

Day 5: Finalizing Your New Routines

Routine plays a massive role in all of our lives – whether we are aware of it or not.

Everyone reading this has some sort of routine in their life. If you think about it, you can probably think of more than a couple that you already go about daily without barely knowing it.

That's why routine can be so powerful! When you commit to routines that align with your goals, eventually these actions will become something you do without thinking about it. You will be attacking your goals every single day almost mindlessly.

Day 5:

In today's lesson we'll be taking a look at our last few routine process steps, and sending you on your way to create productive routines that will let you live your best life!

Step Six: Schedule Your New Routines

Ideally after the last step, you will have a number of potential new routines you can start to incorporate into your life.

You should take some time now, to figure out how these will best fit into your life.

If you are someone who already has a day planner, and you schedule your life down to the hour – then you will simply plot these new routines where they fit.

If you are a little more flexible with your time, then you will still want to take some time to think about where these routines naturally fit into your day.

Instead of stridently scheduling them into your day, you can simply categorize them by the time of day that most makes sense. Keep it simple with categories:

- Morning routines
- Afternoon routines
- Night routines

When you are separating your routines into these categories, remember to honor your own personal preference. Some people like to get more complex tasks done early, while some people like to spend their mornings in a more reflective or laid-back state.

Some people find their creative juices flow the best when they first wake up, while others like to spend their nights being creative.

The important part here is being true to yourself.

Not only do you have to be true to yourself, you need to be true to your circumstances. If you are rushed off your feet in the morning already, then creating a 30-minute meditation routine during that time, might not fly.

Adjust your routines to fit your personal preferences, as well as your personal circumstances. The easier it is to fit your routine into your life, the easier it will be to stick to it.

Speaking of which...

Step Seven: Stick To It

Simple right – just keep on doing the routine!

Wait a sec... Actually it isn't that simple.

Committing to doing a new daily task, no matter how trivial, isn't just as simple as wanting to do it. If that were the case, we would all get enough exercise, save a ton of money and have a totally clean and organized house.

The truth is, committing to a new routine is much tougher than simply creating one. To help your routine stick you should take a couple of steps:

1. Commit to 30 days – There is a lot of info out there claiming there is a specific timeframe to make a habit/routine stick. I don't know how true it is, but I do know that 30 days is both reasonable, and long enough to get into a pattern.

2. Use a calendar or app to mark each day done – There is something really powerful about seeing your progress right in front of you. Ideally, you would get a calendar, hang it somewhere you constantly see and each day mark an X through the day you completed your new routine(s). Conversely, if you have a number of new tasks/routines you want to stick to, you could use color coded stickers.

If you want a more high-tech option, there are plenty of habit-creation apps that will also allow you to track your month of new routines. One note here though – make sure you enable notification on these apps so that you will get regular reminders. It's much easier to forget to use the app, than it is when you have a physical calendar in your face. Use the notifications to bridge that gap.

3. Build in flexibility – While aiming for everyday is pretty important. Let's not forget that life happens and we need to be flexible at times.

Remember Susan Sontag? She built flexibility right into her routines when she wrote them down. She allowed herself a free rule break once a week. If you don't like that idea, you could make up a rule that you can break your new routine for a day, as long as you don't do it again on a consecutive day.

No matter how you incorporate flexibility (and the two examples from above are hardly the only ways) you just need to figure out what works best for you.

4. Build in a reward – Guess who likes rewards? Everyone. You should try and think of a reward that you can give yourself if you go the full 30 days with your new routine(s). Try to think of a reward that really means something to

you. Don't think of anything too extravagant or out of your means, just choose a single simple reward that makes you happy in the moment.

Jack Dorsey of Twitter had a simple daily reward of a cup of coffee. You can choose something that resonates more with you, but that just goes to show you that you don't have to go overboard. If you want to reward yourself something really exciting, and maybe a bit luxurious – try and make it match your goals.

For example, set a new routine to get more active and stick to it for a full month. If you are able to do that, you might reward yourself with a new gym membership, some nice basketball shoes or a new bike.

Those are pretty significant rewards, but they directly address your personal goals, and will quite likely help you accomplish them more efficiently.

Step Eight: Self-Reflection

Once you have reached the end of your month (ideally successfully) it is time to sit back and take some time to reflect on how it went. Ask yourself these questions:

- What went well with my new routine?
- Did my new routine have an appreciable effect on my life?
- What part of my new routine did I struggle with?
- What part of my routine did I truly enjoy?
- What could I do to make my routine more efficient?
- Is this something I want to continue?
- Is there a better use of my time?

Asking yourself these types of questions will help you correct your trajectory (if need be) and tweak your routines so that they are more helpful or efficient.

Don't be afraid to drop routines that haven't helped you, or just don't vibe with your life. On the same token, don't be afraid to double-down on routines that have had significant impact on your life, or that you love.

Step Nine: Tweak Them And Start A New 30 Days

It's a routine right? You don't stop doing it. Take what you learned from the above self-reflection and work on perfecting these new routines.

If you keep going through Steps 8 and 9 after each 30 days, you will be regularly improving your routines until they are perfect.

Your commitment to creating and perfecting routines, will actually become a routine itself!

Now, let's take some time to perfect all of your routines!

Please proceed to Exercise 5