

HABIT BLUEPRINT

BY MEDISPINE



A SCIENCE-BASED & PRACTICAL GUIDE TO
BREAKING, BUILDING, AND TRACKING HABITS



Hey there,

For years, I struggled with building good habits and breaking bad ones. I would start with motivation, only to fall back into old routines within weeks. I read countless books, tried various productivity hacks, and still found myself frustrated by inconsistency. Sound familiar?

It wasn't until I discovered the **science behind habit formation** that everything changed. I realized that habits aren't just about willpower—they follow a structure.

By understanding the process and applying small, intentional changes, I finally created routines that stuck.

This eBook is designed to help you do the same. We'll start by uncovering the fundamentals of habit formation—what habits are, why we form them, how triggers shape our behaviours and how you can use this knowledge to create lasting change. From there, we'll explore how to build new habits, break old ones, and **leverage brain power rather than willpower** to make transformation easier. You'll also learn how to master motivation, set effective goals, and navigate setbacks along the way.

Everything in these eBook is backed by science, drawn not only from my own experience but also from the research of experts worldwide. Throughout the E-book, you'll find activities designed to help you reflect, take action, and apply these concepts in real life. Whether you want to boost productivity, improve your health, or simply feel more in control, these steps will empower you to take charge of your habits—and ultimately, your life.

Let's begin this journey together.

Dr. Veronica Gobeil, DC

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WE ARE BACKED BY SCIENCE

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MEDISPINE

Medispine is a holistic care clinic led by a team of highly qualified professionals dedicated to enhancing your overall well-being. Based in Dieppe, New Brunswick, our innovative practice offers a wide range of services including chiropractic care, naturopathy consultation, postural evaluation and correction, custom foot orthotics, lymphatic drainage, and more. We set ourselves apart with our commitment to innovation, utilizing cutting-edge technologies—therapeutic lasers, compression therapy devices, and AI-integrated evaluation tools—to deliver personalized treatments that alleviate pain, restore mobility, and improve posture.

Committed to empowering our patients through education and diverse health options, we aspire to become a regional leader in addressing and treating neuromusculoskeletal and postural issues.

Your well-being is our priority!

Our services are covered by most extended health plans.



MY STORY

Before diving deeper into the subject, I thought I would give you some insights about me and my story. I have always been a very pro-active, health oriented person. When I was younger, my mom was always cooking with real food, I was doing a lot of sports and playing outside everyday. My parents were very strict on routine: getting up at the same time, eating quite at the same time, going to bed at the same time. *You know, the basics..!*

And then, arrived: the hormones, the university and the start of your “adult life” with all its stress, its social pressure, financials, etc. Fast forward, the beginning of my career as a chiropractor went well, for the first few years. Until everything ~~took a~~ turn for the worse.

To keep it short, I was married to my business partner, and after couple years of doing life and business together, things were **~~NOT GOING WELL!~~** I was frustrated, there were a lot of tensions, arguments, financial stress... We were not going the same way (clearly), wanting the same thing, having the same goals. I couldn't bare with it anymore. I had to leave - *which I did!*

During the months following my divorce, I was exhausted. I was stressed. I was overwhelmed. Everything felt heavy—mentally, emotionally, and physically. Stress, self-doubt, and exhaustion were piling up. Despite all my knowledge in health, I was not sure where to start or what to do to feel better. I wasn't looking for quick fixes or drastic overhauls—I just needed a way forward, one step at a time.

That's when I turned to habits. Not the big, overwhelming ones, but small, consistent actions that *created stability in my life*. Prioritizing movement, nourishing my body, protecting my sleep, and setting boundaries—those weren't just tasks on a checklist; they became my foundation.

Focusing on habits gave me back control. It reminded me that progress isn't about being perfect—it's about *showing up*, even on the hardest days. Over time, the weight lifted, and clarity returned.

I felt stronger, more confident, aligned, energetic and attractive. I felt like I finally gained my power back. The world was opening up to me again.

If you're feeling stuck, **I see you. I hear you.** And I want you to know that you can take back control, just like I did. That's why I created **The Habit Blueprint**—a simple guide to help you understand how habits can be created, ~~how it is NOT just about willpower~~ and how reprogramming your brain is possible, even if you feel hopeless, and helpless. Your habits will support your mental and physical health. **They will create the foundation for a better you.** Focussing on my habits saved me; it can help you too.

Let's take that first step together. *You got this.*



PSsst. I provide you couple pictures to give you an idea on how good habits can LOOK on you. But these don't show how good habits make you FEEL. And from before and after, I have WAY more energy, I am more confident, I feel happy, my hormones cycles are stable and regular, I don't struggle with digestive or acne anymore. There is so much I could take about....! *Let's dive in.*



CHAPTER 1

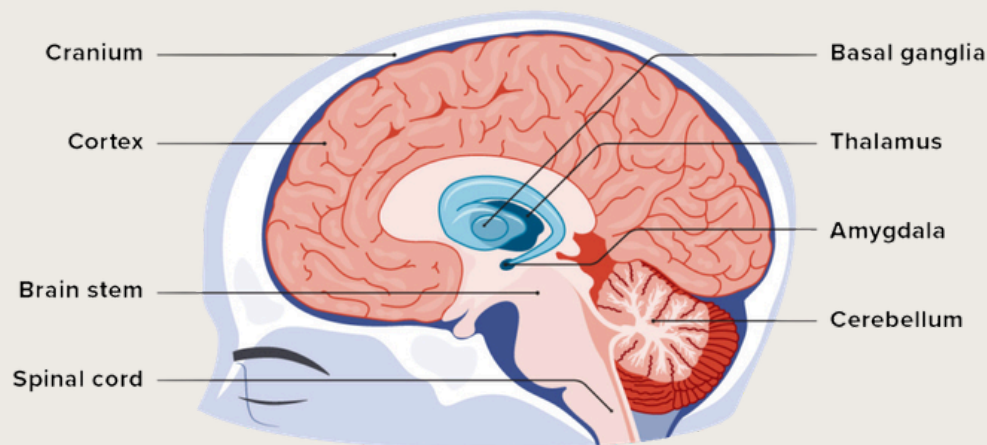
UNDERSTANDING HABITS

WHAT IS A HABIT?

A habit is a routine behavior performed regularly, often automatically. According to research by Duke University, habits account for approximately **45% of our daily actions**. This automation helps conserve mental energy and allows us to focus on more complex tasks (Wood, W., & Neal, D. T. 2009).

THE ROLE OF THE BRAIN

Basal ganglia



MEDICALNEWSTODAY

The **basal ganglia**, a structure deep within the brain, is central to habit formation. Research shows that when a behavior becomes habitual, brain activity shifts from the prefrontal cortex (responsible for decision-making) to the basal ganglia. This shift makes *habits feel automatic* (Graybiel, A. M. 2008).

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A HABIT

A HISTORY OF REPETITION

All your habits have a history of repetition.

We never do something only once and think of it as a habit. Our habits is something we've done repeatedly before, we know what they are, they're familiar to us. We do it constantly.

A HIGH DEGREE OF AUTOMATICITY

Your habits occurs almost effortlessly and unconsciously.

Your habits should require little to no conscious thought, making it fast, efficient, and resistant to change. This happens due to neural adaptations in the brain, particularly in the basal ganglia, which helps automate repeated behaviors. The more a habit is repeated, the stronger these neural connections become, reducing the need for active decision-making.

BEING TRIGGERED IN STABLE CONTEXT

Your habits are triggered in stable contexts.

Habits are always triggered, as triggers are the precursor for habits (*the cue*). Without triggers, we don't have habits.

Habits are behaviours that were once initiated intentionnally but then with repetition became automatic. In order to change habits, ***we need different strategies*** from those we would to change behaviors, that is why we need to truly understand the *habit loop* (see next pages).

ACTIVITY 01

YOUR HABITS

To gain deeper insight into your daily habits, it's good to reflect of the things you do automatically and identify when or where you're doing them. Once you identify your habits and triggers, you can have much more control over your automatic actions.

LET'S DO A REFLECTIVE EXERCISE

In a note book or a journal,

WANTED HABITS

List five habits you currently have that you are happy with. Then identify the trigger for that habits. For example :

HABIT : I go for a 15 minutes walk

TRIGGER : When I get out of bed in the morning.

UNWANTED HABITS

List five habits you currently have that you know are bad for you and would like to break. Identify their triggers. For example :

HABIT : I snack when I'm not hungry

TRIGGER : When I sit on my couch at night to watch TV.

THE HABIT LOOP

A habit requires three key ingredients: a *cue*, a *routine* and a *reward*. Charles Duhigg, in his book *The Power of Habit*, describes this as the "*habit loop*". Let's explore this in more detail :

01. THE CUE

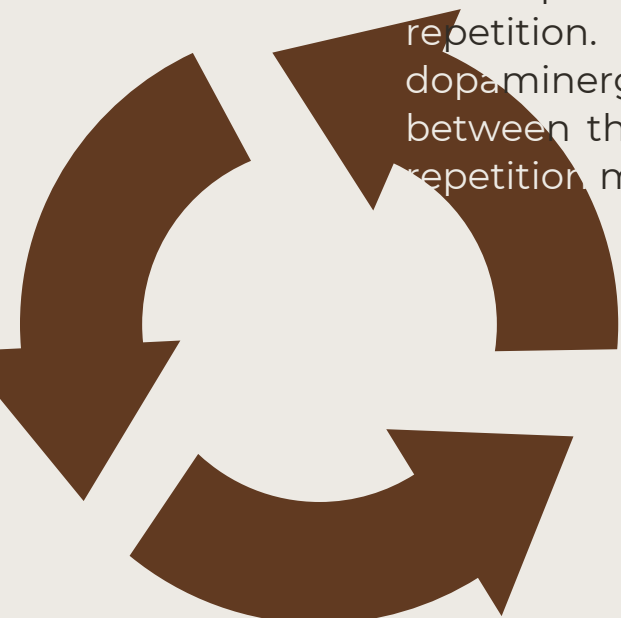
is a trigger that initiates the behavior. Cues can be external (e.g., seeing a cookie triggers snacking) or internal (e.g., feeling stressed prompts nail-biting). Research shows that consistent cues make behaviors more likely to become habitual (Duhigg, C. 2012).

02. THE ROUTINE

is the action you take in response to the cue. It is the behavior itself. Over time, routines become automated through repeated practice and neural reinforcement.

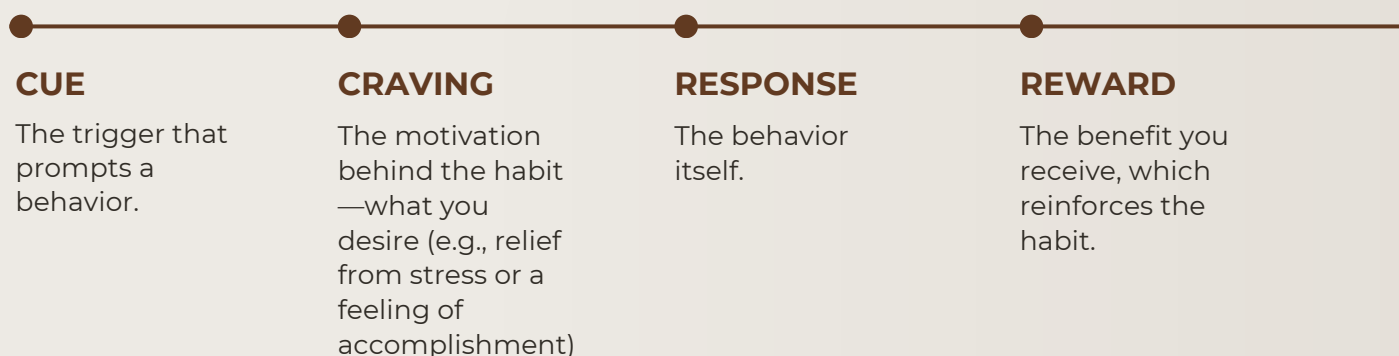
03. THE REWARD

is the benefit you gain from performing the habit. It is a positive reinforcement that encourages repetition. Rewards activate the brain's dopaminergic system, reinforcing the connection between the cue and the behavior, making future repetition more likely (Schultz, W. (2007).



Now, building on this framework, James Clear, the author of Atomic Habits, continues working on that idea and expands the habit loop into four stages:

THE FOUR STAGES OF CHANGE



Clear also introduces the **Four Laws of Behavior Change** to *manipulate* the habit loop effectively and reinforce the process of improving your habits and breaking the bad ones :

MAKE IT OBVIOUS: Design your environment to highlight cues for positive habits. For example, if you want to exercise, leave your workout clothes visible. This principle relies on the concept of environmental cues, which research shows are powerful in triggering habitual behavior.

MAKE IT ATTRACTIVE: Pair new habits with activities you enjoy. This concept is known as temptation bundling (Wood, W., Tam, L., & Witt, M. G. 2005), which increases motivation by associating a desirable action with a new habit.

MAKE IT EASY: Reduce friction to make the desired habit simple (Milkman, K. L., Minson, J. A., & Volpp, K. G. 2014). For instance, if you want to eat healthier, prepare nutritious snacks in advance. This leverages the psychological principle of effort reduction, where making a behavior easier increases its likelihood (Ouellette, J. A., & Wood, W. 1998).

MAKE IT SATISFYING: Reinforce habits with immediate rewards. Positive reinforcement strengthens neural pathways, making habits stick. An example could be checking off a completed task, which releases dopamine and increases the feeling of accomplishment (Schultz, W. 2015).

We will go deeper into this later...

LET'S MEASURE YOUR HABITS

When we talk about habits, we often think of behaviors that feel effortless—things we do without even realizing.

But how can we measure how automatic a habit has become? This is where the **Self-Reported Behavioral Automaticity Index (SRBAI)** comes in.

WHAT IS IT?

The Self-Reported Behavioral Automaticity Index (SRBAI) is a simple yet powerful tool used to assess the degree of automaticity in a behavior. In other words, it helps determine how much a habit has become second nature.

This index is widely used in psychology and behavioral research to evaluate habits like exercise, healthy eating, and even posture correction.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The SRBAI consists of four key statements, and individuals rate how much they agree with each one on a Likert scale (usually from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree):

1. I do this behavior automatically.
2. I do this behavior without having to consciously remember.
3. I start doing this behavior before I realize I'm doing it.
4. I do this behavior without thinking.

The higher the score, the more automatic the behavior has become. This means the habit is now deeply ingrained and requires little effort to maintain.

Understanding habit automaticity helps us gauge whether a **behavior will stick long-term**. If a habit is still effortful, it likely requires more repetition and reinforcement. On the other hand, if it ranks high in automaticity, it's more likely to persist over time without much conscious effort.

If you're trying to build new habits—whether it's improving posture, exercising regularly, or following a health routine—you can use the SRBAI as a *self-assessment tool*.

Ask yourself the four questions above about a habit you're working on. If your scores are low, focus on **consistent repetition and creating strong cues** to reinforce the behavior. Over time, as repetition strengthens neural pathways, your habit will move from conscious effort to automatic action.

By tracking automaticity, you can better understand your progress and make adjustments to solidify lasting, positive behaviors.

Let's discover if you are on automatic pilot (no, but for real...!)

ACTIVITY 02

SELF-ASSESSMENT

STEP 01.

Identify one habit you want to assess (e.g., daily stretching, drinking water, correcting posture).

STEP 02.

Rate your agreement with each statement below on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree):

HABIT X IS SOMETHING...	RATING (1 - 7)
I do automatically.	
I do without having to consciously remember.	
I start doing before I realize I'm doing it.	
I do without thinking.	

STEP 03.

Now, let's analyze your score...! To calculate, just addition all your numbers. Here is how to interpret your score :

- 4-10 points: Your habit is still in the early stages. Keep reinforcing it with reminders and consistency.
- 11-20 points: Your habit is developing but not yet fully automatic. Stay consistent and adjust cues if needed.
- 21-28 points: Your habit is strong and nearly effortless. Keep it up!

WHY DO WE FORM HABITS?

Habits are automatic behaviors that shape nearly every aspect of our daily lives. From brushing our teeth to checking our phones, these routines govern our actions with minimal conscious effort. But why do we form habits in the first place? The answer lies in the brain's natural tendency to optimize energy usage, ensure survival, and enhance efficiency.

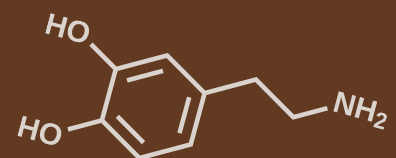
HABITS PRESERVES ENERGY

The human brain is wired to conserve energy. It constantly seeks ways to automate repetitive tasks, reducing the cognitive load required for decision-making. By forming habits, the *brain transfers frequent actions from the prefrontal cortex* (responsible for conscious thought) to the *basal ganglia*, a deeper structure that governs automatic behaviors. This shift allows the brain to focus its resources on more complex tasks while still maintaining essential functions effortlessly.

HABITS FACILITATES EFFICIENCY

Habits are built through repetition. Each time an action is repeated, neural connections strengthen, forming a well-defined pathway in the brain. This process, known as "*neuroplasticity*," allows the brain to *rewire itself for efficiency*. Over time, performing the action becomes second nature, requiring little to no conscious thought (Duhigg, C. 2012).

THE ROLE of REWARD and DOPAMINE



Behavioral reinforcement plays a crucial role in habit formation. When an action is associated with a positive outcome—such as pleasure, relief, or accomplishment—the brain *releases dopamine*, a neurotransmitter that reinforces the behavior. This reward-driven mechanism ensures that beneficial habits, such as exercise or productivity routines, become ingrained in our daily lives. Unfortunately, the same principle applies to detrimental habits like excessive screen time or unhealthy eating.



CHANGE YOUR TRIGGER

CHANGE YOUR STORY

The triggers, or the cues, play a major role when it comes to habits. Habit triggers are *cues that initiate a habit*, prompting you to engage in a particular behaviour automatically. They act as signals to your brain, setting off a routine based on past experiences and learned behaviors; they kick off the automatic urge to perform a habit. Understanding our triggers, therefore, is essential to change and optimize our habits. By identifying and modifying the triggers that lead to unwanted habits, we *can reprogram our brain* to stop performing those unwanted habits or to form new habits instead!

FIVE KEY HABIT TRIGGERS

- **TIME** – A specific time of day acts as a trigger (e.g., brushing your teeth every morning).
- **LOCATION** – Your environment cues a habit (e.g., putting on running shoes when entering the gym).
- **EMOTIONAL STATE** – Feelings prompt behaviors (e.g., stress leading to nail-biting).
- **OTHER PEOPLE** – Social interactions influence habits (e.g., eating more when around friends).
- **PRECEDING EVENT** (or Routine) – One action leads to another (e.g., pouring coffee right after waking up).

THE IMPACT OF YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Understanding these triggers can help you form good habits or break bad ones by manipulating cues in your environment. I wrote you some of the most common triggers for everyday habits.

Also, do you start to see how your environment and your community drives your behaviour?

They are directly affecting your decision making and course of action.

In order to improve your habits, you will need to create an environment that's conducive to your goals and that will support the habits you want to create.

COMMON TRIGGERS FOR EVERYDAY HABITS

- **Waking up**
- **Taking a shower**
- **Brushing your teeth**
- **Entering the kitchen**
- **Starting the coffee machine**
- **Putting on your shoes**
- **Getting in your car**
- **Arriving at work**
- **Sitting down at your desk**
- **Switching your computer on or off**
- **Getting in bed**
- **Feeling stress**
- **Getting bored**
- **Fatigue**
- **Meeting with friends**
- **Seeing someone exercise**
- **Hearing someone complain**
- **Feeding your pet**
- **Etc.**

Ready to reflect on what triggers you?

ACTIVITY 03

WHAT TRIGGERS YOU?

Take out your journal or notebook. Can you identify a habit that you perform in response to each of the triggers below?

You may have habits with overlapping triggers from more than one of these categories - that's perfectly okay.)

- **TIME**
 - **LOCATION**
 - **PRECEDING EVENT OR ACTION**
 - **EMOTIONAL STATE**
 - **SOCIAL SITUATION**
-

CUE JOURNALING

In your journal, create a table starting at 5 AM and ending at 11 PM (or use ours at the next page), ensuring you leave plenty of space for writing. Your goal is to track the common cues in your daily life—this process is called ***cue monitoring***.

Once the table is complete, you can use this information to build new habits through cue-response associations (which we'll explore further in the next pages). For now, simply document your typical weekly routine. A sample entry for Monday has been provided to guide you.

Next, identify the triggers associated with each activity—these may include the time of day, location, the action that just occurred (preceding event), your emotional state, or the people around you. Examples of cues include waking up, brushing your teeth, eating breakfast, leaving for work, sitting at your desk, where you have lunch, and who you spend your evenings with.

Whenever possible, record cues as they happen rather than trying to recall them at the end of the day or week, as real-time tracking ensures accuracy.

ACTIVITY 03

CUE JOURNALING

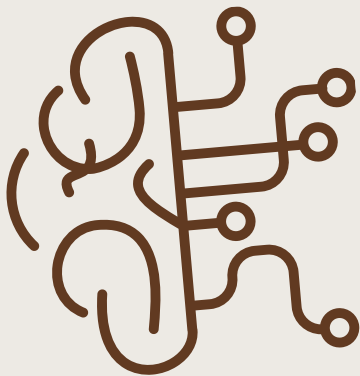
	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
5-7AM	6h wake up 6h30 drybrush						
7-9AM	7h breakfast 7h30 coffee 8h reading						
9-11AM	8h30 get to work drink water						
11-1PM	11h45 take enzymes 12h eat lunch						
1-3PM	treating patients						
3-5PM	4h finish work 4h30 go for a run						
5-7PM	6h arrive home 6h30 take a shower						
7-9PM	7h eat dinner 7h30 put kids in bed 8h play piano						
9-11PM	9h read a book 10h watch tv 10h30 start bedtime routine						

NEUROPLASTICITY

AKA HOW LONG IT TAKES TO MASTER A NEW HABIT

The brain's ability to reorganize itself by forming new neural connections is called **neuroplasticity**. When you repeat a behavior consistently, you strengthen the neural pathways associated with that behavior, making it easier and more automatic over time.

Studies suggest that it takes approximately **66 days for a new habit to become automatic, ranging from 18 to 254 days (Lally, P., van Jaarsveld, C. H. M., Potts, H. W. W., & Wardle, J. 2010).**



Neuroplasticity is affected by:

- Repetition: Consistent practice strengthens neural pathways.
- Attention: Mindful focus enhances plasticity.
- Emotion: Emotional significance accelerates learning.

To leverage neuroplasticity for habit change:

- Practice regularly to reinforce new pathways.
- Stay mindful to interrupt old patterns.
- Celebrate small wins to boost motivation and reinforce learning.

DID YOU KNOW?

Chiropractic care *supports neuroplasticity* by improving brain-body communication and reducing nervous system stress. Adjustments enhance sensorimotor integration, stimulating the prefrontal cortex, which plays a role in cognition, coordination, and decision-making. By regulating the autonomic nervous system, chiropractic care promotes relaxation and healing while also improving proprioception and movement control.



CHAPTER 2

FORMING NEW HABITS

ARE YOU READY TO CHANGE?

Now that you understand better how your habits are formed, why and when; the real question is :

ARE YOU READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP?

I am not going to lie, changing is hard. Your habits are, as you now know, deeply integrated into your brain and makes you who you are. They shape the way we think, act and respond to the world around us. But with the right understanding, the right tools and the right mindset, everything is possible! Am I right?

"The difference between who you are and who you want to be is what you do."

... and what we do habitually makes up much of what we do entirely. Actually, up to 70% of our waking behavior is made up of habitual behaviour. *We are creatures of habit!*

So, having healthy habits that are aligned with our values and goals can shape our life in the way we desire!



The new question is : what do you want?

WHY BUILDING HEALTHY HABITS?

IMPROVED PHYSICAL HEALTH

Regular exercise, proper posture, and a balanced diet help prevent chronic diseases, improve mobility, and boost energy levels.

BETTER MENTAL CLARITY & FOCUS

Healthy habits like proper sleep, hydration, and mindfulness improve brain function, memory, and concentration.

EMOTIONAL STABILITY & STRESS REDUCTION

Positive routines (such as meditation, movement, or gratitude) regulate emotions and lower stress hormones.

INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY & CONSISTENCY

Good habits streamline daily tasks, making you more efficient and reducing decision fatigue.

STRONGER RESILIENCE & ADAPTIBILITY

Healthy habits help you handle challenges better, whether it's injury recovery, mental stress, or lifestyle changes.

LONGEVITY & QUALITY OF LIFE

Small daily actions add up, leading to a longer, more active, and fulfilling life.

Creating healthy habits is essential for long-term physical, mental, and emotional well-being. When you develop positive routines, they become automatic, reducing the need for willpower and making it easier to maintain a balanced lifestyle.

LET'S START!

THE THREE-PHASE HABIT FORMATION FRAMEWORK

Building good habits and breaking bad ones is essential for personal growth and success. However, making habits stick can be challenging. The Three-Phase Habit Formation Framework—Initiation, Training, and Maintenance—provides a structured approach to developing lasting behaviours. It also gives you an idea on what are the stages for integrating a new habit. By applying this framework, you can transform your habits and ultimately improve your life.

01. INITIATION PHASE

The *Initiation Phase* is where a new habit begins. This stage involves setting clear intentions, identifying triggers, and starting small to build momentum.

To succeed, define why the habit matters, choose a reliable trigger, and make the habit manageable. Habit stacking—linking a new habit to an existing one—can help reinforce consistency (we will talk more about this later on). Creating an environment that supports the habit, such as visual cues or reminders, further increases the chances of success.

Overcoming common challenges like lack of motivation or forgetting requires intentional goal-setting and tracking progress.

02. TRAINING PHASE

In the *Training Phase*, repetition and reinforcement solidify the habit. This is where **consistency is crucial**. Performing the habit at the same time and place daily builds routine. Tracking progress through habit journals or apps provides accountability, while rewarding small achievements strengthens motivation.

If a habit isn't sticking, adjusting the trigger, routine, or reward can improve effectiveness.

Common obstacles include skipping days, external disruptions, and loss of motivation. Strategies like the "never miss twice" rule and celebrating small wins help maintain momentum.

03. MAINTENANCE PHASE

The *Maintenance Phase* ensures that the habit becomes second nature. At this stage, the behavior requires minimal effort to sustain. Scaling up gradually, monitoring progress, and adapting as needed keep the habit relevant and effective. Identity-based habits—internalizing the behavior as part of who you are—help prevent relapse.

Challenges like boredom, lifestyle disruptions, and old habits resurfacing can be managed by introducing variations and reinforcing positive triggers.

THE STEPS TO CREATE NEW HABITS

The most effective way to navigate the three stages of the habit-formation framework and ensure your habits stick is by following these five steps:

01. SET A CLEAR GOAL

Before you start forming a new habit, you need to define exactly what you want to achieve. A vague goal like *"I want to be healthier"* is too broad and lacks direction. Instead, be specific and measurable. Ask yourself:

- What habit will help me reach this goal?
- How will I measure my progress?
- Why is this important to me?

For example, if your goal is to improve your fitness, a clearer version would be: *"I will walk for 20 minutes every day after dinner to stay active and improve my cardiovascular health."* Having a well-defined goal gives you motivation and a clear path to follow.

02. SELECT A SIMPLE DAILY ACTION

One of the biggest mistakes people make when forming habits is starting too big. Instead of aiming for massive change overnight, break it down into small, manageable actions. A habit should be easy enough that you can do it consistently without feeling overwhelmed.

For example:

- If you want to drink more water, start with one extra glass per day instead of forcing yourself to drink a gallon.
- If you want to read more, commit to reading one page a day rather than trying to finish a book in a week.
- If you want to start meditating, begin with just two minutes instead of aiming for 30 minutes right away.

Starting small makes the habit easier to integrate into your routine and reduces the chances of quitting due to frustration.

03. CREATE A CUE-RESPONSE ASSOCIATION

Habits thrive on consistency, and one of the best ways to ensure consistency is by linking your new habit to a specific time, place, or existing routine. This is called **habit stacking**—pairing your new habit with something you already do every day (describe later on).

To make this effective:

- Choose a **specific time or event** (e.g., “After breakfast” or “Before bedtime”).
- Choose a **consistent location** (e.g., “At my desk” or “In the kitchen”).
- Attach it to an **existing habit** (e.g., “After I brush my teeth, I will floss one tooth”).

Examples:

- “After I pour my morning coffee, I will write one sentence in my journal.”
- “Before I go to bed, I will stretch for five minutes.”
- “When I get in my car, I will take three deep breaths before starting the engine.”

By establishing a clear cue-response relationship, you make it easier for your brain to associate the new habit with an existing routine.

04. ACT CONSISTENTLY

Once you’ve identified your cue, it’s time to take action consistently. The key to making a habit stick is repetition. Every time you encounter your chosen cue, you must immediately perform the action, no matter how small.

To increase the likelihood of success:

- **Remove obstacles** that could prevent you from following through (e.g., lay out workout clothes the night before).
- **Use the “two-minute rule”**—commit to doing the habit for just two minutes to reduce resistance. If you feel like doing more, great! If not, at least you’ve maintained the habit.
- **Apply the “never miss twice” rule**—if you miss a day, make sure you get back on track the next day to avoid breaking momentum.

Consistency is what turns an action into an automatic behavior. Even if the effort feels small, it adds up over time.

05. TRACK YOUR PROGRESS

Monitor your habit with a tracker, journal, or app. Seeing your progress keeps you motivated. Having an accountability partner or rewarding yourself for consistency can also help reinforce the habit.

ACTIVITY 04

READY TO CHANGE?

HABIT REFLECTION & PLANNING EXERCISE

Let's put those words in action; identify a habit you want to change and create an actionable plan to start.

STEP 01. CHOOSE YOUR HABIT

Write down one habit you want to build (e.g., drinking more water, exercising, reading daily).

Why do you want to develop this habit? (e.g., "I want to drink more water to feel more energized.")

STEP 02. IDENTIFY YOUR CUE

What will remind you to do this habit? Choose a trigger like:

- A specific time (e.g., "After waking up")
- An existing habit (e.g., "After brushing my teeth")
- A location (e.g., "At my work desk")

STEP 03. DEFINE A SIMPLE ACTION

Choose a small, easy-to-do version of the habit. Example:

- Instead of "exercise daily," start with "*do 5 push-ups every morning.*"

STEP 04. PLAN FOR CONSISTENCY

Write down when and where you will do this habit. Example:

- "After pouring my morning coffee, I will drink a glass of water."

Set a reminder (alarm, sticky note, habit-tracking app).

STEP 05. TRACK & ADJUST

For the next 7 days, track your habit daily. *Did you do it?* If not, what got in the way?

Adjust if needed (e.g., change the cue or simplify the action).

BONUS : *Share your goal with someone for accountability!*



By following these five steps—*setting a clear goal, choosing a simple daily action, establishing a cue-response association, acting consistently, and tracking your progress*—you create a strong foundation for lasting habit formation.

The key is to start small, stay consistent, and adjust as needed.
Over time, these small changes compound into powerful transformations.

Let me share some of my favorite tips and tricks!

START SMALL

Research from Stanford University suggests that *starting with small*, manageable changes increases the likelihood of success. BJ Fogg, a behavioral scientist, calls this the "Tiny Habits" approach. For example:

- Instead of "exercise more," start with 5 push-ups.
- Instead of "eat healthier," add a vegetable to one meal a day.

You could also follow the two minute rule aka, start your new habit only 2 minutes a day the first two weeks!

¹⁰

IMPLEMENTATION INTENTIONS

Studies published in the British Journal of Health Psychology reveal that **"if-then" planning** increases follow-through rates.¹¹ Example:

- "If it is 7:00 AM, then I will meditate for 5 minutes."
- "If I am done from work, then I will go out for a run."

ENVIRONMENT DESIGN

James Clear, in Atomic Habits, emphasizes shaping your surroundings to encourage good habits:¹²

- **Make it obvious:** Place workout clothes by your bed.
- **Make it easy:** Prepare healthy snacks in advance.
- **Make it attractive:** Pair habits with enjoyable activities (e.g., listen to audiobooks while exercising).

HABIT STACKING

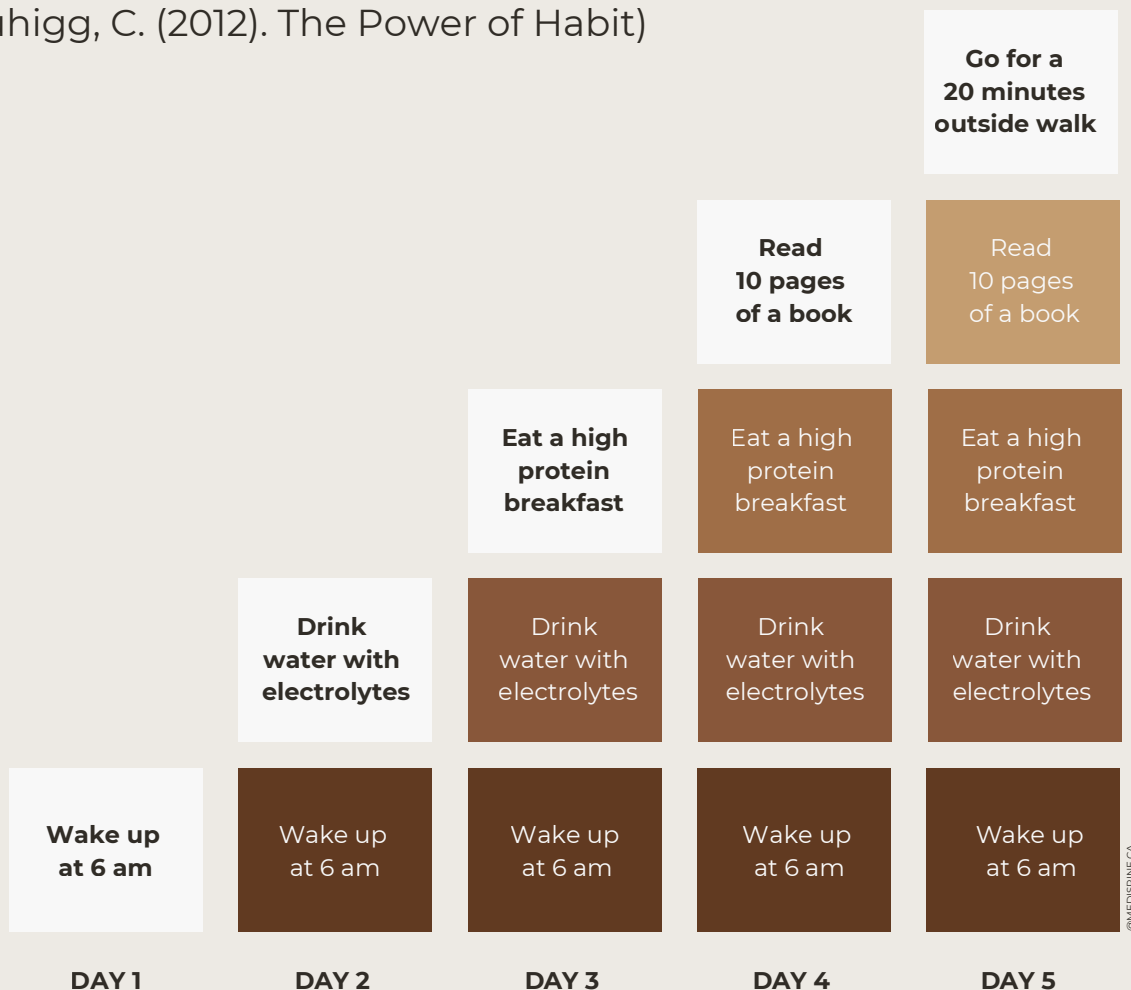
Instead of trying to create a habit from scratch, attach it to an existing one. This technique, popularized by James Clear in *Atomic Habits*, leverages the brain's existing neural pathways.

HOW TO DO IT?

- After I wake up, I drink water with electrolytes
- After I drink my water, I eat a high protein breakfast
- After I eat my breakfast, I read 10 pages of a book
- Etc.

WHY DOES IT WORK?

Your brain already expects to do the first habit, so adding another small habit to it makes adoption easier. (Duhigg, C. (2012). *The Power of Habit*)



CHAPTER 3

BREAKING BAD HABITS

& NOW, LET'S

REWRITE YOUR ROUTINE



Bad habits can feel impossible to break because they are deeply wired into our brains. However, research in psychology and neuroscience shows that habits follow a predictable pattern—a cue (trigger), routine (behavior), and reward—known as the habit loop (Duhigg, 2012).

Understanding and disrupting this cycle is key to lasting change.

"You'll never change your life until you change something you do daily. The secret of your success is found in your daily routine."

— John C. Maxwell

BREAK THE CYCLE

IDENTIFY THE HABIT LOOP

Every habit starts with a cue that triggers an automatic response. Recognizing what prompts a habit—whether it's stress, boredom, or a specific environment—allows you to take control (Duhigg, 2012). Harvard Health suggests tracking your habits to identify these patterns, which is the first step in breaking them (Harvard Health).

REPLACE THE ROUTINE

Simply eliminating a habit leaves a void that can lead to relapse. Instead, swap the routine for a healthier alternative that provides a similar reward (Wood, 2019). For example, if stress leads to emotional eating, replacing snacks with a short walk or deep breathing can satisfy the same emotional need without reinforcing the bad habit (Behavioral Scientist).

MODIFY YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Our surroundings play a crucial role in habit formation. Studies suggest that changing your environment can disrupt unwanted behaviors by removing cues that trigger them (Wood, 2019). For instance, keeping your phone in another room can reduce mindless scrolling, while placing a water bottle on your desk can encourage hydration.

LEVERAGE SOCIAL SUPPORT

The Transtheoretical Model of Change emphasizes that social support is crucial for behavior modification. Engaging with a supportive community or accountability partner makes breaking bad habits easier and helps sustain long-term change (Transtheoretical Model). Whether it's joining a fitness group or telling a friend about your goal, social reinforcement increases the likelihood of success.

PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION

Research shows that self-compassion enhances resilience during habit change. Instead of seeing setbacks as failures, view them as learning opportunities. The "Never Miss Twice" rule—getting back on track immediately after a slip—can prevent minor lapses from turning into full relapses (Neff, 2011).

STRATEGIES TO BREAK BAD HABITS

Bad habits persist because they **follow the same habit loop** as good habits: cue, routine, and reward.

By applying these research-backed strategies, you can rewire your brain for positive change and build a healthier, more intentional life.



IDENTITY TRIGGERS

To disrupt unwanted habits, identify the cues prompting them. Studies show that changing your environment or routine can weaken these cues and break the cycle (Clear, J. 2018).

INVERT THE 4 LAWS

Make it Invisible: Remove cues for bad habits.

Make it Unattractive: Reframe how you view the habit's consequences.

Make it Difficult: Increase friction by adding steps to perform the habit.

Make it Unsatisfying: Use accountability or immediate negative feedback (Verplanken, B., & Wood, W. 2006).

BE MINDFUL

Mindfulness practices enhance awareness and interrupt automatic behaviors. Neuroscientific research suggests that mindfulness strengthens the prefrontal cortex, increasing self-regulation (Clear, J. 2018).

ACTIVITY 05

LET'S BREAK A BAD ONE

BREAKING A BAD HABIT – THE HABIT SWAP CHALLENGE

Ready to break the cycle? Identify a bad habit, understand its triggers, and replace it with a positive alternative.

STEP 01. IDENTIFY YOUR HABIT LOOP

Take a journal and answer the following questions:

- **What bad habit do you want to break?** (e.g., biting nails, scrolling on your phone late at night, emotional eating)
- **What triggers this habit?** (Time of day, emotions, environment, certain people, boredom?)
- **What reward do you get from it?** (Stress relief, distraction, comfort?)

STEP 02. CHOOSE A HABIT REPLACEMENT

Since habits are easier to replace than eliminate, pick a positive alternative that provides a similar reward.

- Example: ~~Instead of reaching for snacks when stressed,~~ try deep breathing or stretching.
- Example: ~~Replace phone scrolling before bed~~ with reading a book for 10 minutes.

STEP 03. MODIFY YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Remove cues that trigger the bad habit (e.g., keep junk food out of sight, place your phone in another room at night).

Add cues for the new habit (e.g., keep a book by your bed, set a water bottle on your desk).

STEP 04. TRACK & REFLECT

For the next 7 days, use a habit tracker or journal to mark each time you successfully swap the bad habit for the new one.

- Write down when you felt tempted and what you did instead.
- Reflect on what worked and what needs improvement.

CELEBRATE SMALL WINS - *Reward yourself for progress*

CHAPTER 4

GOAL SETTING



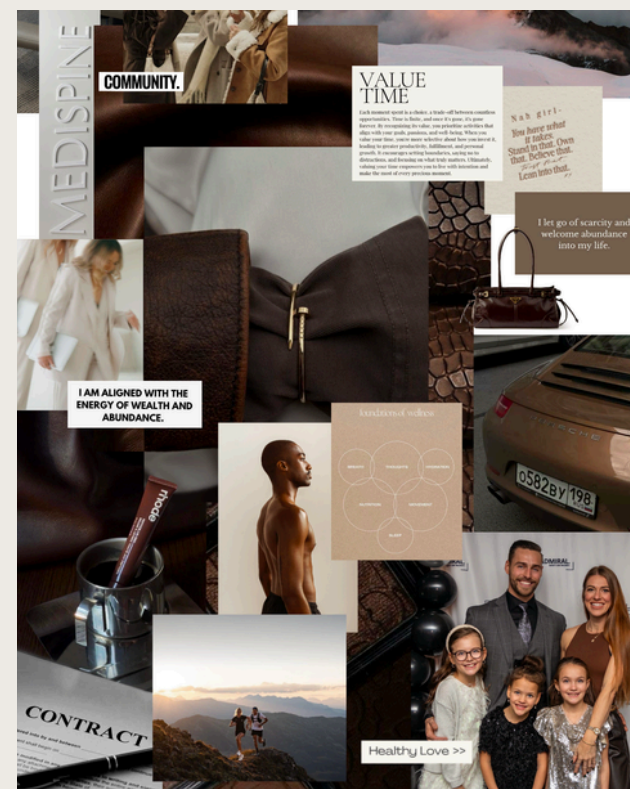
I know, I KNOW... Sooooo many people nowadays talk about goal setting and vision board. BUT in order to change, we **absolutely need to put an intention** to initiate the change and setting a goal is a great way to start.

Whether you want to improve your health, advance in your career, or achieve personal milestones, having a clear and actionable plan is crucial. Research has shown that setting specific and challenging goals leads to higher performance compared to vague or easy goals .

This chapter will guide you through the process of setting, tracking, and achieving your goals.

Setting goals is the foundation of success.

Here is my vision board for 2025. It inspires me for my next projects and hold my intentions for the year →



WHY GOAL SETTING MATTER?

THE SCIENCE BEHIND GOAL SETTING

Goal setting is rooted in psychology and has been extensively studied. The Goal-Setting Theory by Edwin Locke and Gary Latham (1990) suggests that specific, challenging goals improve performance by increasing motivation, persistence, and attention to task-related strategies. Setting goals provides clarity and helps individuals channel their efforts in a focused direction.

HOW GOALS IMPACT MOTIVATION & PERFORMANCE

Studies indicate that individuals who set goals are more likely to achieve success. According to a study published in the Journal of Applied Psychology, goal-setting increases performance by 10-25% (Locke & Latham, 2006). The act of setting goals stimulates the brain's reward system, particularly the release of dopamine, a neurotransmitter associated with motivation and pleasure (Schultz, 2015).

HOW GOALS IMPACT MOTIVATION & PERFORMANCE

Dreams are abstract desires, while goals are concrete plans with actionable steps. A dream might be "I want to be healthier," whereas a goal would be "I will exercise for 30 minutes five times a week." Goals are structured and time-bound, making them more attainable.

SHORT VS. LONG TERM GOALS

Short-term goals are objectives that can be achieved within days, weeks, or months, while long-term goals take years to accomplish. For example, saving \$500 in three months is a short-term goal, whereas saving for a house over five years is a long-term goal. Both types are essential for structured progress.

PERSONAL VS. PROFESSIONAL

Personal goals relate to self-improvement, health, or relationships, such as learning a new language or running a marathon. Professional goals focus on career advancement, such as earning a certification or getting a promotion. Balancing both personal and professional goals leads to overall life satisfaction.

SMART GOALS

When setting goals, make sure it follows the SMART structure. The SMART framework, developed by George T. Doran (1981), is a widely used method for effective goal setting. Each goal should be:

S

SPECIFIC

Clearly defined : What do I want to accomplish?(e.g., "I will read 12 books this year" instead of "I want to read more")

M

MEASURABLE

Trackable progress : How will I know when it is accomplished?(e.g., "I will read one book per month")

A

ACHIEVABLE

Realistic within resources and time constraints : How can the goal be accomplished?

R

RELEVANT

Aligned with broader objectives and values : Does this seem worthwhile?

T

TIME BOUND

Has a deadline for completion: When can I accomplish this goal?

SMART GOALS

WHEN SETTING GOALS, MAKE SURE IT FOLLOWS THE SMART STRUCTURE. USE THE QUESTIONS BELOW TO CREATE YOUR GOALS.

S	<u>SPECIFIC</u> WHAT DO I WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?	
M	<u>MEASURABLE</u> HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN IT IS ACCOMPLISHED?	
A	<u>ACHIEVABLE</u> HOW CAN THE GOAL BE ACCOMPLISHED?	
R	<u>RELEVANT</u> DOES THIS SEEM WORTHWHILE?	
T	<u>TIME BOUND</u> WHEN CAN I ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL?	



LET'S DEFINE YOUR GOALS

IDENTIFY YOUR TRUE DESIRE

Effective goal setting starts with introspection. Ask yourself: What do I truly want to achieve? Why does this matter to me? Research suggests that intrinsic motivation—when goals align with personal values—leads to higher commitment and long-term success (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

WRITE CLEAR AND SPECIFIC GOALS

Writing down goals increases the likelihood of achieving them. A study by Dr. Gail Matthews at Dominican University found that individuals who wrote down their goals were 42% more likely to succeed compared to those who only formulated goals in their minds. Clarity is key—**define exactly what you want to accomplish.**

The clearer, the better.

ALIGN YOUR GOALS WITH YOUR VISION & VALUE

Goals should align with your personal values and long-term vision. If a goal conflicts with your core beliefs or priorities, it may lead to frustration rather than success. Take time to reflect on whether each goal fits into your broader life plan.

*A goal without a plan is just a wish
Dream big, but plan bigger—because action turns vision into reality.*

READY TO TAKE ACTION?

CREATE AN ACTION PLAN

Breaking goals into smaller, manageable steps makes them less overwhelming. For example, if your goal is to run a marathon, an action plan might include gradually increasing running distance each week.

SET MILESTONES AND MINI-GOALS

Milestones provide motivation by marking progress along the way. If your goal is to save \$5,000 in a year, setting monthly savings targets keeps you on track.

OVERCOME OBSTACLE AND STAY ON TRACK

Anticipate challenges and plan solutions. For example, if time constraints are an issue, schedule goal-related activities in advance. Staying flexible and adaptable is crucial for long-term success.

NOT SURE WHERE OR HOW TO START?

Even after all that, you are still unsure about where to start or what to do? Are you still confused or trying to figure your life out...? As usual, **WE GOT MORE THAN YOUR BACK!**

MEET RENEE-CLAUDE

A mindset mentor that could help you overcome adversity and challenges.

"Life's challenges can feel overwhelming, but you don't have to navigate them alone. Whether you're facing a major life transition or simply feel stuck, I'll guide you with the tools and support you need to thrive. Ready to take the first step? Let's connect!"

BOOK A SESSION



ACTIVITY 05

GOAL PLANNER

Created / /

To Achieve By / /

Achieved ☐

GOAL

ACTION STEPS

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____

MOTIVATION

STRATEGY

PROGRESS TRACKER

REWARD

MY HABIT CHEAT SHEET

@MEDISPINE.CA

01. START SMALL

- Break down big goals into tiny, manageable tasks.
- Aim for small wins to build momentum (e.g., 5-minute workout instead of an hour).

02. CONSISTENCY OVER INTENSITY

- Focus on doing the habit daily, even if it's for a shorter amount of time.
- Habits are built through repetition, not necessarily through long efforts.

03. TRACK YOUR PROGRESS

- Use a habit tracker to stay accountable (e.g., check off days you complete the habit).
- Celebrate small victories to keep motivation high.

04. TIE YOUR HABIT TO AN EXISTING ROUTINE

- Pair the new habit with something you already do (e.g., stretch after brushing your teeth).
- This is known as habit stacking.

05. MAKE IT ENJOYABLE

- Choose habits that align with your interests or make them fun.
- If you enjoy the process, you're more likely to stick with it.

06. REMOVE OBSTACLES

- Set yourself up for success by minimizing friction (e.g., lay out workout clothes the night before).
- Eliminate distractions that make it harder to stick to the habit.

07. USE CUES OR TRIGGERS

- Set reminders or visual cues to prompt you to do the habit (e.g., a sticky note on your desk).
- Associating a habit with a trigger helps it become automatic.

08. STAY FLEXIBLE

- If you miss a day or slip up, don't stress. Just get back on track the next day.
- It's the long-term consistency that matters.

09. GET ACCOUNTABILITY

- Share your goals with someone who can check in on you or do the habit with you.
- Having an accountability partner helps keep you motivated

10. REVIEW & ADJUST

- Periodically assess your progress and tweak your approach if needed.
- If something's not working, modify the habit or your strategy to make it more achievable.

MY HABIT TRACKER

FOR THE MONTH OF :

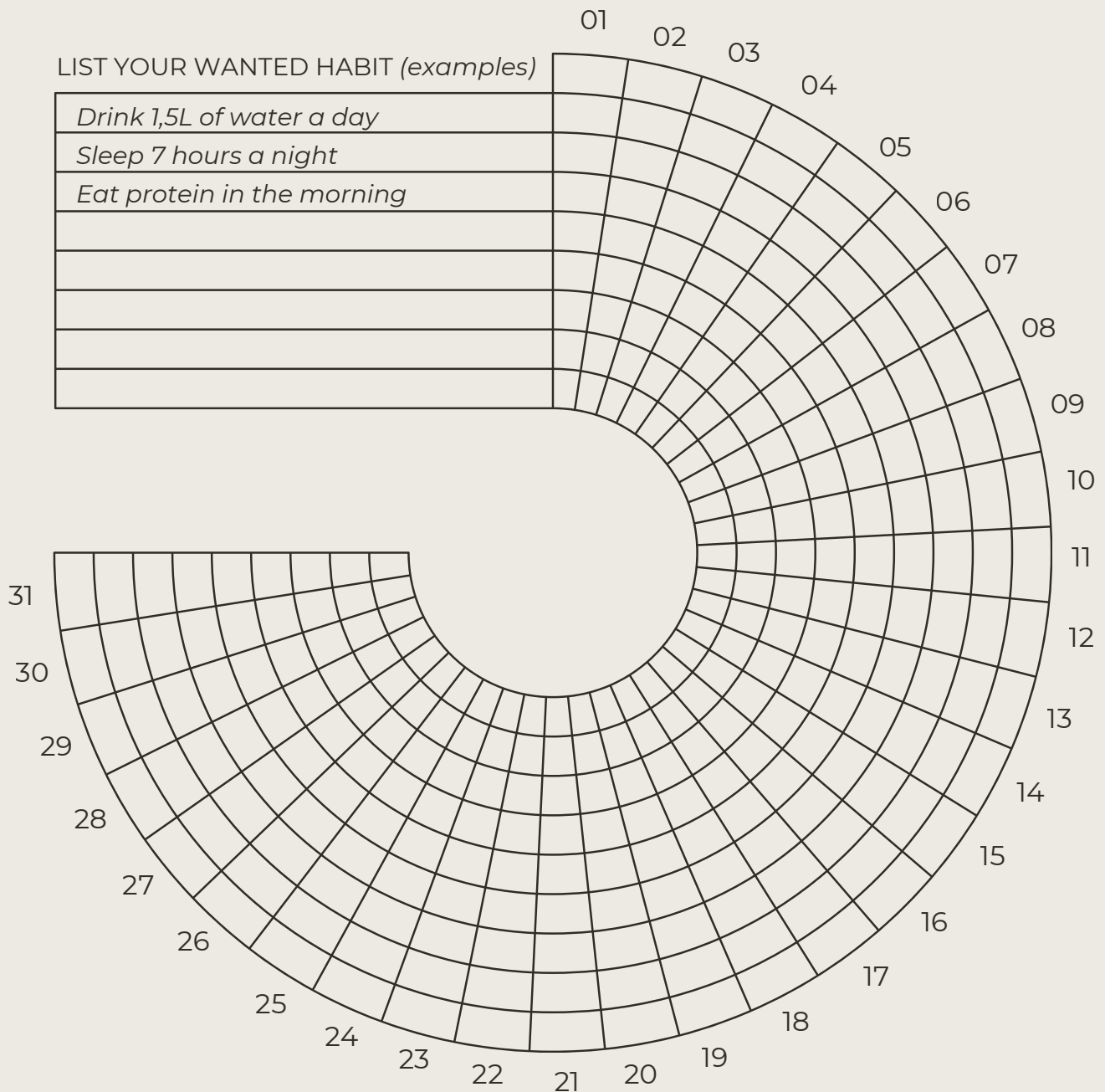
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LIST YOUR WANTED HABIT (examples)

Drink 1,5L of water a day

Sleep 7 hours a night

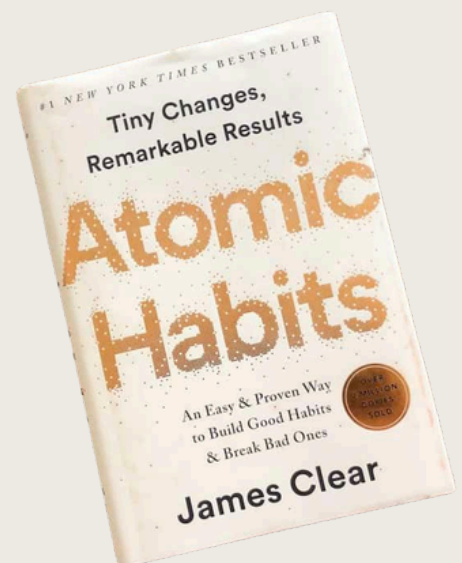
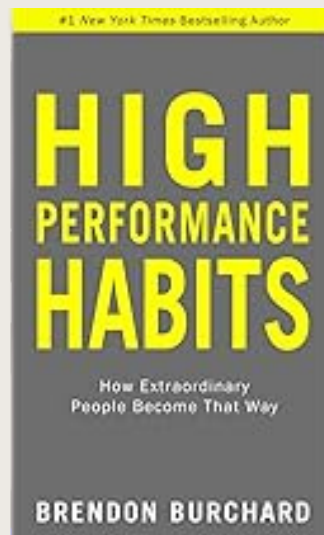
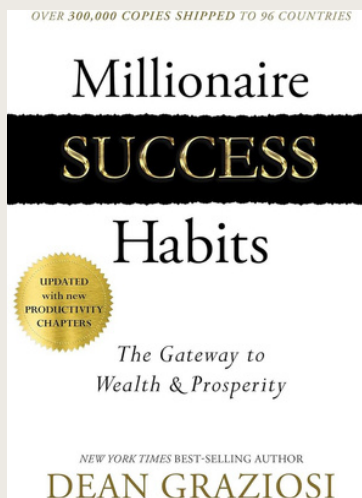
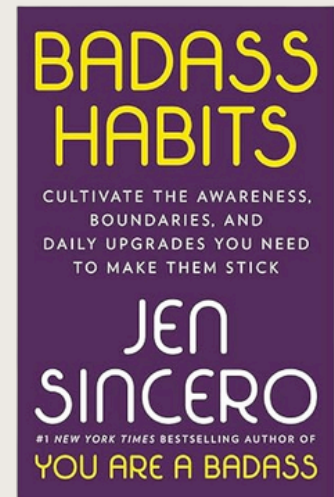
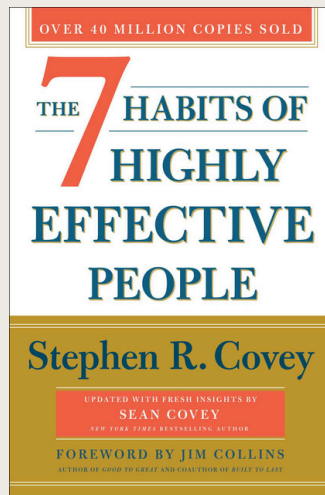
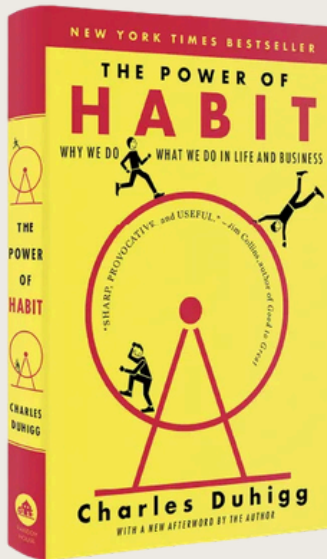
Eat protein in the morning



MY INTENTION & GOAL FOR THIS MONTH :

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?

READ ONE OF OUR FAVORITE BOOKS - CLIC TO BUY



READY TO CHANGE?

Thank you SO MUCH for your interest in our informative E-book and MOST LIKELY, BE PROUD of wanting to change! We hope this gave you some valuable insights about the science of habits and gave you tools to start the path towards a better **YOU!**

WE ARE HAPPY TO GUIDE YOU THROUGH THE PROCESS IF NEEDED!



Ready to take action towards a better and healthier you?
We are here to help.

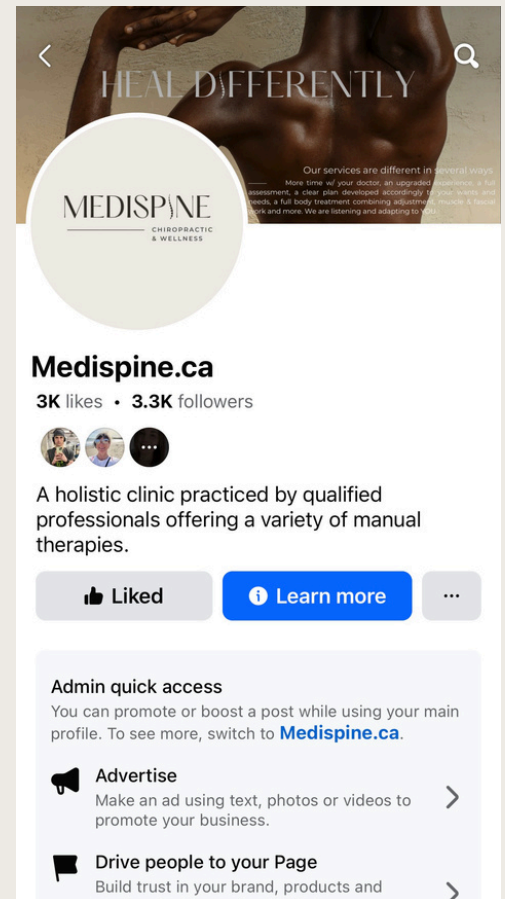
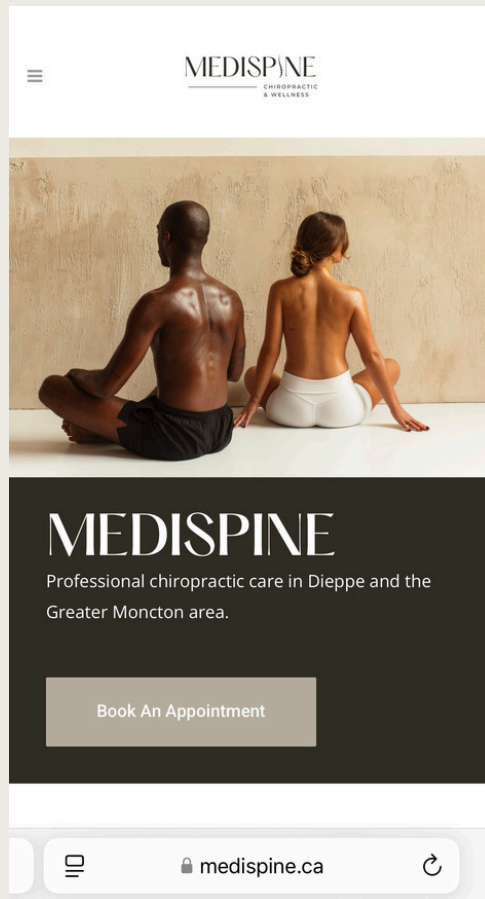
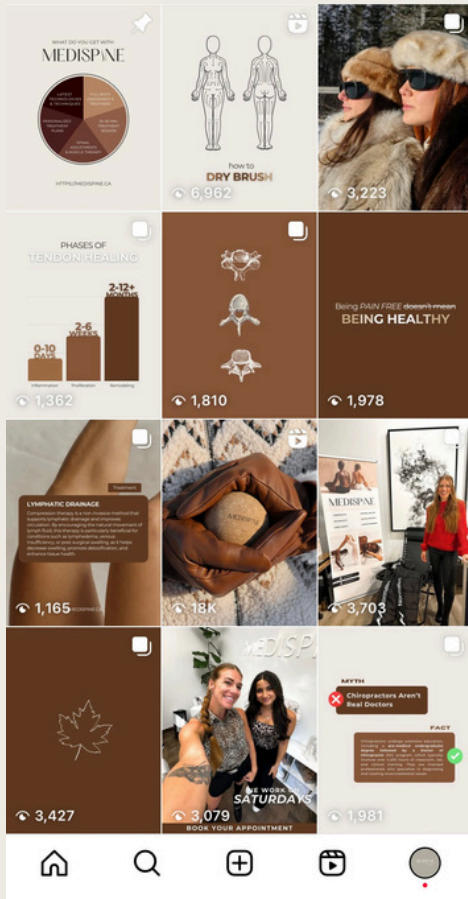
If you are still unsure if how to start or if you have more question; do not hesitate to send us a message info@medispine.ca or

BOOK NOW!

506-889-4490

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