

HABIT HACKS

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Introduction

Whether we're conscious or unaware, we humans are dictated by patterns—may it be for the good or the bad. When we say patterns, it involves your habits and tendencies. Habits are those you do in a daily basis, while tendencies refer to your response in a given instance, for example, the normal response you have in face of fear or embarrassing moments.

However, we didn't automatically obtain such patterns. Genetics, environment, and upbringing play a big part in honing your personality and character, but the bottomline is how we have cultivated those patterns to shape us into what we are today.



To paraphrase Ralph Waldo Emerson, he once said, harness a specific thought, then it'll eventually lead you to take action. Cultivate that action, and then it'll result in a habit. Nurture the habit long enough, and it'll eventually become a character. Now your character is the primary determinant for how your future might be.



Fortunately, our current patterns are completely modifiable if we put time and effort to it. It may be challenging for adults, because patterns by this time is now hardwired into their nervous system, but there is definitely hope and this book is here to help you obtain a better quality of life.

Habits can be divided into three different areas. First, are those hardwired and deeply embedded into our subconscious that we don't notice them anymore. Such habits include our day-to-day agenda like personal hygiene or household chores.



The second area of patterns is those we've consciously developed due to health issues or skill development. It includes habits like eating a healthy diet, regular workouts, or proper sleep. Or specific types of trainings for athletes or people learning new skill sets.

The third kind of habit involves those habits that are seen as unfavorable, like overspending, smoking, and procrastination.



I know we've heard lots of people talking about what their new years' resolution is all about and how they're going to change their lives this year. However, this is proven to be just a fad than a resolution, really. They're all fired up and full of enthusiasm and inspiration that they make unreachable goals for the following year. But at the beginning of the February, they'll start to falter and go back to their old selves.

This phenomenon is also common when we go into a motivational seminar. You know the feeling of inspiration and motivation after hearing a powerful speech that it moves us to do things at that moment. And we've all been there, right? Motivational speakers are all around us, but in reality, you don't need inspiration from them. Knowing your priorities and purpose in life is enough to keep you moving and motivated. In my experience, keeping these factors in mind is sufficient to help me get through even in times when I feel unmotivated.

For people desiring change without a solid foundation as to why they're doing it, may find themselves reverting back to their old and maybe destructive habits unconsciously. As a result, they end up feeling disappointed and helpless.

It leaves a person in despair and questions his ability for change. Some of us may even lead to believe that change is only for the gifted or selected few with immense will power or self-drive.



If you're one of the abovementioned people—there is hope. In this book, we will provide you answers and help you achieve a better quality of living by making changes within your daily routine.

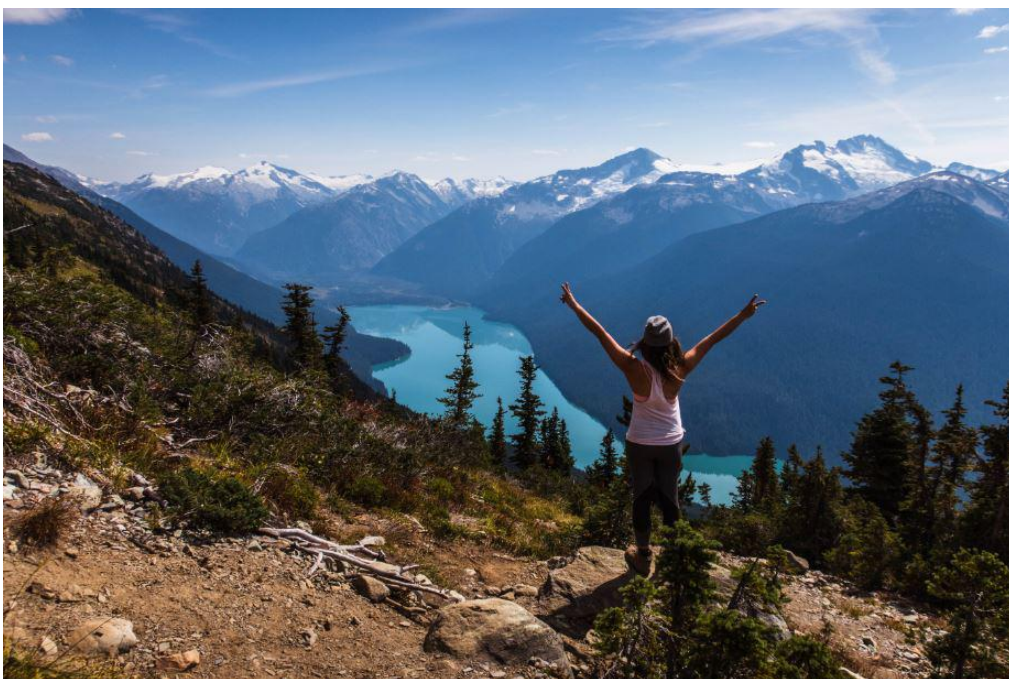
Habit Hacks is a breakthrough program that will help you achieve a better quality of life through simple changes in your behavioral patterns. It's made by interrupting your old habits and replacing it with new ones.

We will provide essential tools you can use in your everyday life that will help you overcome bad habits and incorporate new ones—rest assured that you'll feel freer and more in control of yourself.



Individuals with solid foundations, if you will, can withstand the feeling of disappointment when they unintentionally fail their goals. I assure you these people will move forward because they know what they want.

As mentioned, earlier habits are completely modifiable and factors such as genetics, environment, or upbringing are only minor contributors. Habits are more acquired than anything else. Their development was the result of our decision, conscious or unconscious, to be where we are. This notion should give you hope because it tells you that you can change no matter how old you are. Deflect the idea that says “you can’t teach old dogs new tricks”, because it’s certainly not true. I’ve read a story of an elderly woman who reached the summit of a mountain at the age of 83!



However, like any other skill, you need to invest time and effort in developing new habits. Hardships? Absolutely. Old habits won't back out easily and will try to fight back and stand its ground. This is because your habit becomes automatic when it is practiced with consistent, repetitive patterns that are created in your mind. The only way you will be able to defeat your bad habits is by standing up and equipping yourself for the tasks.

But never worry because we'll provide effective techniques and tools for you to battle them. The only thing for you to do is to persevere and consistently follow the steps and guidelines listed in this book. If you want a better quality of life you have to hone these skills until they become automatic.

The Hack Habits program doesn't stop upon successful behavioral change. We will also give you tips and tricks for lasting change. By doing so, you don't have worry about backsliding. Thus, resisting to old habits may be as easy as munching cake.

Hope you enjoy this book and find it very helpful. Shall we begin?

Chapter 1 – What Are Habits?

Before we go any further, it's important to understand what habits are and how they are formed. By knowing how they work puts you in a better position to effectively manage them.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines a habit as a recurring behavioral pattern and is mostly unconscious. A habit is usually acquired and reinforced through constant repetition of specific actions or behaviors. Once the pattern is settled, it becomes hardwired and difficult to modify.



To better understand this scientific context, you must first have to know how your brain works. Your mind is comprised of interconnected neurons arranged in complex arrays. Neurons receive signals from specific organs and sensory nerves, then translate them to the central nervous system. The end result of this complex transmission is our behaviors and actions—be it conscious or unconscious.

The brain registers, as well as maintains, pathways of various neurons through the chemical impulses that it receives from neurons. To increase cognitive ability, the brain has to keep a simple, streamlined process. This process includes setting the most used pathways as connections, which allows them to run automatically.

For example, you might find yourself feeling automated when doing your regular daily routines such as household responsibilities or personal grooming. The same principle applies to driving and walking.

Okay, so how do we explain bad habits?

Unfortunately, there isn't a conclusive definition what bad habits are. Some generally defined bad habits as smoking, for example, while others are subjective. Popular examples are weight management programs. Not all diets are the same, some restrict fat intake and

recognizes them as bad, while some advice fats as essential to weight loss and instead, considers consumption of carbohydrates as bad. In addition, the brain doesn't generally recognize a habit as either bad or good. As long as you consistently repeat a pattern, the brain will reward the behavior. The good and the bad now become depended on your conscience, whether such a habit has positive or negative impacts on those around you. Considering the latter sentence can help guide you in defining your habits.

Also, bear this concept in mind—a positive and productive habit can help you rise above mediocrity and become successful in life, while a bad habit is destructive for us and to our loved ones. Does this make sense?

A bad habit is also generally defined as anything that consumes much of your time in unproductive activities, which hinders you from achieving your goals or isn't beneficial. One popular example is you might be playing hours of video games instead of getting work done.



This may be the case, but playing video games isn't all bad and may be subjective. If you play video games with your family, it could mean achieving your goal of spending more time with your family, making it a positive habit. However, continually playing video games on your own every day while neglecting your duties is irresponsible. Thus, it makes the habit a negative behavior. Total honesty with yourself is a must, in order to determine whether your habits are good or bad.

Take the time to think things through and weigh in your present habits to see if they are beneficial to you. If some of them hinder you from achieving a specific task or goal, then they may be defined as bad habits. At this point, you have to start devising a plan to break the habits and incorporate new and better ones.

While there are bad habits where you can specifically pinpoint, there are some habits that are hard to detect because they're deeply hardwired and embedded into our subconscious.

Therefore, you might need extra effort and keen observation to determine these subtle habits. Realizing them is worth the effort because in knowing these habits, you'll be able to remedy them.

How to identify a bad habit

Most of us are so used to our habits that we don't actually realize that you have those habits. You can't change anything if you don't know their existence. Thus, the first step that you need to take if you want to change your habits is by being aware of which ones you have.

The only way you can identify their existence is by accident or doing a conscious effort to do self-assessment. Here are two methods that you can use to help you identify both your good and bad habit.

Internal Evaluation

Doing an internal evaluation of your habits requires self-reflection or introspection. Self-reflection is nothing more than analyzing your daily behaviors and taking note of how they make you feel. If you always find yourself snacking on sugary foods, and feeling guilty about it each time it happens, then you've just narrowed down one of your bad behaviors.

You can also use measurement as a way to recognize your bad habits. Most of the time, we tend to lie to ourselves about our bad habits or ignore them completely. With measurement, you can

quickly note your bad habits.



To do this, take a notebook and pen, or use your phone to record down everything that you do daily. If you want to find out if you have any bad eating habits, write down everything that you eat in a day, how it makes you feel, and what you think you could do about it.

When you take the time to write down what you do every day, you can uncover and reveal habits that you didn't even know existed.

External Evaluation

When you evaluate your habits on an external basis, you use information outside of yourself as a way to understand your habits. You take the time to observe and study the people around you and your environment so that to gain insight into your own habits.

For example, reading books will enlighten you on different behaviors and their repercussions. You will be able to determine which habits are good for you and which ones are bad.

Another example of using the external review process to discover your habits is observing the lives of successful people around the world. Look for people who accomplished remarkable things in their lives and note what habits helped them to achieve their goals, and determine if there were any habits they possessed that kept them from reaching their goals. Observing successful people will help you note some bad habits that you might not have considered harmful before.



Different Forms of Habits

Habits are a dominant part of our daily lives. Habits are automatic behavior, they occur even without our conscious effort. Some of these habits started when we were young, like sucking your finger. Habits are a part of us, and we are a part of our habits. Most people categorize habits into two areas, bad and good.

The bad habits tend to be more popular than the good ones and can include procrastination, telling lies, stealing, and laziness, among others. Different schools of thoughts have their own perspectives of different types of habits. Here are two different schools of thought on the different types of habits.

First School of Thought

According to the first, they can be divided into four different kinds as follows:

- Instigating
- Avoiding
- Regimental
- Unconscious

Everyone falls into one of these four types. Let's explore each category a little further so you can determine which one you fall into regarding your habits.

Instigating Habits

These kinds of habits are those that are established throughout the course of our lives to help guide us through our life projects. These habits are responsible for moving us forward toward a preferred idea. They are the habits that tend to lead to serendipity. You can enjoy these habits without actualizing any goal. They tend to take us on a path that is rewarding on its own. At times, these habits might have goals attached to them, but achieving these goals isn't necessarily as important as the process. You can refer to these kinds of habits as open-ended habits. Since you aren't focused on the result or outcome, what happens during the process can be framed to be a success.

Examples of instigating habits include:

- Reading
- Working out
- Spending time with friends
- Eating healthy
- Building a home



Avoiding Habits

These kinds of habits are widely known by everyone because we see these habits everywhere. They are the habits we are trying to break off. Avoiding habits include media addiction, slothfulness, gambling, gossiping, drinking, smoking, and every kind of addiction that you can think of. In this stage, the focus is on changing from one thing to something else.

These are the habits that we try hard to push away. You are either complying with them or not by moving them toward the instigating habits, which is by mentally reframing them. For example, if you are in the habit of gossiping, rather than trying to stop the habit, you can look for ways to compliment others instead.



If this is done over and over again, it will eventually override the habit of gossiping.

Regimental Habits

These kinds of habits involve doing an activity each time the same way without leaving any room for change. It is an automatic response. You can call it the devilish cycle, which robs you of the current moment. People who tend to rile against habit formation only consider this type of habit. Once you form a regimental habit, you lose control of the present.

These habits usually become unconscious if you aren't careful and on the watch. For example, parking in the same spot every day, showering, drinking a cup of coffee every morning, and more.



Unconscious Habits

These habits operate through us, and undeniably, we have them all. We don't see them, but we rely on our friends and family to help us expose them. These are habits that we repeat over time and have become embedded in our characters and lifestyles. We don't have conscious control over these habits. They include pessimism, negativity, overspending, frowning, picking your nose, etc.

Second School of Thought

Besides the habits mentioned above, they can also be categorized into three distinct groups based on the nature of the activities according to this second school of thought on habits.

Motor Habits

These are referred to as muscular activities. They are the habits that directly relate to our physical actions. Motor habits include walking, talking, sitting, standing, exercising, and maintaining a particular body posture, among others.

Intellectual Habits

These kinds of habits relate to the psychological process that is needed for our mental abilities. Intellectual habits include logical thinking, accurate perception, use of reasoning before making a decision, and good observation, among others.

Habits of Character

These are the habits that are expressed through our character. For example, helping those in need, trusting people, being honest, time management, being clean and tidy, etc. These, at times, are called emotional habits because they have the essence of feelings and emotions.



Chapter 2 – How Habits Work

The present condition of your current life is the result of the cumulative actions you've done consistently over time. Whatever your life has become, whether they are good or bad, they're the product of your habits. Thus, habits are a good determinant of a person's success or failure. It may sound a bit off-putting, but imagine the future of a person who read books daily from those who are consumed by degrading entertainment.

Essentially, you are what you repeatedly do, and your habits form the things you believe, the person you are, and the personality that you portray.

Most of the time, we don't have an explanation for certain behaviors we display. And we've all been there, right? Even if we don't like the response we're making, it just happens. Such behavior started as a habit. We may be aware at first but because we do them consistently, it becomes hardwired that we don't even know they exist. Understanding how habits work is the key to a life where anything is possible.

The Pattern of Habits

Every habit that you develop, whether good or bad, started as a set of patterns. Our habits follow a complex interconnection of neural pathway. This is the reason why a habit is extremely hard to shake off especially when it becomes hardwired. Although you know what you're doing is unreasonable and potentially harmful to those around, you do it anyway because of these impulses.

The formation of neural pathways or patterns is the same for both habits we perceive as bad or good. Our habits undergo three sequential phases to fully form. These three phases are as follows:

- Reminder
- Routine
- Reward

Whether you have the habit of reading, exercising, procrastinating, smoking, or something else, any specific pattern follows this same sequence.



For this reason—we have to constantly remind ourselves that a habit is learned and not something innate. Your genetics, upbringing, or environment plays a part, but only as a minor factor. This also means that whatever bad habits we have can be unlearned. Habits are just the result of repeated actions that become deeply embedded into subconscious overtime.

This also gives us hope if we want to learn new skill but feel we're too old for such a thing. The saying that says you can't teach old dogs new trick is simply rubbish. If you want to pursue new skills or any endeavour, you can definitely learn whatever you put your mind into. All you need are persistence and discipline. With persistence and training, you can shape your character and personality to whatever you want. It may be hard at first, but we have to remind ourselves that most of the problems and emotional distress we experience are due to the bad habits we developed overtime.



If you aren't happy with where your life is heading, Habit Hacks will help you rewrite the script of your life. You have the power to eliminate your old bad habits and develop new productive ones.

Taking a look at the good habits, there are many things that could be responsible for their development, including motivation, the drive to succeed, and competition. You might be wondering how motivation can cause habits? It is rather simple. For example, you might not be able to read a book a month, but while watching television one day, you see a teenager talk about how he reads four books per month.

The words of the teenager continue to play in your head. This constant replaying of the teenager's words motivates you to pick up the book and finish it in a month. As the days turn into weeks, and the weeks turn into a month, you finish the book and accomplish your goal. You feel so good about achieving the goal that you begin to read at least one book every month consistently. The words of the teenager motivated you to start a new habit.

Bad habits are typically caused by stress and boredom. Things like drinking, overspending, smoking, biting your fingernails, etc., are ways of responding to stress and boredom. However, it doesn't have to be this way. You have the power to deal with stress and boredom

without developing bad habits.

The Three R's of How Habits Work

As mentioned, the formation of habits follows a sequential pattern which involves—reminder, routine, and reward. In other words, what you do repeatedly, either intentional or unintentional, gets rewarded. You'll step one foot forward the moment you can pinpoint or identify the bad behavior you possess. When you know which habit to eliminate, you'll have the power to change your daily routine and eventually head down the path of a better quality of life.

In the battlefield, understanding how your enemy moves helps soldiers predict them. Thus, it may prove crucial in winning any battles. The same rule applies in habit modification—understanding how our habits are shaped can help to change them, even if you've had them for years.



In this section, we'll discuss these three R's of habit and how they impact us individually.

The Reminder

This is known as the “cue” or the “trigger” and is the first pattern of how habits work. All your habits start with a trigger. The trigger is responsible for telling your brain to go into automatic mode, as well as the particular habit used. An external trigger reminds you of the habit, which is associated with that particular habit.

This reminder immediately stimulates your subconscious behavioral pattern. This means that from that point forward, your subconscious mind is in control of your behavior. The trigger from your environment can be likened to a button, which puts your entire

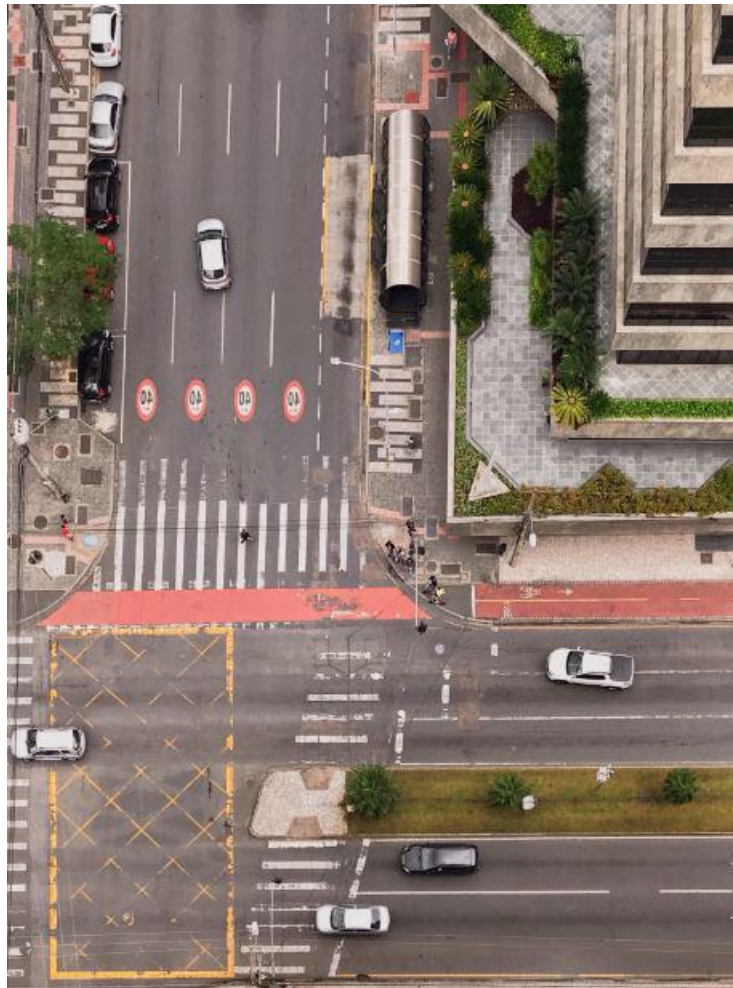
behavior into action when pressed. This is then translated into the second pattern, the routine.

The Routine

This is the actual behavior that is triggered by the reminder. The routine could be mental, physical, or emotional. The routine can happen quickly, without much thinking.

This is the key to becoming a habit because it doesn't require any thought or conscious effort by you to carry out the sequence. It merely happens because it has become encoded in our brains. It is not firmly planted in your muscle memory.

It is like driving to work, and you automatically know where to turn without thinking. The moment the sequence is ingrained into your muscle memory and brain, it becomes difficult to change. The third pattern is the reason why it can be a challenge to change a habit once it is learned.



The Reward

Every routine has a reward, either positive or negative. The reward process is responsible for helping your brain find out if such a routine is worth remembering for the future. As time goes on, the process becomes automatic.

The reminder-and-reward process ends up becoming entangled until a sense of eagerness and craving arises. Most times, the reward is connected with a feeling.

The moment this tri-pattern becomes encoded in our minds, it remains there forever. There is a specific neural network for each habit that is formed in the brain. This unique neural network strengthens whenever you repeat an activity, while weakening when an activity is stopped.

This is why people who have stopped a particular habit, and think that they've overcome it, will later find themselves going back to it when it is externally triggered. In this situation, the only way of changing the habit is to form a new one which is strong enough to replace or override the old habit's pattern.

Chapter 3 – Impact of Habits on Your Quality of Life

Habits have the capacity to potentially hinder us from achieving goals or become destructive to us and our loved ones. They can fester and develop into a lifestyle that can take away the life you want to create.

On the flip side of the coin, they can also help us create a life that is full of opportunities and possibilities. Moreover, good habits can make use of successes or failures. What the latter means is that it doesn't matter whether you fail or succeed, if you have good habits and use those experiences to do better next time.

According to Jim Rohn, a well-known author and motivational speaker, "Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going." Bad habits influence our daily life and distort everything in our lives. A bad habit can have a tremendous impact on everything from your health, personality, brain, and character.



What Effects Can Bad Habits Have on Your Brain?

Every bad habit either affects your brain directly or indirectly. Bad habits tend to make your mind needy. Irrespective of the form that bad habits take, they are incredibly addictive. This is why it is so much harder to break a bad habit, as opposed to creating a new one.

Our brains are hardwired at the biological level to seek out things to fulfill addictions. This biological process has something to do with our primitive genetics popularly referred to as the reward system. Whenever we experience something and perceive it as pleasurable, the brain releases a hormone called dopamine.

Now, this hormone also acts as a neurotransmitter which activates the reward system. Once this part of the brain is triggered, our psyche will want to experience it over again. Now it's up to us whether we'll succumb to its enticing invitation or resist. If we decide not to resist and indulge to it, the tendency to repeat becomes high. If we constantly give in, we reinforce such behavior, making it hard for us to break the pattern.

You can even say that the dopamine from such an experience makes you high because it's the same process that occurs in people with cases of substance abuse.

Once you continue to participate in a bad habit, the cycle of bad habits continues, which also means that your brain is forced to look out for these activities. This results in the brain's immense reliance on such behavior, which makes it incredibly challenging to break away.

Bad habits also tend to build a resistance of dopamine, which will end up reducing the quality of your life. Each time your brain is flooded with dopamine, it gradually gets used to the influx of the chemical.



After a certain period, your brain becomes discontented with the doses it receives and may demand more stimulation from dopamine. You can even end up becoming less joyful, gloomier, and duller. This lowers the quality of the life that you are meant to live and can steal away your ability to find pleasure and fulfillment in the little things.

What are the Consequences of Bad Habits on Your Health?

During your childhood, your mother might have told you not to suck your thumb or pick your nose. Like most children, you were probably a little rebellious, and once you were out of your mother's sight, you continued the action.

At the time, you didn't consider the social conventions and carried on with the action. Given enough time, the habit became something that you could do without, and suddenly you are known in the neighborhood as the kid who picks his nose.

While this won't affect your health, brain, or body, other bad habits can cause severe damage to your health and will ultimately reduce your quality of life. It is imperative that you avoid these four habits.

Smoking

In this day and age, there isn't a person alive who doesn't know that smoking is bad for their health. Even smokers are aware of the truth, yet they still continue to participate in this habit. As with any other habit, it still has to do with the dopamine resistance discussed earlier.

Smoking has different side effects that affect not just themselves, but those around them as well. Not only can it cause lung cancer, it

can also cause complications for pregnant women, heart disease, COPD, and many other health concerns. If you formed the habit of smoking, it is time that you find a way to stop.

Lack of Physical Exercise

Keeping your body active is crucial in enhancing our physical fitness and health. Exercise is performed for a variety of reasons. However, once you form the habit of not exercising, you end up depriving your immune system of the boost that it needs, which can eventually end up causing you to develop heart diseases and other severe medical conditions.



Consuming Alcohol

Even moderate alcohol consumption ends up damaging the body and brain cells. When you drink too much alcohol, you increase your chances of experiencing liver issues, brain damage, high blood pressure, diabetes, and cancer.

This isn't what you want if you are thinking of improving your quality of life. Too much drinking can interfere with your normal sleep patterns, which can lead to nervousness and trauma.

Chapter 4 – How to Break Bad Habits

We human beings are hardwired to seek rewards. As mentioned, it's a primitive gene that we've inherited from our ancestors. What this means to us present day humans is that once we indulge in something and constantly repeat it, then becomes deeply embedded into our subconsciousness. Breaking a habit may be easier for children and young adults, but becomes extremely challenging for mature adults and the elderly. Breaking a habit and incorporating a new one demands daily commitment, which is what the Daily Habit Hack is all about.

This material will provide you necessary tools you can use daily to improve the quality of your life. But beyond that, we also extend our support in events you feel down and in need of motivation. For our part, we will do our best to help you get back on your feet and move forward.

Like any journey, the beginning is always the hardest, which may even lead someone to become irritable and depressed. You may be tempted to repeat your old habit for one last time. But as mentioned, it only occurs at the start and you'll become progressively better every day. The only thing that's required of you is to persevere and stick with the program until you finally free yourself of your bad habits.

We also do understand that a life of happiness and prosperity is a life-long commitment. Thus, we extend our support through inspirational emails we'll be sending regularly to keep you moving forward. You may also contact us whenever you need emotional support.

4 Basic Steps in Breaking a Habit

Even though the process of breaking bad habits can be incredibly difficult, such feat isn't impossible and we all can achieve the life we desire. Before you begin the process, we ask you to be mentally prepared for a challenge, but with enough determination and persistence, you'll be able to break your bad habits for good.

Here are the four easy steps that you'll need to follow if you want to get rid of your bad habits permanently.

Step #1 – Identify the Problematic Habit

The first step that you need to take when breaking a bad habit is to identify it. Conduct an internal and external review of your life, as mentioned in Chapter 1, to determine the habits that you currently have.

The moment you can understand and accept the habit, you will have a better chance of dealing with it. If you identify a bad habit in your life, you need to accept it by telling yourself that you have a problem and that you are willing to do whatever is necessary to stop it.



Step #2 – Decide on a Replacement Habit

The key to breaking any bad habit is finding a replacement habit. For example, say that you love watching television. Instead of

expecting just to stop watching TV and being idle, you need to participate in something that you love to do and do it during the time that you could have been watching TV. If you like to read, pick up a good book that you've been meaning to read and get started. If you enjoy listening to music, start listening to it instead of flopping down on the couch and watching TV.

If you have a habit of biting your nails when you're bored or stressed, you can replace this unhealthy habit with something else. You could buy sugar-free gum and pop a piece in your mouth every time you feel the urge.

Your goal when it comes to breaking bad habits is to avoid leaving a vacuum because your habit will come creeping back when you haven't filled the void with something else. As you try to find a replacement, make sure that you don't end up replacing the habits with another bad habit because you'll have to start the process over again to deal with the new, bad habit.

Step #3 – Establish a Motivation

The power that keeps us moving forward in life is motivation. If you want to overcome your bad habits, then you have to find the motivation for changing your behavior. If you don't have the

motivation to get rid of your bad habits, then you need to find one.



You can start by thinking and analyzing the good reasons why you need to break it. Use the reasons that you come up with as your motivation. For example, if you are trying to reduce how much you smoke, or want to quit altogether, you can look at how smoking negatively affects your health.

Smoking also affects those around you indirectly, which could be the motivation you need. If improving your health and the health of those around you isn't enough for you to quit smoking, you could look at the financial impact this habit has on your life.

Consider how much money you are spending on cigarettes daily, monthly, or yearly and think about all the other things you could have spent that money on if you didn't have the habit of smoking. If your finances are tight, you can use this as an excellent reason to stop smoking.

If money isn't an issue for you, you might want to look at the time that you spend smoking as your reason. As an active smoker, you may be spending more than 1000 hours every year smoking. This is over 40 days a year just spent smoking. Think of what you can do in 40 days and find the motivation to quit. This is a lot of time that you could be spending on doing something more productive.

Finally, look at the health issues that you could end up with if you continue to smoke. There are higher chances of succumbing to lung cancer high, along with other cigarette-related diseases that are among some of the top-ranked killers in the world.

Step #4 – Modify your Environment

Where you live and who you interact with on a regular basis will determine whether or not you can change your behavior. Most people head to addiction recovery clinics to help them deal with their addictions. Unfortunately, after treatment, they often go back to where they came from and start hanging out with the same people who were a part of their lives before they got help.

At first, they might be able to resist the habit and can even caution those around them about the habit. Unfortunately, the more they interact with these people, the number they become to the issue. Given enough time, they give in and return to their old habits.



If you want to overcome your bad habit, then you have to change your environment and distance yourself from the people that tend to influence your choices. The hardest part of this step is that you might be forced to change your friends and your schedule.

Other Necessary Steps for Changing Bad Habits

The techniques discussed above are only the basic steps in overcoming a bad habit. In most cases, these comprehensive steps will require additional supplementary actions to help make them more useful. The following additional Hack Habits will enhance your chances of breaking through a habit and making it long lasting.

Change Your Mindset

Have heard the adage, everything starts in the mind? It does. In fact the entire body's function is connected to the nervous system.

As Norman Vincent Peale said, you change your thinking—you change your world instantly. If you want to break a habit, you have to change your mindset.

Establish a Goal and Commit to It

While this may seem obvious, it is something that you have to do if you want to break a bad habit. You can't merely start by wanting to break a bad habit without being sure that you really want to break it. If you want to avoid failing, then you have to commit to a goal.

Understand Your Habit

You can't go into a battle without knowing any background of your enemy. Likewise in habit modification, you have to make an effort in understanding how your behavior is stimulated, if you desire a chance in breaking it. As we repeatedly explained, habits are nothing but a series of patterns that have evolved because they

were constantly rewarded.

Anthony Robbins, author of the bestselling *Awaken the Giant Within*, says that to change a habit you must interrupt the pattern that's continuing the flow of the cycle. Understanding the trigger points of your behavior is the first step to take for you to effectively scratch the old habit.

Assess the Context of Your Habit

Any habit is repeated because of an emotional and mental satisfaction. If you can get to these factors that trigger the habit, then you can effectively determine how to break it. You will be able to understand better the rewards your brain is continuously looking for. It will also help you to develop alternate, healthier means of achieving the same rewards that the bad habit provides.

You need to be aware of what prompts the bad habit. Most habits are made daily, which we, in time, are no longer aware of their presence. We advise you to make a conscious effort to determine when it happens and try to write them down. Be especially aware of the emotions, conditions, and triggers.

If you bite your fingernails, take a few notes of what you are feeling when you have the urge. Writing down what you've been feeling, what's happened, and what you've been thinking about will help you lay a good background of how to deal with your habit.

Make a Plan

When you know what triggers your habit, you can start to make a plan for minimizing or eliminating the habit triggers and behavior changes. You should set up milestones for how to break your habit. This can help you create new patterns of action. For example, you may decide that when you feel like smoking, you can take a walk instead. It is important to remember that your plan will only work if you stick to it.

Change Your Environment

When you change your environment, you will dramatically reduce the temptation that you have of going back to your bad habit. You can avoid places that you used to visit that triggered the habit; you can look into studying a vocation or break your past relationships.

Create Obstacles for the Habit

If you can create barriers that make the habit unpleasant to perform, you will successfully break the bad habit. One way you can do this is by joining a support group or finding people who's also trying to break the same habit and join forces with them.

If you want to stop using Facebook or Twitter during the day, you can disconnect the Internet or download an app that turns off distractions. You can also create a punishment for the habit. For instance, maybe you can add another 30 minutes of cardio exercise to your daily routine every time you overeat.

Start Small

Take the process one step at a time. Don't aim to achieve the entire goal at once because it will only lead you to failure. Instead of saying, "I will stop eating junk," consider saying, "Today, I'm going to eat a healthy breakfast." Continue increasing the steps, and with time, you will reach your goal.

Reward Your Successes

Since your bad habits developed because of the rewards they received, you can do the same for your new, good habits. After achieving a particular goal, reward yourself immediately.

For example, if you have a terrible habit of always being late to work, you can reward yourself in some way when you arrive on time. Choose a reward that you like and repeatedly do it until the reward is no longer needed.



Be Patient

Breaking a habit is a challenging task. It can take years for you to achieve it. This means you have to learn to be patient. Even if a month passes without any sign of progress or success, don't quit.

Breaking your bad habits is a complicated process. Make sure that you follow the steps outlined in this chapter and be patient. Rome wasn't built in a night, and you won't be able to break your bad habits in a night either.

Chapter 5 – How to Form Good Habits

The Daily Habit Hacks program doesn't stop with breaking a habit. As soon as the bad habit is eliminated, it's going to leave a void. And this moment is very critical because if a person doesn't incorporate new patterns immediately, then the chances of the old habit returning is very likely.

We mentioned earlier to plan—this involves finding a suitable replacement for the old habit. It's advisable that the old habit must be closely related to the new one, so as to trick the brain into releasing dopamine. For example, if you're a sugar addict, then you may replace your sugary sweet with healthier options such fruits or raw honey that are relatively sweet as well.

Follow these guidelines to defeat your bad habit once and for all.

Step #1 – Start Small

The slightest adjustments in your daily routine can dramatically alter the outcome of your life. When you want to form good habits to replace the bad ones, you need to start small and find a manageable habit that you will be able to continue for the rest of your life.

You don't want to start with overly ambitious, unrealistic habits because you are just setting yourself up for failure. Don't try to reinvent yourself all at once.



For example, if your goal is to get and stay fit through regular exercise, you don't want to vow to do an hour of cardiovascular training, four times a week if you're overweight, out-of-shape, or sedentary. Instead, start with a habit that you know you can do and don't mind doing, and build upon the habit over time.

Step #2 – Take Action Immediately

If you want to be successful in forming good habits, then you have to act immediately in forming your them. You want to try to link this new habit to the end of a routine that you have already established. Typically, you want to try and plan your new habit in the morning when you have the energy.

Willpower fatigue is a real issue, making it increasingly harder to resist the temptation to forego your planned routine. Give the morning routine a try, even if you don't consider yourself a morning person.

Step #3 – Use a Trigger

Just like triggers can cause you to develop a bad habit, you can also use them to help you form a new habit. For example, your trigger

might be something that you do habitually, like brush your teeth, or it might be something that happens regularly every day, like commercials interrupting a TV show. Here's an example of how you can use a trigger to form a new habit:

- After I brush my teeth, I'll do ten minutes of yoga.
- When a commercial comes on, I'll do five pushups at the kitchen counter.

Step #4 – Modify Your Surroundings to Suit the New Habit

Making changes to your environment that will make it easier for the new habit to develop. For example, if you want to create a habit of working out first thing in the morning, keep your shoes and exercise clothes near your bed.

If you're going to drink more water, fill up a pitcher with the amount of water you want to drink daily and place it in the refrigerator the night before. Seeing your exercise clothes or water in the fridge is a visual cue that will help you initiate your new habit.

Step #5 – Visualize As If You Already Have the Pattern

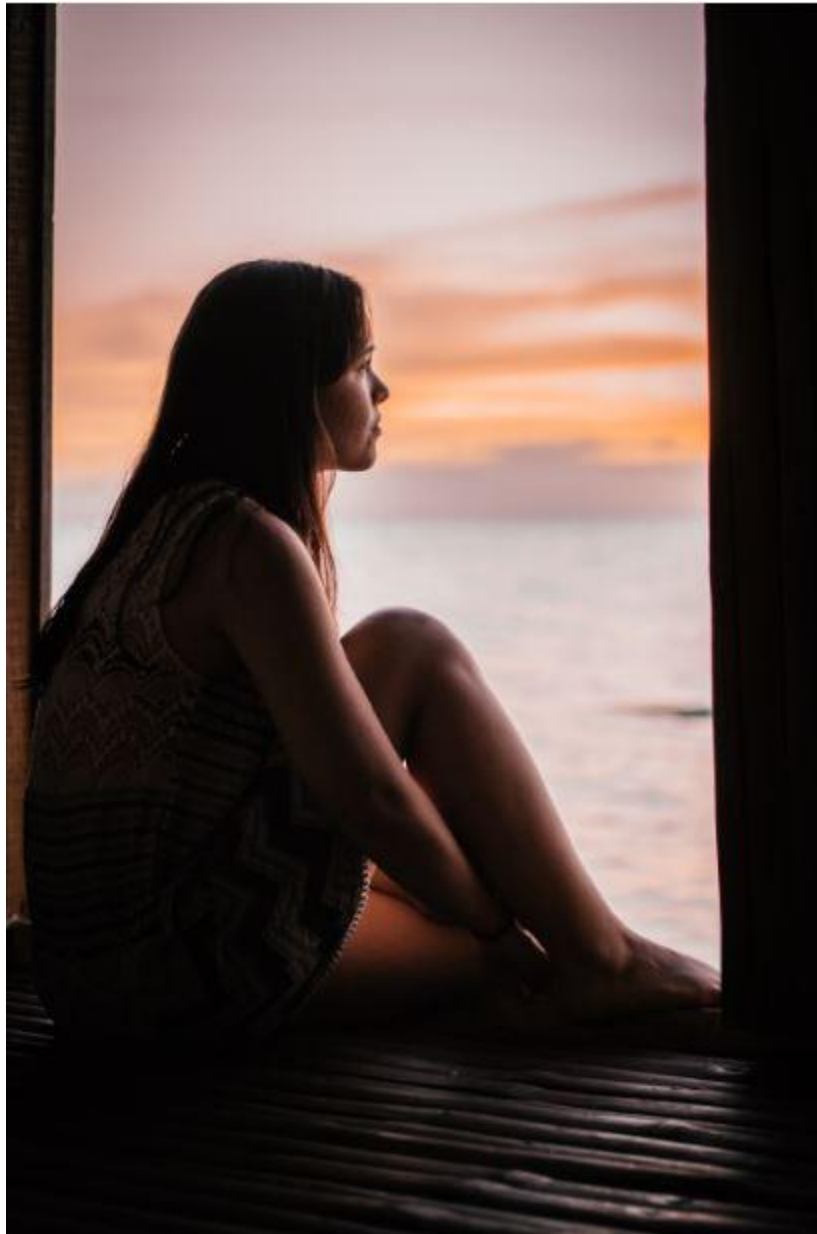
The great psychologist William James once said, if you want to gain something, act as if you already have it. For example, if you want to be confident then act like you already possess this feature.

Spend time picturing your daily routine, not just your wished-for results. Visualizing your anticipated results can be incredibly motivating. A study conducted by UCLA found that visualizing yourself achieving your goal can help in forming a new habit, but only if you also imagine how you will meet your goal. You need to picture yourself actually doing the daily routine that will ultimately help you achieve your goal.

Step #6 – Formalize a Plan B

Nothing ever goes as planned, which means you need to develop an “if: then” strategy, or a Plan B if you will, to determine what you will do if your habit routine gets interrupted. First, you need to think about the situations that are likely to pop up to interfere with your schedule.

Then you need to figure out what you will do for each scenario. For example: “If it rains and I am unable to go for my daily jog, then I will put on an exercise video and workout for 20 minutes.”



Step #7 – Reward Yourself

Rewarding yourself once in a while reinforces the formation of the habit.

The reward doesn't have to be grandiose, a simple walk in the park or roaming in the small is sufficient to strengthen the neural pathways from the new habit.

It's also advisable to give yourself demerits every time you falter, so as to discourage you from returning to the old habit.

Actions have to be repeated if you want to form new habits, and you will want to repeat actions that make you feel good. Giving yourself rewards when you successfully practice your new habit will help you better enjoy creating and sticking to the new habit.

Don't Be Too Hard on Yourself

If you have a lapse in your habit-forming plan, don't give up. Most habits can be formed in about 21 days. However, don't be so tied up in this "magical 21 days" that you feel lost if you end up slipping.

A study completed by the University College of London in 2009 found that missing one opportunity to perform the behavior did not materially affect the habit formation process. This means that you can occasionally mess up and fail to practice your new habit without it changing the overall result.



Conclusion

There are various factors in the formation of a habit—which include biological makeup, upbringing, experience, or environment. But no matter what it may be, we are not a prisoner of our own habits. We are their master and we can control them at our disposal.

Habits are nothing but a series of patterns that can be modified through constant effort. Once a habit is hardwired, it becomes extremely difficult to shake it off, but change is very possible. We also have to remind ourselves that habits have a singular goal to suppress your stressful situation and create the illusion that everything looks alright.

Fortunately, you aren't alone in your desire to break your bad habits. Just about everyone in the world has an undesirable habit that they would like to break. What matters most is what you do with your bad habit.

The techniques and advice we relayed in this book have been tested and are scientifically researched on. Following them thoroughly and diligently throughout your entire journey can help you achieve success and prosperity in life. As promised, we will also guide you and provide you with inspirational tidbits daily to keep you up on your feet.

The beginnings are always the hardest but you'll become progressively better if you persevere and find the power to move on. What's important is that you don't take too long to start on the journey so that you don't continue to find comfortable living in your status quo.

We only hope you the best! We hope to hear from you soon.

With much love,
Brandon Bishop