

A man with a backpack is walking away from the viewer on a cracked, stone path that leads into a massive, glowing green tunnel of water. The tunnel is formed by large, swirling waves of water that create a bright, ethereal light at the end. The sky above is dark and filled with stars, suggesting a night sky. The overall scene is surreal and evocative, symbolizing a journey or a path through challenges.

Habit:

The Foundation Of All Success

An Introductory Guide

Introduction

We are at an odd time in history, where many old and new paradigms are colliding. A recent study came out suggesting that the average American has a shorter attention span than a goldfish. Life is moving faster than ever, and we are constantly bombarded with marketing, news, and the daily pressures of life at a rate that can be staggering to the most “together” of us. That’s why it’s so vital at this juncture in time, to really have the fundamentals of an exciting, successful and “centered” life mastered. What many successful people will tell you is that they can tell quite a lot about a person and their potential for meeting their goals, by the habits they routinely practice. This has certainly been true in my own observations as well.

As we embark on this journey together, first, let me break down the most basic way I process life. I look at life from 2 perspectives, quite simply to make keeping track of things relatively simple and painless. Those perspectives are the 4 main commodities of life, or health, wealth, love and time; and the 3 states of existence, being, doing and having. Inevitably, if you structure your thinking along these lines, it is far easier to assess where you are, and where you’re going, as well as what is working and not for you at this particular point in time. Essentially, if you view the various commodities and how you relate to them in your being (how you think/resonate with that commodity), your doing (how actively you are pursuing the next “level” of that commodity and the steps you’re taking to get there) and your having (the outward manifestation or feedback loop of the world around you, which clearly demonstrates your outcomes at this time) you’ll most often know what you have to do, or the next thing you’ll need to find out, in order to achieve what you want to achieve.

So with all of that in mind, let’s spend some time looking at the power of habit, those things we do so regularly and frequently that we almost don’t have to think about them, and how they affect your outcomes. Habits are nothing more than the things we do regularly, and they aren’t always huge things, typically, they are small, even micro-movements in the right direction. Just like interest adds up in a bank account, habits add up over time. Master your habits, in you’ll be well on your way to mastering your life.

Habit Creation Secrets Of Highly Successful People

Have you ever noticed that people you admire usually have habits that serve them well in life? A famous athlete might have habits of keeping in shape such as exercising at certain times every day – and more than the mediocre athlete.

The Governor of a state might have formed the habit of studying hard at times when other students were partying or he or she may have taken the time to volunteer in political campaigns and other methods to advance in politics.

Whatever your goals for the future – positive habits can be created to get you there. These habits can make even the most far-reaching goals seem closer and more doable.

Dissecting Habit Creation

When you dissect a habit, scientifically, you'll notice that it's actually a continuous loop that includes three elements – trigger, behavior and reward. When one of these elements is left out of the equation, the loop implodes and the habit creation is broken.

Here are the fundamental ingredients of each trigger, behavior pattern and reward of the habits that you create:

Triggers – A trigger is a thought that occurs in your brain (it could be from a smell, touch, sound or sight) that tells you to do something. Any new habit that a person creates must have a trigger as a call to action.

Successful people use triggers that work for them – the ones that create a knee-jerk reaction. They use the surroundings of their homes or offices to create the triggers. For example, workout clothes, laid out the night before in the same place each time can create a trigger of working out first thing in the morning when you see the clothes. If you have to search for them, it's not as meaningful.

Behaviors – Your behavior comes from both the trigger and the motivation that you have for wanting to develop the habit. Your motivation could be a college degree, owning your own business or becoming more productive. Keeping your behavior pattern (habit) on track means that it will lead to something you're enthusiastic about. You may want to be in better shape for that 30-year class reunion coming up. Or, you may want to learn another language before you travel overseas.

Asking yourself why you want to create the habit that will help it stick. It will lead to the ultimate end of the loop which is the reward you'll get at the finish line.

Reward – For any new habit to work there must be a reward at the end of the loop. Rewards are the satisfaction we get from a job well done. They can also be satisfactions for cravings we might have.

When you're trying to create a habit that will help to lead you to success, it's best that you experiment with rewards and see what best works for you. For example, if you feel the urge to stop by Starbucks for a Frappacino in the morning, choose another routine that provides a different reward. You may want to arrange to meet a friend in the break room for coffee or have a prepared snack ready to eat at your desk.

Experiment with what makes you feel that same level of satisfaction that a stop at Starbucks gives.

Highly successful people have the habit loop figured out. Their loops may be more complex than the habits you're beginning to create, but it provides them with the same level of satisfaction and keeps them on the right path.

Ability also plays an important part in the creation of a habit. You may have physical constraints that prevent you from becoming a body builder, but you can find other goals and habits that can help you become the best you can be at whatever you choose.

Depending on how ingrained a certain habit is in your life – or if it has an extra issue of addiction – you can accomplish the creation of a new habit much faster if you dissect the habit first and discover what makes it so attractive to you.

Habits Can Make Or Break You

If you create and perpetuate a bad habit, it can become a huge obstacle to your eventual success. Good habit creation can help you reach your full potential by driving you on to the next level in all that you desire to do.

Habits are fundamental to humans. They become second-nature to us to the point where we don't even have to think about them in order to carry them out. But, during a habit's creation, you must be mindful of how you're executing the formation of the habit and engage in whatever it takes to turn it into a "second-nature" habit.

Highly successful people are highly motivated to succeed. They only engage in habits that are going to serve their needs. All other habits are discarded and the only ones they concentrate on are those that are beneficial.

Carrying a burden of bad habits in your luggage on the trip to success is not only a bad idea, but it can keep you from taking the steps or becoming recognized as a person who can get the job done.

When people work hard to succeed and then fall behind, it's usually because of a habit that they just can't let go of. If you're on a diet and lose 50 pounds through hard work and the creation of good habits, you can gain those pounds back – and more – by letting the old habit of choosing the double cheeseburger rather than a salad or sleeping in rather than exercising.

Highly successful people wouldn't think of letting anything or anyone stand in the way of their ultimate goals. It takes strength and willpower over the fleeting pleasures that bad habits usually offer.

Before you begin to change or create a habit, think long and hard about what the new habit will do for you down the line. If the pull is strong enough, you'll find a way to accomplish it.

Psychological studies tell us that motivation is the key predictor of future success. Unless you're motivated to change the old habits that have kept you back – or create new habits that will ensure success, even with absolute motivation, you may well simply spin your wheels.

Most successful people in any walk of life have devoted hours to learning a craft, exercising, furthering a career or anything that was going to propel them on to the success they longed for.

Highly motivated people plan ahead so that they're prepared for changes in their lives which will ensure maximum results. This goes for life changes or small habits that keep you from living up to your potential.

Change isn't easy, because you have likely been practicing bad habits or have no clue what a good habit entails. The deeply ingrained habits are set in proverbial concrete and the good habits are fragile and can vanish into the sunset unless you're motivated for change.

When you're motivated to change a habit or create a new one, here are some facts that will make it happen.

Determination – If you're determined to resist the ingrained habits in your life that are holding you back, you have a more than good chance of success.

Drive – This is the motivational engine that can be external or internal and that will propel you into the actions needed to reach success.

Persistence – You must be able to persist when everything seems to be fatigue, but success depends on you being able to overcome these threats.

Ability – You have to be the one to initiate and create the habit or get rid of those that hold you back. Devoting 100% of your time and effort into the habits that will help you reach success depends on your ability to persevere.

Focus – Can you focus on the end result of your efforts rather than satisfying yourself with only moments of pleasure? Those who have made successes of their lives have chosen to focus on what matters in the long run.

To take full advantage of your new habits, you'll need to uncover – layer by layer

– what motivates you and will keep you strong enough to withstand the obstacles that are sure to block your path to success.

Strange Habits Of Successful People

Many people have developed some habits that may seem strange to the rest of us, but have in some way helped keep them on the path to success. Some highly successful people who have developed some strange habits that have served them well include:

Bill Gates – For one week during the year, Gates stayed in a small cottage on the waterfront, with only a caretaker who brought two meals per day. The quiet time, with no distractions, gave him time to think.

Winston Churchill – Churchill awoke at 7:30 am, but stayed in bed, ate a good breakfast, read his mail and all national newspapers and dictated to a secretary until 11:00 a., when he bathed and walked in the garden.

Warren Buffett – An avid reader, financial genius, Warren Buffett reads over 500 pages per day to build up knowledge at “compound interest.”

Habits don't have to run the norm in life. They can be eccentric, happen at odd times of the day or just bring peace into your life. The important thing is that each habit you cultivate brings out the drive and motivation within you to keep reaching for success.

