Habit Plan

Basics
Start date:
Specific habit:
Trigger:
Reminder(s):
Review dates:
Accountability:
Commitment:
Asking for support:
Potential obstacles:
Log:

Who will you share the plan with?

More Advanced (you can add these later)
These aren't necessary to put in the plan right away, but if you have any problems, be sure to address these in your reviews.

Ensure that you start:
Mindful reward:
Make sure you don't miss 2 days:
Deal with disruptions:
Cope with stress, boredom, loneliness, tiredness, sadness:
Socialize the habit:
Rationalizations:
Removing temptations:

Notes

- **Trigger**: something already in your daily routine that you're going to tie the habit to. It should be the thing that happens right before you do your habit -- so the trigger

happens, then the habit comes immediately after. Examples: waking up, drinking your first cup of coffee, eating breakfast, brushing teeth, showering, using bathroom in the morning, leaving the house, opening your computer for the first time, arriving at work, going to lunch, leaving work, arriving home, going to bed, turning on the TV, etc.

- **Reminder(s)**: How will you remember? Physical reminders near where your trigger is are often best (running shoes near bed, a big note next to the coffeemaker, meditation cushion on top of laptop, etc.), but phone or computer reminders are good too.
- **Review dates**: When will you do your weekly review? Who will you send it to?
- **Accountability**: Who will hold you accountable for your commitment? How will you report to them?
- **Commitment**: What kind of commitment are you making? Doing the habit for one month? Having a big consequence is helpful.
- **Asking for support**: Who do you need to talk to to ask for support? Make sure to enlist them in your habit planning, so they know what to expect and can raise any objections.
- **Potential obstacles**: Any trips, big projects, or other potential disruptions that you can foresee? What can you do to anticipate and prepare for them?
- **Log**: Will you log this habit? How? Will you share it with anyone?
- **Who will you share the plan with?** Once you've created the basic plan, share it with someone (email it to them, share it via Google Docs).
- **Ensure that you start**: If you have trouble getting started some days, come up with solutions to ensure that you get started. Examples: lower the bar so that the habit is even easier (i.e. just open up a document and write 3 words), give someone your wireless router until you finish the habit, do it with someone else.
- **Mindful reward**: Basically, how you'll make the habit rewarding using mindfulness. It's just a reminder to do that, actually.
- **Make sure you don't miss 2 days**: What will you do to make sure you don't miss 2 straight days? Set a consequence.
- **Deal with disruptions**: What will you do if there are disruptions that come up, like sickness or travel or visitors?
- **Cope with stress, boredom, loneliness, tiredness, sadness**: Often these kinds of emotions cause us to stray from our habit plan. What will you do to cope with these things when they arise?
- **Socialize the habit**: If you're not having fun or not motivated to do the habit, is there a way you can socialize it? Can you find a partner or group to do it with, or a coach or accountability partner? Can you join an online accountability group (like a writing group or smoking cessation forum)?
- **Rationalizations**: Start making a list of the rationalizations you find yourself making, and maybe some answers to them. For example: You deserve a treat (answer: you deserve to be healthy and stick to this habit); Just once won't hurt (answer: actually, every time you've said that in the past, you've failed at the habit);

Let's do it in a minute, after checking email/Facebook (answer: no, that leads to not doing the habit — how about we check email/Facebook only after the habit is done?).

- **Removing temptations**: If you're trying to quit junk food snacks (chips, crackers, cookies), it's too tempting to have them in the house. Can you remove them from your house and office? If not, can you remove yourself from the environment (go somewhere else if people are smoking or drinking when you're trying to quit)? Can you talk to others in your environment for help on this?