

Winning Habits



Redefine Success, Break Free From Bad Habits, And Achieve Your Full Potential

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Introduction



Everyone wants to be more successful in their life, but actually knowing how to take the steps needed to achieve that success can be mystifying.

Even when you understand what is required, it can be extremely challenging to take action unless you know where you are going.

Most people stumble blindly along, not understanding why they continue to fail at their efforts. But this book is going to change all of that for you.

In fact, this guide is going to give you the tools that you need to finally achieve the success you have always wanted – and that you deserve.

The Facts about Success

If you don't think that you are where you are meant to be, you are in good company. In fact, [according to a Harris Poll](#), two-thirds of Americans are unhappy with their life. Most people have not achieved their goals, and are not on track the way that they would like.

That's why the self-help industry is bringing in more than \$10 billion a year. People pay exorbitant amounts of money for personal coaching, self-help books, seminars, audio presentations and DVDs to help them achieve their goals, and most of the time, they fail at whatever they are trying to achieve, which puts them right back in the market for self-help.

The Solution is Surprisingly Simple

You don't have to be one of those people who continue to fail at setting and reaching your goals. While the self-help industry is set up for failure (because the majority of money is made from recidivism) the actual process of achieving goals is surprisingly simple.

In this book, you will learn that process. You will be able to achieve the results you have been wanting by learning how to get rid of negative habits that are preventing you from being successful and then replacing them with good habits that are going to be moving you towards the success you want every single day.

The Benefits Offered by This Book

There are probably hundreds of benefits that you could get from these chapters, but there are a few that this book has been specifically written to provide you. Here are ten benefits that you will get from this book.

- **Being Able to Define Success:** You will be able to define success, which most people cannot, and often, they have more trouble achieving their goals because they don't know exactly what success is for them. You will not only know what success means to you; you will also know what successful habits are so that you can create them easily.
- **Replacing Bad Habits with Good Ones:** Instead of learning how to get rid of bad habits, this book will teach you how to replace them with good ones. There is a very specific reason for this, and it has to do with the psychology behind habitual behaviors. This will be explored in much more detail in Chapter Four.
- **Forming Permanent Habits That Will Stick:** You will also find techniques for making habits permanent. Eventually, you want to reach a point where your good habits happen automatically, without you having to consciously think about doing them. These permanent habits will carry you along the road to success and the faster and more strongly you can make them stick, the faster you will achieve a higher level of success.
- **Getting the Confidence to be Successful:** People often lack the confidence that they need to be successful and a lack of belief in oneself is one of the main reasons that people fail. This book will

demonstrate techniques and tips on gaining that confidence so that you have a foundation for success.

- **Identifying What Triggers Bad Habits:** When you do an action habitually that has negative consequences, it is usually because something triggered it. Both types of habits – positive and negative – have triggers and learning what triggers your bad habits can mean putting a stop to them.
- **Creating Triggers for Good Habits:** Triggers do not just prompt negative habits. You can create triggers for good habits as well. In this book, not only will identifying negative triggers that prompt destructive habits be covered, but also identifying, creating and maintaining good triggers so that positive habits can be developed in their place. These good triggers can then replace the negative ones so that an entire overhaul of your habits takes place, where negative habits begin to quickly get replaced by good ones and you start seeing real changes in your life.
- **Motivating Yourself to Start the Journey:** In addition to triggers, you will also need motivation, and you will need a great deal of it the first few days that you are working on a new habit – or series of them. You will also learn how to create habits that reinforce each other which adds to your motivation both initially and over the long-term.
- **Motivation to Stay on Track for 30 Days:** 30 days is the key to developing new habits that become deeply ingrained in your mind and body. If you can consistently perform an action once a day for 30 days you will be on track to making it a permanent fixture in your life. This book will teach you how to make it through those thirty days,

including an entire section on the first few days of the journey, which are going to be the hardest.

- **Overcoming Obstacles that Stand in Your Way:** Finally, you will also get the benefit of expert advice on overcoming any obstacle that stands in your way, whether that be your family and friends being less than supportive, personal issues that make you want to put off your plan for another time and many more, both expected and unexpected, because you will encounter both.

The bottom line here is that this book is exactly what you need if you have struggled to create new habits and if you follow the principles here you will have success, no matter what your specific goals actually are.

Chapter 1: What are Successful Habits (or what is Success)?



Before you can start the journey towards being successful and begin building habits that move you along that road, you need to understand what success is. Most people only have a vague idea of success. This prevents them from actually becoming successful because they don't know where they are going.

It's like getting in your car and jumping onto the interstate with a full tank of gas, trying to drive to the perfect vacation spot. Odds are, you aren't going to stumble onto it by accident. You need a destination in mind, and you need a map to get you there.

That's exactly what this book is designed to be for you – both a way to identify your destination (sort of) and a road map to show you exactly how

to get there. But in order to start the journey, you first need to understand what success is, and specifically, what successful habits actually are.

The Definition of Success

The reason that people have problems becoming successful is that they have not figured out exactly what it means to be it. That's why defining success is the first step in achieving it.

The problem is, success isn't really a destination. Success is actually a journey with stops along the way. Those stops are definitely the destinations that you want to arrive at, but there is no "final destination" that you will get to where you will finally be happy. When it comes to being successful and happy, the only way to achieve it is to be constantly moving towards your goals.

For example, suppose that you have the goal of financial freedom – being wealthy enough to afford some of the finer things in life. You may want to eat out at better restaurants instead of places like Chili's or Applebees (or fast food). Once you have created enough wealth to be able to afford restaurants where the bill always comes to at least \$100, you are still not going to be satisfied.

You are going to want more, and that's okay. You set another goal – a higher goal – of being able to attend charity dinners where the price of a plate is over \$1000. Your happiness isn't dependent upon the actual reaching of that goal – it is based upon your hard work and your sense of accomplishment from achieving that goal.

The bottom line is that your definition of success should never be a specific destination, even though you should always be working towards that end, but it should instead be defined as being on the path to get the things that you want, one at a time, and continuing to improve yourself and inspiring yourself to reach more and more goals.

The Definition of Successful Habits

That brings us to the framework for those goals that you want to achieve – your habits for success. The habits that you will be teaching yourself will result in the success you desire. Habits for success are clearly defined, well thought out and designed to take you to the goals that you have set for yourself.

In order to understand what a habit for success is completely, you are going to have to set some goals first. But for demonstration purposes, in order to define habits for success, we will be using some example goals. In fact, we will be using three different examples because it can be difficult to understand how to identify the successful habit underneath the goal if the example is too unlike whatever you are trying to achieve.

Example One: The Weight Loss Goal

Our first goal is going to be weight loss. This may or may not be one of your specific goals, but getting healthy, losing weight and reducing the risk for heart attack, stroke, diabetes and other health problems is definitely one of the most common ones out there.

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If you have a habit of eating unhealthy foods and avoiding the gym, you are not alone. When age 50 starts to creep up on people, their health becomes a primary concern.

So, suppose that the goal that you have set for yourself is to lose 30 pounds and eat healthier. You don't want to set goals or develop habits that are negatives. You want to create positive habits instead. The reason for this is simple: when you try to change bad habits, you are taking something away from yourself – something you very likely enjoy.

Instead, form good habits that will automatically replace the bad habits. That way, you are giving yourself something good and not taking anything away – at least in your mind. The difference is subtle but it really will make a difference.

So, when it comes to identifying habits for success for this example, let's start with what you don't want to do.

Habits to Change (Negatives)

- Stop eating so much junk food
- Stop watching so much evening TV
- Quit going to all-you-can-eat buffets
- Lay off soda

See how all of those are taking something away from your life? You are removing things that you enjoy and that's just depressing. It will be very difficult to motivate yourself to change your habits because you feel as if you are giving up lots of stuff that you enjoy. But let's change those habits slightly and make them positive.

Habits to Add (Positives)

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- Start eating a piece of fruit every day
- Spend 30 minutes in the evening taking a casual stroll
- Start eating at nicer restaurants with a healthier menu
- Start drinking more water (flavored if desired)

Can you see how much of a difference this makes? When you are choosing new habits or trying to break old ones, you want to make sure that you are giving yourself something instead of taking it away. Even though you know somewhere inside that it is basically the same action, you can fool your brain into being more motivated this way. We will go into more detail on this in Chapter Four.

Chapter 2: How Actions Become Habitual



In this chapter, we will be discussing just how certain actions become habitual, which will both help you break negative or destructive habits and develop positive ones in their place. But before you can take a single step towards that goal, you first have to understand how you got to where you currently are.

Everyone has habits in their life that they have developed over the years. Some of them are really good for you and others not so much. For example, you might have learned to brush your teeth every morning and every night before bed. This will keep your teeth healthy and it is a habit that will give you a better smile, save you big money at the dentist and prevent a whole lot of pain and suffering (anyone who has ever had a dental extraction will agree wholeheartedly).

On the other hand, you might have developed the habit for procrastination. You definitely aren't alone. Everyone procrastinates to some degree, and some people make it a way of life. Procrastination happens for many reasons. Sometimes it is the fear of success, the lack of confidence in achieving it and sometimes, it is just a lack of motivation.

These are just two examples of good and bad habits. You have thousands of habits (good and bad) that you have ingrained in yourself over the years. Understanding how these habits developed will allow you to see your own successes and failures more clearly and being familiar with the psychology behind habits will give you an objective perspective and allow you to fix problems without as much emotional baggage.

The Psychology Behind Your Habits

It all starts with understanding the psychology behind your habits: how they form, what motivates you to perform them and how they become a permanent part of your life.

The first thing that you need to understand is that all habits – from brushing your teeth to recognizing and taking advantage of multi-million dollar business opportunities – are formed exactly the same way. The neurological process in forming habits is identical, and it doesn't matter if it is a tiny habit, a major habit, a bad habit or a good one.

Understanding this is actually one of the most important things that you can do because it immediately tells you something about yourself – namely, that if you can teach yourself to brush your teeth twice or three times a day, without even thinking about it, then you can teach yourself anything. You

can have confidence in your ability to teach yourself any good habit that you want because you have already done it many times in your life.

While brushing your teeth may seem to have very little to do with starting an online business and making it successful, the process is exactly the same. If you can do one, you can do the other.

Learning How to Brush Your Teeth Again

Imagine that you are not in the habit of brushing your teeth. You brush a couple of times a week, but you want to brush at least twice every day. You probably aren't trying to develop this habit in reality but bear with me because it serves to demonstrate a very important example of how habits are formed.

Let's start with the morning. When you get up in the morning, you know that you have bad breath. The last thing that you want to do is leave the house with dragon breath and then go to work and talk to co-workers.

That's why when you first wake up, you are going to spend a few minutes thinking about what it would be like to go into work with bad breath. Imagine the look on your co-worker's faces and how people would talk about you.

This should properly motivate you to get into the bathroom as soon as you wake up to brush your teeth.

If you want to motivate yourself in the evening, using the same example, then spend a few minutes lying in bed and thinking about all of the bacteria,

sugar and rotting bits of food that is still in and on your teeth. You will want to get up and brush them before you go to sleep.

These pre-actions are called triggers, and they are the basis of the neurological process that creates habits. When you have a trigger, you motivate an action. You can create these triggers yourself so that you do the action automatically, and it won't be a chore. It will be something that you actually want to do.

Creating Long-Term Habits that Last

Creating your trigger is only the first step in the process of creating a long-term habit. You first have to train your mind to trigger the action and then you will perform it. When you do that enough times (which is where the 30 day plan outlined in a later chapter comes in) the action will become automatic and you will no longer need the trigger in order to remember to do the action.

It is just as important to be motivated when you are triggering an action as it is to remember to do it. Just because you created a trigger doesn't mean that you are going to want to perform the habit. That's why you need to create a benefits list for every habit that you are attempting to form.

Use visualization to motivate yourself to complete an action. When you can see the end result that you want in your mind you are much more likely to do the habit with or without the trigger.

This is just a brief overview of how habits are formed. By the end of this book, you will have a much better grasp of the psychology behind habits and especially how you can create them with staying power over the long-term.

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Creating long-term habits that will last a lifetime does take a little work, but most of it is right at the beginning and the rewards for doing it are actually pretty great.

Chapter 3: Setting Goals



In order to start your journey towards success and begin developing successful habits you first need to have some goals. This is the destination that was discussed in Chapter One.

Learning how to set goals properly isn't complicated, but it does need to be done the right way. However, the most important thing that you understand about goal setting is that the journey is much more important than the end result.

This was discussed a little in Chapter One. When you have goals and you are on track to reaching them, you are happy. But your happiness isn't going to become permanent when you finally reach those goals. You will be more satisfied with life and happier, but you are still going to want to set new goals. You will never be satisfied, and that's perfectly okay.

What Are Goals Then?

So, you might be wondering just what the purpose of goals actually are then. You cannot be successful without goals, and you cannot form good habits without goals.

You can try to force yourself to do something habitually, but without a goal behind them, those habits have no power and they will not stick, even if you do follow the steps required to get them to become permanent. Your goal is not only your motivation; it is also your blueprint. The goal that you are working towards will put demands on the types of habits that you create and it will shape the way that you change.

Creating a List of Goals

One of the best ways to set goals that will show you what habits you need to form to achieve the end result is to use the YEAR-MONTH-WEEK model. This is a style of goal setting that is similar to the LONG-TERM/SHORT-TERM model that most people are familiar with. However, YEAR-MONTH-WEEK is a much more effective model in today's world, where we measure success in those clearly defined periods of time.

If you are lucky enough to be reading this in January, then you have a great opportunity to create a perfect goal structure. If not, then you have a couple of choices: either set your plans for "the rest of the year," however many months are left, or you can set your longest goal period over the next 12 months, no matter what month you start in.

Those goals for the 12 month period are your long-term goals. They will be the guide that you will use to create habits. Your 12-month goals are going

to be what you are attempting to accomplish with the habits that you create and you will see how they break down into those habits shortly.

First, we need to set some goals so that you can see how the process works. Let's start with some simple example goals for the 12 months period.

- Learn a new language
- Improve website traffic
- Lose some weight
- Read more books

The problem with these goals is that while they definitely tell you what you should be working on, they aren't clearly defined enough to create habits from. So, let's make these goals something with a definite achievement point.

Goal 1: Learning a New Language

Instead of learning a new language as a goal (which may actually take you longer than a year) let's use something that you can actually measure. For example, suppose you used the popular (free) language learning website Duolingo.

Duolingo allows you to earn a specific amount of XP (Experience Points) each day that you study your language. It also tracks your learning so that you can know when you are 100% fluent. This is perfect for a goal because you can set a goal of becoming X percent fluent rather than the rather vague (and maybe impossible) goal to learn a new language in a year. As a side note, you should also choose your language.

Goal 2: Improve Website Traffic

This goal assumes that you have some type of website (possibly one that is making money) that you want to get more traffic to. This may not be your goal at all, but it is just an example to help you form your own goals.

In this case, your goal simply identifies your objective without a specific end point. If you increase web traffic by a single visitor, you will have achieved your goal, and that's probably not what (the hypothetical) you had in mind.

Goal 3: Lose some weight

Okay, this is a common goal, but again, it's not specific. Lose how much weight? By when? If you don't have a clearly defined timeline, you aren't going to be able to make habits that allow you to reach that goal.

Goal 4: Read more books

You are probably getting the hang of it by now. How many more books do you want to read? If you are planning for a year, then you need to realistically choose how many you will be able to get through. You also need to identify what types of books you want to read.

Goals That Will Actually Work

Let's rewrite those original goals that we have identified into ones that will actually help you create habits, as outlined in the next section. Here are some examples of these goals with more specifics and a timeline.

- Goal 1: Become 25% fluent in Spanish using Duolingo
- Goal 2: Improve Website Traffic by 50%

- Goal 3: Lose 50 pounds, 8 inches from waist
- Goal 4: Read 20 Fiction Books & 10 Nonfiction Books

Creating Short-Term Goals AKA Habits

So, once you have some reasonable, specific 12-month goals, you want to break them down into 30 days goals. Remember, your key to success is 30 days of training a habit.

This is where you break down your goals into monthly ones that will help you create daily habits. Remember, the goals themselves are simply a destination. Now, you have to create action to go along with these goals. Sometimes, you can create smaller goals that give you a much more manageable short-term achievement within a 30 day period. For example, if you were to use the goal to create more web traffic for example, you might have a goal during the first 30 days to evaluate your current web traffic, search keywords and the like. You can also set goals to research methods for increasing traffic.

In some cases, however, this is counterproductive. For example, if you set a goal to increase your Spanish fluency by 20% in a 12 month period, you can't really break it down into more manageable goals unless you plan out which lessons you want to tackle each month and this often backfires because some lessons are much harder than others and people get frustrated when they cannot reach their goal.

The bottom line here is that you basically want to look at each goal individually and figure out how you are going to break it down. The YEAR-MONTH-DAY system is great for using habits to reach goals, but just be aware that you don't have to worry too much if all you have is a destination

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goal – one that is specific and measurable – and some habits that will take you there.

Chapter 4: How to Stop Bad Habits by Starting Good Ones



If you are planning on changing your life and becoming more successful by stopping your bad habits, you are going about it entirely the wrong way. There is a much better way to stop bad habits and that's simply by replacing them with good ones.

Let's get straight into some examples so that you can see exactly what this means for practical purposes. This is a list of some of the bad habits that you might want to change.

- Stop eating so much fast food
- Stop binge-watching Netflix and get more work done
- Quit procrastinating so much
- Stop staying up so late

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- Quit being so messy

Okay, so now you have identified some bad habits that you want to change. The problem is, if you start on the road to change with this list you are going to psych yourself out before you even begin, because you are going to be taking things away from yourself. The way that this list looks to your brain is something like this.

- Never eat those delicious burgers, fries and milkshakes ever again
- Stop having the enormous pleasure of binge-watching Netflix TV shows
- Work all the time and always be doing boring stuff
- Quit partying and never stay up and do anything fun
- Be a boring neat freak and be cleaning up all the time

When you are listing bad habits that you want to break, you are making your brain think that it's losing some of the most pleasurable parts of your life. This will make you battle yourself when you try to make these changes. Instead, you want to do something different, like setting some new habits that will add benefits and value to your life.

Here are some examples of some habits that will do exactly the same thing as the ones identified above, but will trick your brain into thinking you are getting a reward instead of being punished and having something taken away.

- Eat healthy for at least one meal per day
- Watch Netflix on the weekends
- Complete at least 5 tasks each week *before* they are due
- Start getting more sleep on weeknights

- Become more organized in certain areas (home, office)

As you can see, even though these give you the same exact result as your other habits, they are not taking anything away from your life – especially something pleasurable. Sure, if you read between the lines, you can see that watching Netflix on the weekends means that you don't watch it on the weekdays, but your plan isn't to fool yourself completely; you just need to trick your brain a little to get it to quit fighting you when you try to implement a new habit.

Why Negativity Never Works

The number one factor that will determine whether or not you can achieve your goals is whether you believe in yourself. Any sort of negativity, whether it is coming from the habits that you are changing or the thoughts going through your head is going to mess with that confidence.

When you replace your negative habits with positive ones, you see positive change in your life. If you are focusing on the negative habits then all you do is get depressed and overwhelmed because you see just how many negative habits you have that you need to change. This starts an all-or-nothing cycle that results in nothing but depression and failure.

On the other hand, if you are trying to add positive habits to your life, you don't have the all-or-nothing ultimatum. You feel good when you act on your good habits, even if you aren't perfect at them, and it makes an environment much more conducive to change.

Things to Keep in Mind

There are a few things that you should keep in mind as you are working on changing your habits. These are truths that you should remind yourself of every day until you have them memorized and can refer back to them.

1. Everyone has bad habits that they are trying to change. Some people have a few more than others but that doesn't make them any less valuable of a person and the individual who overcomes more to change their habits can end up a much stronger person than someone who got there easily.
2. Whenever you find a bad habit that you want to change, think of a way to put a positive spin on it. Find a way to create a good habit that will squeeze out the bad habits without making you think that you are losing anything valuable from your life.
3. The most important thing that you can do when it comes to training a new habit is try your best every day. Don't get discouraged because you had a bad day and didn't do as much as you thought you should have. As long as you made an effort it is going to count towards your 30 days.
4. Remember, 30 days is just a guideline. Everyone is different and there is nothing wrong with you if you need a little longer to make a habit stick. In fact, some studies show that if you want to form a truly effective habit, then 66 days is a better guideline. However, 30 days is a really good start.

5. Be flexible when it comes to training new habits. If you have made a goal that you are going to study a new language for one hour every day but you cannot every find a full hour to study, there is nothing wrong with cutting it down to a half hour, or even ten minutes if necessary. Try not to be too rigid and don't be too hard on yourself if you don't get it right the first time.

A Recap of the Important Stuff

The thing that you want to take away from this chapter is that you always want to make your habits something positive that are adding something to your life. There are some great examples here of ways that you can turn a negative into a positive. These may have nothing to with your goals, and in fact, your goals may be so different that you might not be able to see right away how you can replace the “do not” with the “do” habits.

A good way to overcome this is by writing down the “do not” and then coming up with a list of things that you might be doing in place of it if you suddenly found that you were no longer exhibiting that behavior tomorrow. Keep plugging away at it and refine your habits as needed.

Chapter 5: Identifying Your Triggers



In this chapter, we are going to discuss your triggers. Triggers are really interesting psychological elements. Triggers are things that happen in our lives that evoke an emotion, an action, a behavior or a thought.

You have experienced triggers throughout most of your life and you may not even have realized it. For example, when a certain song comes on the radio it may evoke a very specific memory. When you think of a specific moment in your life it may give you a very specific feeling about that moment.

Your good and bad habits work on these very same triggers. For example, someone that is trying to quit smoking often has to deal with the physiological trigger of the smell of cigarette smoke. This can create an almost irresistible urge to smoke again.

The Good & Bad Triggers

So, you have two tasks when it comes to cultivating habits to help you reach your goals. First of all, you need to realize that negative habits shouldn't be stopped, but replaced. We discussed this at length in Chapter Four. Second, you need to identify negative triggers and create positive ones so that you can have an action plan for avoiding negative habits and triggering positive ones.

Creating Good Triggers & Identifying Bad Ones

If you want to create good habits then you are going to have to create good triggers. Good triggers are things that you teach yourself that prompt positive actions.

For example, an instance was mentioned earlier in this book where you lay in bed thinking about the germs and disease that was incubating in your mouth to trigger yourself to go brush your teeth. This would be considered a pre-action state, which is one of five techniques for building positive triggers detailed below.

Trigger Technique One: Scheduling

This is probably the most popular way to trigger a positive action. Just about everyone has some kind of schedule that they have to follow, and scheduling can be a great reminder that you need to take action.

Scheduling doesn't necessarily mean that you have to choose a particular time to set an alarm in order to trigger your positive action. There are several ways that you can go about it. You could create a to do list and

refer to it throughout the day or you could plan to take your action directly after lunch, no matter what time you actually take your lunch.

When it comes to negative triggers, just be aware of patterns that you know lead to bad habits around certain times of the day. For example, if you find yourself binge eating during evening TV watching, you can take steps to replace that ice cream or platter of chicken wings with something healthier.

Trigger Technique Two: The Pre-Action State

This is the state that you are in before you actually take the action – whether good or bad. One example is the going to bed and thinking about the health of your teeth because you didn't brush. Another example might be when you start thinking about what fast food restaurant sounds good today, you can step in and replace that fast food thought with something healthier.

However, the pre-action state doesn't just apply to thoughts; it can also apply to emotions. It is a true fact that when you are in a certain emotional state, you are prone to triggering actions, both good and bad. You can see this in many addictions, where depression, euphoria or anger may trigger an addiction response.

Trigger Technique Three: The Preceding Event

Perhaps one of your goals is to check your phone less. This is a perfect example of a trigger event that precedes your habit or action. When your phone goes off, you pick it up and check the messages, even if it is nothing more important than Rhianna tweeting about how much she loves chocolate.

Preceding events can be triggers for negative actions, but they can also easily be turned around so that an event triggers an action. One of the best ways to do this is to tie the new habit to an action that is already habitual. For example, when you have a habit that is already deeply ingrained (drinking your morning coffee, brushing your teeth) you can tie a new habit to the old and make something that you already do every day your trigger action.

Trigger Technique Four: Your Current Location

Sometimes, you can use a specific location to trigger an action that you are trying to make habitual. Your environment can be a powerful ally (and enemy) when it comes to creating habits because we are so used to our environments controlling what we do.

For example, when we're in the family room, we watch television. When we're in the dining room, we eat. When you're at the office – you work. The list goes on and on. You can make specific locations work for you when it comes to building habits but you need to keep a couple of things in mind. First of all, you can't make the location too general. For example, if you choose your office building as a trigger location you are never going to trigger the action because you spend eight hours there. Either that, or you can trigger the action over and over, and that can get frustrating and counterproductive as well.

The other thing to keep in mind is that you want to keep your actions simple and reasonable. If your trigger location is an intersection that you pass by on your way to work, don't try to do an entire Spanish lesson triggered by that location. Instead, choose something like quick self-affirmations that you can recite over the next few blocks.

Trigger Number Five: Your Friends and Family

Your friends and family probably have more of an impact on your life than you'd like to admit. Do you do things differently when your parents are in town? If you go to the bar with your buddies, do you order a beer, even if you would rather have a soda pop?

Rather than allowing your friends to unconsciously affect your habits, use them to trigger positive ones. If you go to the bar with friends and you are trying to cut down on alcohol, then actively choose something else. Use that person or group as a trigger for a positive action.

Chapter 6: 30 Days to a New Mindset



One of the major tenets of this book is that you can develop a habit that will completely change your life in about 30 days. This isn't just a nice idea, but it actually something that you will find to be true. That is, as long as you do it correctly. This chapter will be an overview of how the 30 days to building a new habit will progress and give you a picture of what it actually takes to build a habit.

What is a New Mindset?

You are constantly creating a new mindset without even realizing it. Sometimes it hits you like a ton of bricks and other times it is more subtle. Think of a time in your life when you realized that something you had taken for granted for a long period of time was untrue (or true in some cases).

It may have been something that you assumed about a friend or co-worker, or it might have been something about yourself that you only just realized. Whatever it was, it changed your mindset. You had a psychological shift as a result of that revelation.

It works the same way when you create a new habit; when the habit has become ingrained so that it is almost automatic, your mind changes and the way that you feel about the habit changes.

Just as an example, suppose that your habit was working out at the gym every day for a month. At the end of that 30 day period, many people find themselves actually looking forward to going to the gym and working out, and even missing it when they cannot find time to go.

That's because their mindset has changed about the activity of working out. Now, it is something that they enjoy and get pleasure from whereas before, when they first started forcing themselves to go, it was pure drudgery that took all of their strength to do.

That's the power of changing your mindset and it is something that you will experience with every new habit that you form and every bad habit that you replace with something positive.

Why does it Take 30 Days?

This is a really good question and one that science has been asking and answering for decades. To understand the reason behind the 30 days rule you have to understand a bit more about the science behind that rule and the reasoning behind this book.

First of all – and bear with us here – it doesn't take 30 days to form a new habit. At least, it doesn't take 30 days for everyone. The 30 days is used as a guideline because the authors of this book believe that it is a good, solid time period to develop a new habit (as long as it is practiced daily) based upon the currently available research.

The original guideline, which was in place from the 1950's until almost 2010, is that it took 21 days of doing something every day to form a new habit. This number came from a surgeon who studied plastic surgery patients and amputees. Based upon his (relatively unsound) research, that was how long it took people to get used to their new plastic surgery look or to get used to losing a limb.

But the truth is, studies have shown that it can take anywhere from about 18 days all the way up to 66 days to form a new habit. This will depend upon what the habit is that you are trying to master and your own ability to train yourself to learn it.

Keeping it Simple

One of the most important things that you can do when you are building habits during the first 30 day period is to keep it relatively simple. That means building just one or two – or at the most three – habits at a time. This will allow you to concentrate on those habits and make sure that you are taking action every day.

As you become more experienced, you can add more and more habits that you are trying to learn, tying them to trigger actions that you already do. For example, if you brush your teeth every night without fail then you can safely tie a new habit to this trigger action without putting too much pressure on

yourself. But the first time you take these techniques for a test drive, you should stick with three habits or less.

Complementary Habits

There is an exception to this rule in the form of complementary habits. These are habits that reinforce each other. When you have several actions that are related, you can use them to trigger one another and you can add several more habits to your day.

This works best when all of the habits are necessary for you to reach your goal. For example, suppose that your goal is for you to get in shape to run a marathon in 12 months. Even if you are overweight and need to cut down on calories, dieting alone is not going to get you in shape for a marathon. Instead, you can use dieting, exercise and even stretching to reinforce each other.

You do want to be careful of trying to do too much, even with complementary habits. If you try to do too many things in a day you are going to get overwhelmed quickly and you may not be able to complete everything in one day, which results in frustration and depression.

The Recap

Just remember, 30 days is more of a guide than an actual number that will mark when you have learned a new habit. You aren't going to go from no habit on day zero to magically performing a habit perfectly on day 30. Be flexible and reinforce when you need to.

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Keep your habits simple and try to stack complementary habits on top of each other so that they reinforce each other. But try to keep the number of habits you are trying to learn in a 30 day period down to a small handful because you want to train yourself for success so that next time you do a 30 day session you will already have the confidence to make habits stick.

Chapter 7: Your First Five Days



In the previous chapter, we discussed how you can build a new habit in 30 days and some of the things that you should expect as you begin the journey. Any period of 30 days where you are developing a new habit can be divided into two parts – the first five days and the remaining 25 days. That’s because the first few days are going to be just as difficult – and quite possibly more difficult – than the remaining 25 days all put together.

How this Guide Can Help You

If you are just starting on the journey to change your habits (and therefore your mindset) in just 30 days, then you are going to need a step-by-step guide that will give you advice and information for each day. Some days are going to be grueling and some days are going to be okay, but you can assume that the first five days are going to be the hardest.

That's why we have created a guide for each of the five days that you can use when it comes time for you to start your 30 days to success. These daily guides are below. It is recommended that you do not read them in advance and that you stop reading this book at this point until you are ready to begin your 30 days of forming a new habit.

If you are ready and this is Day One for you, then let's go ahead and get started.

Day One:

You've started on your journey! Congratulations are in order! Some people never make it to this very important step. You have a bit of a battle ahead of you but it will not be nearly as bad as you are imagining. In 30 days, when you are doing these habits automatically and these first few days are long behind you, you are going to laugh at how easily you were able to overcome.

The most important thing that you need to remember on day one is that you take it slow. Sure, you want to work on your habits and try to complete them if you can, but the important thing is that you try to do at least one thing from each of the habits that you are trying to form. You can work on improving a little bit each day, but it is vital to think about and take some kind of action on each habit you are working on, each and every day of the 30 day period.

If you happen to miss a day, all is not lost. You can simply do it the next day and make sure that you don't miss again if at all possible. One or two misses may not keep you from developing your habit, but five or six just might. It will depend upon you.

Day Two:

So, you made it through day one and you did the two things that were necessary to make these habits stick – you thought about doing something with them during the day and you took some kind of action on each of them.

Now, you are going to work on them just a little bit harder on day two. For example, if your goal was to make a habit of going to the gym and working out for 30 minutes a day and you exercised for 10 minutes on day one, then on day two you are going to try to go for 15 minutes.

Whatever you did on day one, you are going to try to increase it on day two.

Day Three:

Day three is another day when you are getting used to your new habits. Don't push yourself too hard on day three because it is this day when lots of people jump ship. Instead of trying to fulfill your goal completely on the third day, just try to do a little bit more than you did yesterday.

Again, using the gym example, if you worked out for 15 minutes on day two, then work out for 20 minutes on day three and then stop, even if you think you can go longer. If you trying for 30 and you find that you can only make it 22 minutes you are going to suffer a big disappointment – which could lead to a setback or an abandonment of your plan entirely.

Day Four:

Now, you are getting serious about your plan. Today is the day when you are going to make your first attempt at completing your habit entirely. If your goal is to work out for 30 minutes per day then you are going to do

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your very best to stay at the gym and being active until that 30 minutes is up.

Don't worry if you cannot do it. This is sort of a trial run and you still have one more day to perfect your technique if you cannot make it the entire day. But if you find yourself putting off the actions that will develop your habits, sit down and remind yourself how important they are to you.

The important thing on day four is to do your very best to complete as many habits in their entirety as possible. If you can't then you still have tomorrow, but if you can, then you'll have a big head start on your remaining 25 days.

Day Five:

So, day five has arrived. You have been building up to this moment for the past few days and once you complete your new habits for this day you will be over the steepest part of the hill and headed for the downhill slope. Do everything in your power to complete all of your habits all the way today.

If your goal is 30 minutes in the gym and 1000 words on your novel, make sure that you complete every minute and every word. This is the best way that you can enter the remaining 25 days of your challenge with the confidence to complete the full 30 days and learn the habits that you have decided upon.

Chapter 8: Your Remaining Twenty-five Days



So, you have made it through the first five days of your 30 days to success! Congratulations again! Everything from here is a piece of cake, but don't let your guard down, because you are still going to have days where you feel like giving up, and where you think that this is never going to work and that your brain is unwilling to get the message that these are habits that you need to form.

First of all, take a look back at the past few days. Was it a struggle? If the answer was no, then you might not have been trying hard enough or challenging yourself enough. For most people, getting through the first few days is a major struggle.

But no matter how hard or easy the past few days were, the good news is, now you can forget about that portion of your habit-forming plan. Never

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again will you have to do those grueling first few days – unless of course, you give up somewhere in the near future and have to start all over again later on.

So, let's go through the rest of your thirty days, one at a time, with a little inspiration and motivation to carry you through the rest of the period.

Day 6: You are doing a great job! You have made it through the toughest part and now it's time to stick to those habits and make them your own.

Day 7: Remember, when you make a mistake or have a setup, it's not proof that you are going to fail. The only thing it proves is that you are trying.

Day 8: You are amazing! You have made it through an entire week of forming a new habit. You are a quarter of the way there and you are getting close to the downhill slope of this plan.

Day 9: Desire is the key to motivation but it is your persistence, hard work and sheer determination that will actually get you through the doorway of your dreams.

Day 10: Guess what! You are 1/3 of the way there. You have done better than more than 60% of people who set out to develop new habits. You are not yet part of the successful elite, but you are well on your way!

Day 11: Take this day and skip your habits to do a self-evaluation. Do you think you are working as hard as you can towards your goals? Do you feel like your habits are really starting to stick? Do you need to adjust your triggers or throw some of them out completely? Take this day and make sure that you are on track and that nothing in your plan needs adjusted.

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Day 12: Remember back to day one? You never thought you would make it this far. But here you are almost halfway through the month. You should complete your habits today, but you should also think about what your life is going to look like when you reach your goals and you get the rewards from forming these habits. Come up with actual scenarios and make them as close to reality as possible.

Day 13: Remember, your beliefs become your thoughts, your thoughts become your actions, your actions become your habits and your habits become you.

Day 14: Remember this whenever you think that your work in developing permanent habits is having no effect. *"The chains of habit are too weak to be felt until they are too strong to be broken."* — Samuel Johnson

Day 15: You have reached the halfway point of your 30 day period! You are halfway to making the habits that you are working on permanent. At this point, you should be remembering to complete your habits even without the triggers that you have designed. Of course, this doesn't mean that you should stop using the triggers, but just be aware that this might be a milestone.

Days 16-20: This five day period is going to be your first of three sprints. If you have been slacking off and haven't been giving 100% of your effort to your habits, these sprints are designed to bring them back on track. First, spend a day reviewing your motivation again and making sure that you don't need to adjust any of your strategies. The remaining four days, you are going to go above and beyond your original plan.

If you were going to spend 30 minutes at the gym per day, then you will spend 35 minutes on the four days that you are doing the sprint. If you

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were going to spend an extra hour working on your online business, then spend an extra hour and fifteen minutes.

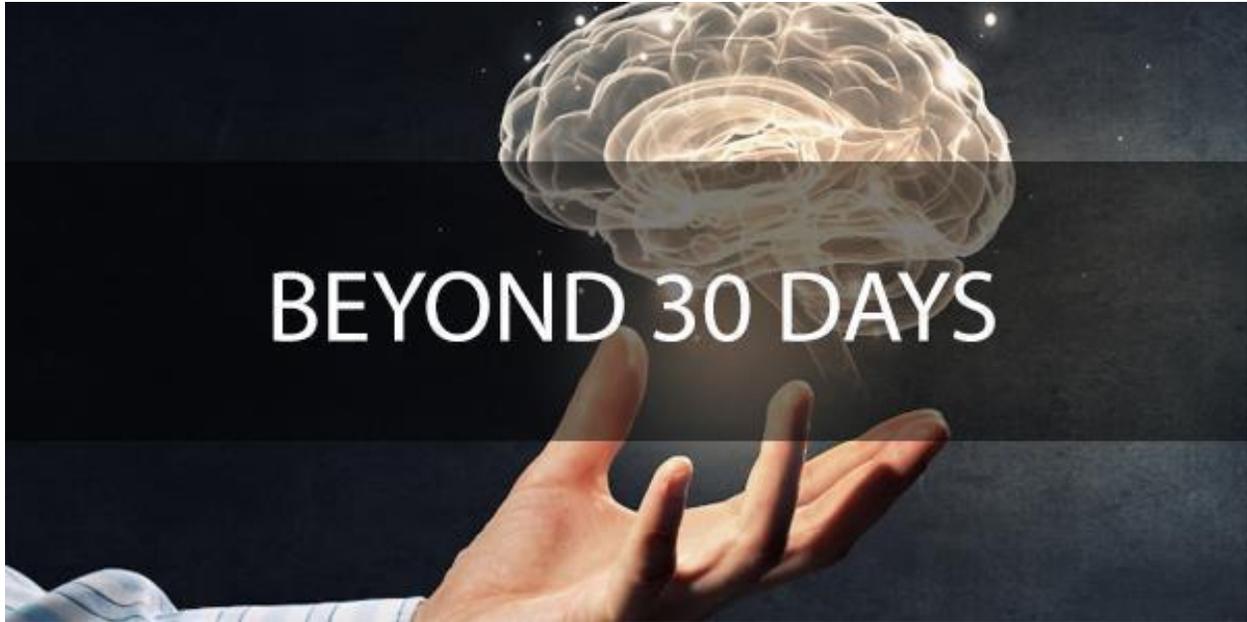
Days 21-25: This is sprint #2. This is going to be the same, except that you don't need to spend a day reviewing your motivation and changing your strategy. This is going to be a full on, five-day sprint.

Days 26-30: This is your third sprint. This time, you are going to do a four day sprint again, but on day 26, when you sit down to evaluate your progress, this time, you are going to draw a timeline to the future in order to see how these habits will change your life if you keep them up after the 30 days.

Remember, you are coming to the end of your journey, and that can sometimes result in relaxing for a few days after such a difficult journey. But at this point, these habits should be second nature to you, and there shouldn't be much effort involved in completing them.

If you are still struggling, then it is more important than ever not to take a break for several days and instead, to keep pushing forward. The next chapter will give you some suggestions on how to push past the first 30 days.

Chapter 9: Beyond 30 Days



This chapter is meant to guide you after your first thirty days have passed. If you made it through the 30 days you should be feeling pretty good about yourself.

But now is not the time to slack off and let your guard down because even though you have ingrained those habits into your brain, you are still going to have to put forth some effort for the next few weeks.

This will be nowhere near the monumental effort that you had to make during the first 30 days, but it is still going to take some work. Here are some steps to follow as you leave the training level and progress to the maintenance one.

Step One: Do a Self-Evaluation

The first thing that you need to do is an honest, no-holds-barred self-evaluation. You need to determine if 1) you tried as hard as you could and put forth your best effort over the past 30 days and 2) if you feel that your habits are deeply ingrained.

Step Two: Repeat if Necessary

Remember, these are habits that you are forming to reach a goal in 12 months. If you do not have a good foundation then you are not going to reach your goal. If you haven't been able to ingrain these habits as deeply as you'd like, then go through the thirty day process again.

Step Three: Determine Your Next Step

Assuming that you aren't going to repeat your 30 day cycle again, decide what your next step is going to be. You may have a whole new list of habits that you want to start developing in order to reach your goal after 12 months.

Step Four: Don't Forget Reinforcement

Even as you are developing new habits, if you find yourself slacking off or forgetting about habits that you have already developed then make sure that you reinforce them with thought and action. You don't want to lose what you worked so hard to attain in the first place.

What a Year of Habit Development Might Look Like

In this section, we are going to try to project your habit development into the future so that you can see what happens beyond the initial 30 days. For simplicity's sake, we will take just two goals and work with them over a 12 month timeline.

In this case, we are using the following 12-month goals:

1. Lose 50 pounds, get in better shape, improve health
2. Create an alternative income stream of \$12K per year

So, now we have the two goals. Let's determine what sort of habits might have been chosen for the first 30 day period.

1. Work out daily for 30 minutes
2. Cut down by 500 calories per day

As mentioned, sometimes you have to create complementary habits in order to make actions a reality. In this case, we have an exercise habit that can pretty much stand on its own. The only way that you might add to it is by coming up with daily goals or habits for your specific workouts.

For example, if you are doing strength training on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, cardio on Thursday and Saturday and abs on Sunday, then you can come up with individual fitness goals for those activities, perhaps using one of the hundreds of apps available.

As for the diet goal, you are going to need some way to track whether or not you are actually cutting out 3500 calories per week. Again, apps like MyFitnessPal come to mind.

The point is, you will need a plan that incorporates several habits if you want to make these generalized habits stick – and actually work towards your main two goals. Let's take a look at what that specific plan might look like.

30 Day Plan for Developing Habits

Habit 1: Log meals immediately into MyFitnessPal App [Trigger: Eating]

Habit 2: Keep track of calories throughout the day and take in 500 calories below amount needed to maintain weight (app will tell you).

[Trigger: Logging meals]

Habit 3: Spend 30 minutes per day working out [Trigger: Waking up]

Habit 4: Track workout progress using YourGymDaily (Name made up) app. Enter reps, weight, sets, etc. [Trigger: After finishing sets]

Habit 5: Follow goals outlined by the app and put forth as much effort as possible to achieve them. [Trigger: review prior to workout]

The Rest of the Year

As you can imagine, the rest of the year might look similar. But the difference is, you are going to be tracking your progress the entire way through the apps or some other method.

You may have to change your triggers as your life and circumstances change, but your habits should remain basically the same, unless you find that you are absolutely unable to do them as they are, in which case, they must be adjusted.

Chapter 10: Overcoming Barriers to Success



In this final chapter of the book, we are going to discuss some strategies for overcoming barriers to your success. No matter who you are, and no matter what your life, family, friends, financial situation or health is like, you are going to face obstacles. It's just a set-in-stone fact of vying for success. Everyone encounters obstacles, but it is how you overcome them that determine what sort of success you achieve.

Identifying Barriers to Success

When it comes to overcoming barriers to success, you first have to identify them. Obstacles can come from different parts of your life and often, you create them yourself. Some of that has already been discussed and

resolved here, with the program laid out in this book, but there are still going to be other obstacles that you have to deal with.

Let's go over the eight most common obstacles to success, including a strategy for overcoming that particular barrier, so that you can stay on track and actually get your habits to stick, no matter what comes at you.

Barrier 1: Your Confidence

The first barrier that we are going to discuss is your confidence. Unfortunately, this is something that you are going to have to cultivate on your own. This program will give you the tools that you need to achieve just about any goal or develop any habit, but if you don't have confidence in yourself to succeed, you are going to find it very hard to keep going.

Barrier 2: Your Motivation

Your motivation is a big factor as well. This program has tried to show you how to motivate yourself as much as possible using 12-month goals. These goals should be something that you really want in your life, not something that someone else wants for you. Your goals need to motivate you and keep you going when you feel like quitting.

Barrier 3: Your Plan

Again, the lack of a plan can be a major barrier to success. But this entire book is your plan, from the 12-month goals that you set, to the very habits that you practice and work on every day in order to get to those goals.

Barrier 4: The Naysayers

You are going to have people in your life telling you that you are bound to fail. Some of these people may even be loved ones or friends. Others will be jealous co-workers or others that you cross paths with. Don't listen to

the naysayers. They have nothing meaningful to share with you and often, the only reason that they are trying to prevent you from being successful is because misery loves company.

Barrier 5: Financial Obstacles

This can be a major barrier for certain goals. For example, if you want to start a business but you have no money, no credit, no collateral and no prospects, you are going to have more of a challenge than someone who has those things. But nothing is impossible and if you want to succeed, you need to do some research and find a way to overcome.

Barrier 6: Health-Related Obstacles

Sometimes, your health can turn down a bad road and it can be difficult to continue working on your goals in the face of a heart condition, a disease like diabetes, or even obesity, which can make it difficult to move around.

The only advice here is that whether your health issues stop you from achieving your goals will depend entirely upon how much you want to achieve them.

Barrier 7: Personal Tragedy or Difficult Circumstances

Again, one of the things that often stop a person in their tracks while they are attempting to be successful is personal circumstances. A tragedy in your life or difficult circumstances beyond your control can be challenging and you will have to decide if you want to continue working towards success.

Barrier 8: Well-Meaning Friends & Family

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Sometimes, your family and friends will become obstacles even when they have the best intentions in mind. Have you heard the cliché about the mother who wants to show her son how much she cares after she sees him suffering all day exercising and trying to eat right to lose weight so she prepares him a huge meal?

Sometimes, family and friends will think they are helping when they are actually becoming obstacles and you will simply have to let them know that they aren't helping.

Conclusion



You have reached the end of this book and have hopefully come away with not only tools to help you develop habits, but an actual plan-of-action that will guide you throughout the 30 day period that you need to begin habit development.

It is important to reiterate here that the thirty-day rule here is not set in stone. It is used a guideline because it is a happy medium between what science has found when it comes to creating new habits.

Some studies found that it can take as little as 18 days to form a new habit and others clocked it at just over 60 days. But regardless of which study you choose to believe, 30 days is a solid guideline for starting new habits.

Summarizing the Key Points

- The definition of success is more of a journey than a destination, with stops along the way that act as goals for you to shoot towards. You will be continuing the journey for the rest of your life, but there are stops along the way that are going to make your life so much better and give you the success that you want.
- Understand how the psychology of habitual actions works, as explained in Chapter Two, because then you will be able to look at your own goals and habits much more objectively.
- Use the YEAR-MONTH-DAY system of setting goals (if it helps you). You set a yearly goal and then break it down to what you need to accomplish each month to achieve it. Then you can develop daily habits that will move you towards that monthly goal every single day.
- Don't try to get rid of bad habits. Your brain will think you are losing something and will fight against you. Instead, replace those bad habits with good ones so that you feel like you are gaining instead of losing.
- Identify your triggers for negative actions and create new triggers for positive actions. You can piggyback new habits onto old ones for easy triggers and you can create complementary habits that all kind of trigger each other so that you have a better chance of completing them each day.
- This program is designed to guide you for 30 days (and beyond to a certain extent) so that you can develop new habits. However, keep in

mind that there is no scientific consensus on how long it takes to form a new habit and each person is different, as is each habit that people try to create.

- Your first five days are going to be the most difficult. Use the guide in Chapter Seven to help you through that period and remember that it is only five days and afterward, you will be headed for the downhill slope.
- Use the information provided in Chapter Eight to help you through the remaining 25 days of forming a new habit. There is expert advice, motivational quotes and much more included with that material.
- Use the checklist in Chapter Nine to evaluate your efforts and determine where you should go from there. You can begin working on new habits right away if you have been able to make the first ones stick.
- Read through the barriers to success that most people have to overcome and come up with strategies for combating each one in advance, so that when one does pop up, you will be able to slide over it easily and continue on the road to success.

Strategies to Take Away From This Book

So, what are the most important things that you should be taking away from this book that will stay with you the rest of your life and actually help you on the road to success? Without using the obvious answer of 'everything' there are a few things that are really important to remember.

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First, you don't have to use everything in book, and you don't have to use it exactly the way it is described. Everyone's style is different and everything listed here may not work for you exactly the way it might work for us. A good example of this is with the goal system. Not everyone can make the YEAR-MONTH-DAY system work and some prefer the conventional LONG-TERM/SHORT-TERM style of goal setting and then work how to develop habits from those goals.

It is also important to remember that if you have never tried to develop these kinds of habits before, it is going to be a challenge and there are going to be times that you fail. This is perfectly normal. Just remember, a failure only stays a failure if you don't learn something from it.

Finally, just remember that you have the ability to be successful. You might think that you don't have the educational background, the means, the determination, the opportunities, the friends or a million other resources that other successful people seem to have. But that doesn't mean that you don't have just as much chance of earning success as they did.

Just believe in yourself and start small. Every single successful person in this world, every single entrepreneur, celebrity, corporate bigshot and self-made millionaire began with the same journey that you are about to take right now; setting their first goals and developing solid habits that they did every day to achieve them.

You can do the same. All you need to do to be on your way to completing the journey is take the first step.

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IMPORTANT: To help you further take action, print out a copy of the *Checklist* and *Mindmap* I provided. You'll also find a Resource Cheat Sheet with valuable sites, posts and articles that I recommend you go through.