

HARNESSING HABITS

ACCOUNTABILITY

4. ARE YOUR HARNESSING HEALTHY HABITS?

WHAT

Wellbeing is not a spectator sport – just like being physically fit, our mental wellbeing requires us to do things consistently that help us thrive. Knowing what to do isn't enough, doing it once isn't enough. Moving towards a thriving life requires tiny tweaks we start and then do repeatedly. Easier said than done right?

One of the ways we can hold ourselves accountable with greater ease is making habits. Habits help us to reduce the noise and friction between thinking about doing something and actually doing it. As James Clear tell us in his book Atomic Habits "The quality of our lives, often depends on the quality of our habits".

HOW

So how do we make habits? Charles Duhigg and other researchers have discovered a simple neurological loop at the core of every habit, a loop that consists of three parts: **cue**, a **routine**, and a **reward**. This loop uses things that are already habits in our lives as an anchor to create new habits, using them to "cue" us into the new behaviour. This can be done in a short amount of time so there's no excuse that we're too busy! In fact, starting small is a successful formula for change so choose something you can do in 2 minutes or less as a starting point. Here's a 3-step process for making a new habit:

- 1. CUE.** A cue can be a visual trigger, a place, a time of day or an existing habit or routine. Choose one thing that happens repeatedly in your day like cleaning your teeth, having lunch, starting work, going to bed, getting up etc. Use this as the anchor for your new habit. You can say to yourself before I do this (existing habit) I will do that (new habit). *For example: before I have my morning coffee, I will do a 2-minute breathing meditation.*
- 2. ROUTINE.** The routine is completing the new habit. It can be physical, mental or emotional. *For example: A 2-minute meditation, 2 push ups, 2 minutes of stretching. Remember to start small.*
- 3. REWARD.** A reward can be anything that produces a natural rush of dopamine – the feel-good chemical in your brain. The reward gets you craving more and makes it more likely for you to repeat it. *For example: going to bed, having a coffee, ticking it off a list, telling a friend. Specifically, drinking the coffee (after the meditation) is the reward.*

WHY IT WORKS

Up to 40% of our daily actions are habits, involving little or no conscious thought. This automatic response requires less effort, energy, and brain power making it more likely that we will do what we need to do to thrive. Aristotle said, "we are what we repeatedly do." See more here: [Tiny Habits by BJ Fogg](#) or [Tiny Habits by James Clear](#).

For more info contact us at hello@needtoseesomeone.com