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THE
POWER
TO
CHANGE

Mastering the Habits That Matter Most

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

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The Power to Change

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Introduction

Wanting to Change

Exercise 1

For our first exercise, let's lay some groundwork by personalizing this introduction.

I'm going to ask you to write down the behaviors you want to change. But first, I want you to forget the times you have attempted to initiate a change—any start or stop. To wipe the slate clean, allow yourself some grace and agree to make a new beginning. You may have the same goals, but you'll have a fresh approach. Consider any change you desire, even one you may have given up on a long time ago, and let this be a reset, a refresh, a revival for you.

Write down your “starts”—behaviors you want to change:

Write down your “stops”—behaviors you want to get out of your life:

Finally, if God told you that he would miraculously change one thing in you, right now in this moment, what would you want it to be?



1.1 Why You Do What You Do

Exercise 2

Using the “stop” behaviors you listed in exercise 1, think about the belief that is driving your behavior. What is the “what you think of you” motivating the “what you do”?

Get specific in your answers. The deeper you go, the more you can reveal what’s in your mind and heart and then the more you can increase your opportunity for change.

Use this exercise to help identify the self-perception that drives your repeated result. Identify the why behind the what. Identify the who behind the do.

When I (“stop” behavior from exercise 1), the underlying belief is that:

Examples:

When I (drink too much), my underlying belief is that (the only effective way to escape my stress and pain is to medicate myself).

When I (choose not to read my Bible), my underlying belief is that (I don’t really believe God will fulfill his promises for me).

When I (continue in that toxic relationship), my underlying belief is that (this is all I really deserve).

Duplicate the sentences for each behavior in the blank space provided:

When I:

My underlying belief is that:



1.2 Stagnation through Behavior Modification

Exercise 3

Taking your “start” and “stop” behaviors from exercise 1, list them again here and then write down the failed ways you have attempted behavior modification.

When you’re done, take a look at your list to consider how your efforts were like pulling up the weed without getting to the root. Did you try to treat the symptom while ignoring the real issue? Focus on *doing* without addressing your thinking?

Behaviors:

Modification Attempts:

Thoughts:



1.3 True You

Exercise 4

In this exercise, let's identify some of the voices that have accused you and told you things about yourself that are not true.

Has someone in your family or some other close relationship consistently told you something that you have come to believe about yourself—even though it is not based in truth? List those lies.

Next, list any accusations you consistently repeat about yourself that are not on your list of lies, whether or not you know their origin.

Which of the identity statements and Bible verses listed in this chapter stood out to you? Write out why you feel that statement and verse (or verses) speak to you.



1.4 Future You

Exercise 5

Take a few minutes to write about Future You—the hero you'll be in ten years. Create a target for yourself. Engage in deliberate practice. Tell yourself and God who you want to become. When you're done, pray and commit this new vision to him and ask for his help.



1.5 Called to Who (Before Do)

Exercise 6

SALVATION

If you are a follower of Jesus, briefly write out your testimony—how you came to salvation in Christ. (Go back over my story, if needed.)

SANCTIFICATION

List the most significant changes Christ has made in your life since salvation.

SERVING

What is your do—your calling to serve?

Is there a service that you sense God has called you to do, but the opportunity has not come about yet? Explain.



1.6 Start with Who

Exercise 7

Complete this open-ended sentence with true aspects of your life: If today, I lost [blank], I would feel totally lost and not know what to do.

Examples: a job, money, social status, a talent or skill

Describe how each aspect of life you wrote down is connected to who you are—your identity—and not just what you do.

How can you turn each one from do to who? How can you surrender that aspect of your life to the point where, if God took it away, you'd still be okay?

Example: I feel like my career has become who I am, not just what I do. But if I got let go or could no longer do that work, I would still be a child of God, still have my life, calling, and family. I would still have the most important things in my life.



2.1 The Thing about Goals

Exercise 8

Complete the following sentence.

The primary aspects of my life where I need to establish a win are:

Examples: my marriage, career, relationship with God,
health, finances, parenting.

Using the areas of your life in which you want to establish a win, work through this next part of the exercise to define it. Refer back to my examples at the beginning of the chapter if needed.

You can repeat this pattern for each win you want to establish. If you need more or fewer than three steps, feel free to list whatever it takes.

My new win is to:

Using what you have written here, state your goal and who you will tell for support.

My goal is:

and I commit to share this with:



2.2 Trying versus Training

Exercise 9

Using the defined wins from exercise 8, write down some ways you have tried to change in the past but failed. This is important to identify what you've done that has not worked—the trying.

Taking those same defined wins, list some strategic habits you could implement through training.

Examples:

To forgive someone who hurt you, you can train by (1) writing out the verses where Jesus taught on forgiveness and (2) writing out the offenses that God and others have forgiven you for.

To read your Bible every day, you can train by (1) waking up twenty minutes earlier and (2) setting your Bible out each night in a visible place as a reminder, open to the last passage you read.

Last, how could giving up trying and focusing on training be freeing for you?



2.3 Discipline Is Not a Dirty Word

Exercise 10

Identify the top three areas in your life where you feel you lack discipline.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Next, identify the top three areas in your life where you exhibit the most discipline.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

In the parts of your life where you are choosing what you want now over what you want most, write down your reasons for why you may be putting off the pain of discipline and risking the pain of regret.

Examples: I'm just too tired to be consistent in disciplining my kids. I'm healthy right now, so I have time to start working out down the road.

In the areas where you realize you lack discipline, what is the biggest positive change that could come if you chose some pain today over putting it off until tomorrow?



2.4 Your Habit and a Plot Twist

Exercise 11

I want you to do the exercise I introduced at the beginning of this chapter. Repeat the template as many times as you need.

Here's a reminder of one of the examples:

Goal: get closer to God.

Habit to start: reading the Bible every day or attending a small-group Bible study.

Habit to stop: hitting snooze in the morning or planning things on the weekend that prevent church attendance.

Goal:

Habit to start:

Habit to stop:

Complete the following sentence.

When I have a day where I don't win, to stay on track, I commit to:

Example: Not miss more than one day; tell my accountability partner.



2.5 I'm in Training

Exercise 12

Using the goals and the habits to start and stop from exercise 11, complete these sentences:

I am going to stop trying to [blank] by:

I am starting my training by:

For each sentence, create a statement to remind you about your training.

Example: I am not trying to get healthy. I am exercising regularly, saying no to sweets, and going to bed early because I am in training.



3.1 Change Your Life? Change Your Habits.

Exercise 13

To give personal context to what I shared in this chapter, write down the basics of your daily routine. Be sure to write down what you actually do—your routine, your rituals, your habits—not what you wish you did or hope to do. The goal of this exercise is for you to look at your routine because so few people ever stop and evaluate their daily habits.

Morning

Midday

Afternoon

Evening



3.2 Flossing Saved My Life

Exercise 14

Because we're talking about mastering the habits that matter most, what is the first habit you can establish that could lead to your biggest win? Take a look back at my examples in this chapter, if needed.



3.3 The Loop

Exercise 15

Working through the five major triggers/cues, list positives and negatives for each in your life right now. Remember, these are to discover consistent tendencies, not one-off incidents.

PLACES

Places that cue a positive response:

Places that trigger a negative response:

TIMES

Times that cue a positive response:

Times that trigger a negative response:

MOODS

Moods that cue a positive response:

Moods that trigger a negative response:

MOMENTS

Moments that cue a positive response:

Moments that trigger a negative response:

PEOPLE

People who cue a positive response:

People who trigger a negative response:



3.4 The Art of the Start

Exercise 16

What is one habit you need to start?

For any change you desire to make, any habit you want to form, any win you want to achieve, personalize the five guides. Look back at my examples if needed.

To help make my habit more obvious, I will _____ after I _____.

To make my habit attractive, I can:

To make my habit easy, I can begin by doing _____ for two minutes.

To make my habit communal, I can invite, involve, or join:

To make my habit repetitious, I can:



3.5 How to Stop before You Flop

Exercise 17

This exercise is more intensive for good reason. If a habit you are struggling with, especially in secret, could lead to a Samson-type ending for you, digging in and being fully transparent in your response to these questions could bring clarity and understanding. Let your answers lead to change, and let the change lead to freedom.

What is the one habit you know you most need to stop?

What is the best thing that could happen if you are successful and quit?

What is the worst thing that could happen if you continue or get worse?

When you think about stopping, what is your rationalization for continuing?

What cues regularly create triggers for your habit?



3.6 From So to Who

Exercise 18

To close out this section, consider how you may have made your goals “means goals” (or so goals). Use this pattern to change your current and future goals from means goals to end goals.

MY MEANS/SO GOAL

I want to _____
_____ *so I can* _____,
so I can _____, *so I can* _____
_____.

MY END GOAL

I want to start a new habit of _____.
Why? Because I am becoming more like Jesus. And when I _____
_____, *I am / I can* _____
_____.



4.1 Fanatical Consistency

Exercise 19

Complete the following sentences.

One thing I have done occasionally that I want to become fanatically consistent at doing is:

I can begin (or increase my efforts) to put in my ten thousand hours by:



4.2 You in Ten

Exercise 20

What area of your life is not what it was or what it should be?

Begin with prayer. Ask God to help you develop a strategy:

List a few bricks you can focus on in the next few days to take small and consistent steps.



4.3 You Reap What You Sow

Exercise 21

Here's the assignment we covered in this chapter. Use this pattern for as many areas of life as you need to address.

*God, I have sown _____ and
have reaped _____ because of
my habit of _____.*

*To change this outcome, I need to start or stop my habit of _____
_____, so help me to plant the seeds of _____
_____ so I can reap _____
_____.*



4.4 You Reap More Than You Sow

Exercise 22

Give some examples from your life of when you have seen the effect of cumulative and compound choices at work—positive or negative.

Financial:

Physical:

Spiritual:

What was the smallest decision you ever made that had the greatest impact on your life?

What was the greatest “small stuff” act that impacted your life, such as a word of encouragement, an act of kindness, or a simple gift?

What was the last “small stuff” act of your own that impacted someone else?



4.5 You Reap after You Sow

Exercise 23

Where have you given up and need God's help to get started again?

Where are you struggling and being tempted to give up and need God's help to endure?

Where are you experiencing a harvest and reaping more than you have sown?



5.1 I Can't

Exercise 24

As you work through this exercise, consider this progression:

- After feeling stuck long enough, we can feel dead.
- After we feel dead long enough, we can feel shame.
- After we feel shame, we give in and give up.

Be honest about the depth of any places where you feel you can't change.

Places in my life where I feel stuck:

Places in my life where I feel dead:

Places in my life where I feel shame:



5.2 But God Can

Exercise 25

Complete these sentences to write out a prayer, being as specific as you can in what you are asking God to do in your life. Use this pattern as many times as you need.

God, I can't:

But you can by:



5.3 It's All You!

(But Actually Not at All)

Exercise 26

To illustrate the power of Galatians 5:16–17 in your life, complete the following sentences. Use the pattern as many times as you need.

In my flesh, I constantly struggle with:

But in my spirit, I want to:



5.4 Renew, Remain, Acknowledge, Ask

Exercise 27

Use the four keywords in this chapter as a guide for prayer, and complete these sentences.

*Father, I pray today you would **renew** my mind by helping me to:*

*Father, help me to **remain** in you today as/when I:*

Father, today I acknowledge my weakness and your power. I know I am weak, but you are strong, in:

Father, today, I recognize your great love for me and how you desire to give me good gifts, so I ask you to:



5.5 Steps

Exercise 28

Taking into account everything you have learned throughout the book, and all that God has shown you as you've worked through every exercise, let's calculate your next steps.

I know the first step I need to take in starting a new habit is:

I know the first step I need to take in stopping an old habit is:

*The one change I believe God is calling me to make—in his power,
not my own—is:*



Appendix

Identity Statements and Bible Verses

- Sought after (Isa. 62:12)
- Precious in his sight (Isa. 43:4)
- A new creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17)
- Not condemned (Rom. 8:1)
- Forgiven (Col. 1:14)
- Loved (1 John 3:1)
- Accepted (Rom. 15:7)
- A child of God (John 1:12)
- Jesus' friend (John 15:14)
- Free (John 8:36)
- The temple of God (1 Cor. 6:19)
- God's treasured possession (Deut. 7:6)
- Complete in Christ (Col. 2:10 NLT)
- Chosen (Col. 3:12)
- Called (2 Tim. 1:9)
- An ambassador of the Most High God (2 Cor. 5:20)
- God's masterpiece (Eph. 2:10 NLT)
- Able to do all things through Christ, who gives you strength (Phil. 4:13)
- More than a conqueror through Jesus, who loves you (Rom. 8:37)