

Healthy Habits Workshop - Supplementary Detailed Packet

Instructions

Use this packet in combination with the handout from during the speech. After completing each exercise, revisit the corresponding question in the handout and answer it again.

Question 1 Exercise - How do I decide on my top priority?

Pick 1 of 2 Methods: Clarifying or Experimenting

The 'Clarifying Questions' may work better if you believe you already have a top priority, but haven't clarified or cemented it in writing. The 'Experimenting Questions' may work better if you don't have a top priority already and need to explore options. Remember, you can always change priorities later.

Clarifying Questions

- Are you devoted to...
 - faith, family, freedom?
 - autonomy, a purpose, a craft?
 - maximum health or happiness?
- What journey are you on?
 - **Beginning** - What big "life" moments might you use to propel yourself forward?
 - **End State** - What do you hope to achieve? What does it look like? What do you feel?

Experimenting Questions

- Ask "What excites me?" on your drive home today.
 - Write down any ideas when you park OR ask again tomorrow.
 - Eventually, you'll hear an answer.
- Make that your focus for now.
 - Learn about it. Practice it. Study it.
- Discard it when you want to move on.
- But when you find time stands still, hours go by without you noticing, you may have found your top priority for a long time.

Going Deeper

If you want to explore a bit deeper, check out Simon Sinek's book *Start with Why*, his TED Talk, or The Golden Circle. The book focuses on companies, but you can apply the concepts to yourself.

- Why do you get out of bed in the morning?
- What is your purpose, cause, or belief?
- Why should anyone care?

Read the book or watch the video for inspiring examples.

Question 2 Exercise - How do I allocate 5 minutes for my new habit?

Pick **one current activity** from the three categories below to recoup 5 minutes of your time.

1. Media and Email Options

- Email - Check once per day, Check only after lunch.
- TV / Video - Watch 1 show per day max.
- Social Media - Skip it for one week, then time-box to 10 minutes per day.
- Radio - Skip one day per week (“Radio-Free Friday”). This is best for building car habits like audiobooks, thinking time, etc.
- Internet - Time-box to 10 minutes per day outside of work and personal projects
- What else? Games, Shopping, Photos, News, Articles, ...

2. Get Out of Bed ASAP Option

The last option I’d consider that may consume a lot of time is: Get out of bed immediately when your first alarm goes off. That’s a hard one if you don’t already. Snooze time sleep doesn’t provide much rest since you need roughly ninety minutes for a full sleep cycle.

Sitting in bed on the phone can be a time black hole. Try pulling the covers off, standing up and starting your morning routine immediately for a week and see how you feel.

3. Make Up Your Own Option

Use these ideas or make up your own. If you’ve been thinking “I really don’t need to spend too much time on ... ” Fill in the blank and write that down.

Experiment Framing

Whether you pick an easier change like the list above or a harder change like getting out of bed immediately, it can be easier to start by framing this change as a 1-week experiment. If you don’t like the results, pick another option.

Notice, Then Replace Self-Judgement

Remember, we’re not labeling email or media consumption as “good” or “bad”. Deciding to reduce an activity doesn’t make it “bad”, but the current amount of time you spend on that activity may not align with your priorities. Often we’d like to categorize things as “bad” when we’re making changes and then we feel bad when we continue those activities. Quitting something completely is hard. Give yourself a break. Most of life is more complicated than “good” or “bad”. Use a time-box to make it easier to make changes and notice if you’re judging yourself when you’re using that time-box. When you feel that judgement, replace it with “I’m making a positive change” because you are.

Question 3 Exercise - Which new habit will I choose?

Pick **one new habit** you want to add to your life from the categories below with the time you recouped in step 2.

1. Healthy Habit Options

1. Sleep
 - Read a real book or a Kindle before bed. (* Recharge - Sleep)
 - Go outside ASAP once you wake up. (* Recharge - Sleep)
2. Stress > Relax
 - 1 minute of deep breathing after lunch. (* Recharge - Meditation)
 - Journal for 5 minutes to start day. (* Recharge - Journal)
3. Eat
 - Replace one regular junk food with nuts, fruit, etc. (* Nutrition - Eat Clean)
 - Add olive oil and mixed greens to your lunch. (* Nutrition - Eat More Veg)
4. Exercise
 - 60 seconds of Squats to start day. (* Physical - Bodyweight Exercises and Burpees)
 - Walking break at work after lunch. (* Physical - Walking)

To learn more about these habits, go to the Habits Guide (* = <http://mattdever.com/habits-guide/>) to read more details on similar habits. The section and post are in parentheses in this format (* Section - Post).

2. Make Up Your Own Option

If these ideas aren't what you want right now, make up your own. If you've been trying to build a habit, use that. Remember, to make the habit small, easy, and 5-10 minutes long.

Small wins create momentum through action. Don't rely on motivation. We may think we need motivation to act, but more often we need *to act* to motivate ourselves.

Experiment Framing

Just like you did with reallocating your time, imagine this habit is a 2-week experiment. Use two weeks instead of one because it takes at least a week or more to establish a habit normally, even with a simple 5-minute routine. Plan for the first week to take a little longer, maybe 2x - 3x (10-15 minutes). You'll be in a much better position to assess whether you want to continue after you've learned the habit and can spend less time on it than the 2-3x required when learning. This is another reason why starting small is critical to success when establishing new habits. If you want to learn more on this concept, read the "J-Curve" post in the Habits Guide (see Additional Resources).

Question 4 Exercise - How can I make my new habit automatic?

Create a reliable cue, double-check that you setup your routine for success, and **select a reward** that you'll crave for your new habit to make it automatic.

Cue

- When will you complete your new habit?
- Where will you complete your new habit?
- What will remind you to complete your new habit?

Routine

- How much time have I allocated for my new habit?
- Do I have 2-3x the normal habit time to learn the habit the first week?
- Have I made the habit easy enough I'm confident I can do it *every day*?

Reward

- What reward will I crave and receive *daily* immediately after completing my new habit?
- Is the combination of the habit and reward a net positive for my health and fitness?
 - Rewards like quiet time, socializing are easily net positive.
 - Rewards like a chocolate bar counteract the benefits from a new habit.

The Power of Habit

Read *The Power of Habit* by Charles Duhigg to learn more about habits and the technique above. Use the lunch example as a guide. A cue like the clock on the wall triggers you to head to lunch. Eating lunch is the routine. The reward for lunch could be socializing, quiet time, or just feeling satiated from your meal.

Additional Resources

- Matt's Habit Guide
 - <http://mattdever.com/habits-guide/>
 - List of 15-minute habits, implementation steps, and my story on each
 - Sections: Concepts, Nutrition, Mental, Physical, Recharge
- James Clear
 - <http://jamesclear.com/articles>
 - Excellent resource on habits, the science behind them, and how to implement them.
 - Don't Break the Chain - <http://jamesclear.com/stop-procrastinating-seinfeld-strategy>
- Books
 - *The Power of Habit* by Charles Duhigg, *Mindset* by Carol Dweck, *Drive* by Daniel Pink, *The ONE Thing* by Gary Keller, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* by Steven Covey