetitions.

- **Chapter 12:**

- **The Law of Least Effort:**

- ♦ Oswald Neukollos an IT dev from Mississippi, follows a nice schedule to make sure that he doesn't spend a lot of time on arranging his workplace and home.

- ♦ Whenever he watches the TV, he places the remote back in its

place so that next time things are easy for him.

- ♦ Want to improve ur diet:
  - ◇ Chop a ton of fruits and vegetables and pack them in container to eat all over the week.
- ♦ Similar Techniques to avoid bad habits:
  - ◇ If you are addicted to TV, ensure to plug out your plug so that there is resistance to keep the plug back if you want to watch TV.
    - If you want to take it to the next level, you can also remove batteries.
  - ◇ Whenever possible leave your phone in the other room.

- **Chapter 13:**

- **Stop Procrastinating by using 2 min rule:**
  - ♦ TWYLA Tharp: Greatest dancers, credits her success for daily habits
  - ♦ Habits are like the entrance ramp to the highway.
    - ◇ You sit through a bad movie for 2 hours, you keep snacking even when you are already full.
    - ◇ You check phone just for a second, and soon you have spent twenty minutes staring at the screen.
- **2 min rules:**
  - ♦ Start small:
    - ◇ The habit which you are planning to imbibe shouldn't take more than 2 mins to start.

◇ Example:

- Read before bed each night becomes read one page.
- Study for class becomes open my Notes.
- Run three miles becomes Tie my running shoes.

◇ A new habit should not feel like a challenge. The actions that follow can be challenging, but the first 2 mins should be easy, what you want is a gateway Habit that naturally leads down you a more productive path.

◆ Example:

◇ Dont worry about losing weight by going to GYM, worry if you are consistent to the GYM or not, even not doing anything in the GYM is also okay.

- **Cast your votes in building your new identity.**

● Chapter 14:

- Victor Hugo when struggling to publish a new book, he asked his assistant to lock all his clothes except a few shawls,
  - ◆ as he cannot go out with that shawls, he focussed his time on completing the book, and finished two weeks before the deadline.
  - ◆ Some times it works your way when you make bad habits hard.
    - ◇ This is often called as commitment device.
  - ◆ Author James clear asks the waiter to cut his food into half, pack the other half to go.
  - ◆ The best way to break a bad habit is to make it impractical to do.
- ◆ **Story:**

- ◊ How John Henry Patterson over came his problem of employee theft(Mid 1800's) in his store by deploying a new product Ratty's Incorruptible Cashier.
  - ◊ Which made him a profit of \$5000 (Equivalent to \$100000) now a days, from loss in the business.
  - ◊ Later he got the rights of Ratty's Incorruptible cashier and opened a successful company called National Cash Register, which is one of the successful business of the time.
  - ◊ The best way to break a bad habit is to make it impractical to do. Increase the friction until you don't even have the option to act. The brilliance of the cash register was that it automated ethical behavior by making stealing practically impossible.
- ◆ civilization advances by the number of operations we do without even thinking about them.

## • Chapter 15:

- Story of a public health worker named Stephen Luby left his hometown of Omaha, Nebraska, in an attempt to increase the health awareness among the people there and help the people to teach prevention is better than cure for the diseases like diarrhea, vomiting..etc
- Their team realized that the simple habit of washing hands could make a real difference.
  - ◆ Although people over there knew that, there were not effectively implementing it
    - ◊ Then Luby and team partnered with P&G to supply the neighborhood with safeguard soap.
    - ◊ In Pakistan, Safeguard is a safe-soap, people used to enjoy washing with it because of its great smell and easy formation of foam.
  - ◆ With in months the rate of diarrhea fell by 52 percent, pneumonia by 48 percent.

- It was a powerful example of **the fourth final Law of Behavior change : Make it satisfying, at the same time make sure the long term result of the same habit shouldn't hurt you.**
- How Wrigley's revolutionized the chewing gum by adding fruit flavor to the chewing gum. (Same principle.)
- Similarly don't get confused with the bad-habits, all the bad habits immediate outcome feels good but the ultimate/long term feels bad.

- **Chapter 16: How to stick with good habits:**

- **Paper Clip Strategy:**

- ◆ How a 23 year old stockbroker named Trent Dyrsmid, how he used to make 120 sales calls every day, and how he used to transfer each paper clip from one Jar to another after every call which resulted in a very high paying job very soon.

- **Track your progress.**

- ◆ Making progress is satisfying, like moving hairpins, marbles, paperclips.
- ◆ Visual measurements comes in many forms food journals, workout logs, loyalty punch cards.

- **Habit Tracking:**

- ◆ When you are feeling down, it's easy to forget about all the progress you have already made.
- ◆ Habit tracking provides visual proof of your hardworking.
  - ◇ A subtle reminder of how far you have come.
  - ◇ The empty square your see each morning can motivate you to get started because you don't want to lose the progress by breaking the streak.



- ♦ Habit tracking will make sure that you are focused on the process rather than the result.
- ♦ Whenever you miss a habit, try to get back to the track as soon as possible.
  - ◇ You are not going to miss two in a row.
- ♦ The first mistake is never the one that ruins you,
  - ◇ It is the spiral of repeated mistakes that follow.
  - ◇ Missing once is accident.
  - ◇ **Missing twice is the start of the new habit.**
- ♦ Any one can have a bad performance, bad work out or a bad day at work.
  - ◇ **But when successful people fail, they rebound quickly.**
- ♦ We don't realize how valuable it is to just show up on your bad/busy days.
- ♦ Some times the habit might not give you anything which help you, but it re-affirms your habit.

- **Chapter 17:**

- Accountability partner can help you to keep you on the track. We care deeply about what others think of us, and we don't want other to have a lesser opinion of us.
- Knowing that some one else is watching you can be a powerful Motivator.

- **Chapter 18:**

- Author explain the story of Steve Martin on how he became a successful comedian with his years of Practice.
- In Steve Martin's words:
  - ◆ 10 years spent learning
  - ◆ 4 years spent refining
  - ◆ 4 years as a wild success.
- How do we design habits that pull us in rather than ones that use away:
  - ◆ The human brain loves the challenge of just manageable difficulty.
  - ◆ **Goldilocks rule:**
    - ◇ Humans experience peak **motivation** when working on tasks that are right on the edge of their **current abilities**.
      - Not too hard, not too easy, Just right.
      - Once a habit has been established, however it's important to continue to advance in small ways to continue to be in the state of Goldilocks rule/ also called as flow state.
      - Scientists tried to quantify this feeling.
        - They found that to achieve a state of flow, a task must be roughly 4 percent beyond my current ability.
- How to stay focussed when you get bored working on your Goals:
  - ◆ **From on an Olympic elite coach when asked the following question:**
    - ◇ **What's the difference between the best athlete's and every one else?**
      - **At some point it comes down to who can handle the**

**boredom of training every day, doing the same lifts over and over.**

- ♦ **At same point, every one faces the same challenge on the journey of self improvement: You have to fall in love with boredom.**

- **Fair Weather Meditators:**

- ♦ David Cain, an author and meditation teacher, encourage his student to avoid being "fair-weather meditators.
- ♦ Similarly, we don't want to be a fair weather athlete or fair weather writer or a fair weather anything.
- ♦ When a habit is truly important to you, you have to be willing to stick to it in any mood.
- ♦ Professional take action when the mood isn't right. They might not enjoy it, but they find way to put reps in.