

3 Steps to Creating New Habits

Let's talk about forming new habits. We all have times in our lives where we intentionally want to change our behavior for the better and create new habits for ourselves. This could be getting in the habit of eating healthier and drinking more water. Or writing every day so we can finish that book. Or exercising, or taking care of ourselves. So many areas of our lives could be improved and made easier if we took the time to create new habits.

Getting into the habit of doing something is often easier said than done. We seem to acquire bad habits without any effort, but getting into a "good" habit can be a little more challenging.

Let's break it down into a three step process that makes it easy to follow until we've internalized the new behavior and made it a true habit – something we do automatically without having to think about, like brushing our teeth.

1. Decide What You Want To Do

The first step is to decide what you want that new habit to be. Be as specific as possible. Don't just tell yourself you want to exercise more. Instead say something like "I will go for a 30 minute walk every single day". Deciding what your new habit will be and committing to when and how you're going to do it = that is half the battle.

2. Remind Yourself To Get It Done

In the first few days, we often don't need reminders for what we are motivated to accomplish. Sticking to the new habit isn't an issue—yet. But after a bit of time passes, you'll notice how easy it is to slip back into our comfort zone where many bad habits reside.

Maybe it's raining and you don't really want to go out and exercise. Maybe you want to curl up on the couch and binge watch the latest episodes of your favorite show on Netflix instead of getting a new chapter written. Whatever the reason, remind yourself why you want to attain your goal. Set an alert on your phone to add the new habit to your daily inbox.

3. Make It Part Of Your Routine Until It Becomes A Habit

Which brings us to the last step. It takes some time before a new behavior becomes a true habit. Until then, a routine will work to your best advantage. Even before the new behavior becomes automatic, a routine will help you get it done without having to spend a lot of willpower or relying on daily reminders.

Make that daily walk part of your after-dinner routine, or change from grabbing a snack at the vending machine at work at 10:00 in the morning to packing a healthy snack. Try writing whenever you have a spare 15-30 minutes. Don't wait for hours of empty time because life is busy. We don't have hours and hours of empty time, so we need to figure out the best way to make use of what time spurts we DO have.

Decide to create a new habit, practice the routine until it's second nature to you, and you'll be well on your way to tackling the new habits!