

## 21 Day Habit Fix Worksheet

This worksheet offers simple, practical suggestions and tools to implement positive change through forming healthy habits.

A basic rule of thumb suggests that it takes 21 days to create a new habit. That's just three weeks. In that short timeframe, you can create new neural pathways to help you more easily accomplish tasks and adopt healthier behaviors. Notice, I said "more easily." It won't be easy, especially at first. You'll still have to work at it. But growth and transformation are possible.

I know how frustrating it can be to feel stuck in behaviors you don't want to do. For decades, I felt trapped by food and held hostage by its demands. Of course, food can't actually demand anything. I know that logically, but emotionally speaking, food seemed to grab hold of my thoughts and eradicate any willpower I possessed. What I learned is that forming habits isn't about perfection. Actually—and this may surprise you—perfection should be avoided.

The result of perfectionism is the "white-knuckle" effect, where you use every ounce of your grit and gumption to tackle a problem. This may sound like a good thing. But imagine doing this for days on end, or weeks, months, or years. You can't white-knuckle anything for that long. It simply isn't sustainable.

The goal of creating healthy habits isn't perfection, but *imperfect progress*.

I wholeheartedly believe the only failure in life is quitting. In a Dyson vacuum commercial from years ago, the president proudly stated that every time the company discovered a broken prototype, they *celebrated*. Why? Because that meant they were one step closer to a finished product.

Just like that vacuum company, when you do encounter setbacks, embrace them, then press on toward your final goal. Take these behaviors one step, one day, or one moment at a time. Learn, evaluate, and monitor your successes and setbacks. Don't feel guilty when a setback happens. And whatever you do, don't quit—especially within the first three weeks.

### **Phase One: Observation**

**What habit do you want to change?**

**Why do you believe this habit needs to be changed?**

**What do you want your new habit to be?**

State your new habit as clearly and specifically as possible. For example, instead of the vague goal of, "Be healthier," write specifics: "I want to incorporate a daily walk into my routine." Another vague example is, "I want to be more productive." A more specific habit is, "I want to arrive thirty minutes early to work so that I can plan my day."

**What do you believe this new habit will achieve? Is this realistic?**

Realistic: Accounting for life or setbacks to occur.

Unrealistic: Wanting to implement the new habit 100 percent of the time. Realistic: Knowing change will create a positive effect in your life.

Unrealistic: Believe your entire life will change.

**What is your motivation for wanting this new habit?**

For example: a feeling of accomplishment, praise from others, rewards (money, things), a promotion, etc.

**How committed can you be to creating this new habit?**

For example: Is this a good time for change in your life? Do you have the energy to take on this particular habit?

## **Phase Two: Remove Roadblocks and Distractions**

**What are your likely roadblocks to adopting your new habit?**

*For example: energy, finances, willpower, etc.*

**What two things can you do to help remove these roadblocks?**

1.

2.

**What will likely distract you from your progress?**

*For example: Scrolling through social media feeds eats up hours of my day and leaves me distracted and comparing myself to others.*

**What two things can you do to remove these distractions?**

1.

2.

### **Phase Three: Preparation**

**Create Community:** Community provides needed accountability and encouragement.

- *Who can I journey with to help me incorporate my new habit?*
- *How will this person contribute to my new habit?*
- *What can I do to help contribute to this person's life?*

**Create cues:** Cues are visual reminders to help you with your new habit, like leaving your running shoes out to remind you to exercise in the morning.

My cue is:

**Create a Routine:**

*For example:*

Every morning before I leave for work, I will

When I get home from work, I will

Before I got to bed at night, I will

On the weekends, I will

**Establish your rewards:**

Make the reward compelling enough to motivate you. Be wise in choosing your reward. Make sure it doesn't have the possibility to turn into something unhealthy, like rewarding yourself with food, alcohol, or excessive spending.

After I , I will earn .

**Phase Four: Implementation**

Depending on your preference, you can jump in and commit to your new habit every day for 21 days. This offers you a relatively small amount of time with a specific deadline in mind.

Or, you can develop phases. For example: “For one week I will read the Bible every morning for five minutes. The next week, I’ll read two days a week for ten minutes. I’ll keep increasing the time every week until I reach 30 minutes of daily Bible reading.”

I personally like the incremental way because it allows for slow, consistent habits to be developed. When you start small, you naturally have more opportunities for success. You can always maintain a new habit for 21 days, evaluate, and then make changes. Remember, the goal is *progress*, not perfection. Slow and consistent growth over time creates an exponential effect.

For example, one of my habits is reading one book a month. It takes me about 15-30 minutes of reading a few days a week, which is a pretty low—yet attainable—commitment level. Since adopting this habit less than two years ago, I’ve since read 28 books. Occasionally, a month or two passed where I didn’t read a single page. But instead of ditching the habit altogether, I gave myself grace and got back to it. You can do the math and see that even with those lapses in reading, I’ve actually read *more* than my goal.

Small, consistent change creates dynamic growth.

**I will start my habit on        for        amount of time.**

I recommend 21 days. Then evaluate, make necessary changes, and resume for another 21 days.

**How can you incorporate your faith during this implantation phase?**

### **Phase Five: Evaluation**

This may be the most difficult phase. Whether or not you complete the 21 days of habit implementation, evaluate what happened. Even if you were able to complete the new habit for a day or two, evaluate what happened.

**What were your greatest successes during those 21 days?**

**What setbacks did you encounter?**

**What fears did you encounter?**

For example: What if people don't approve? What if I don't know how to do it? What if costs too much (time, energy, resources)? What if it doesn't work? What if I'm not successful?

**How did your habit help in your vision casting?**

**What will you do differently next time? Why?**

**What benefits did you see or realize during those 21 days?**