

# Habit Evolution Framework

Which stage are you at in your habit? Where do you tend to get stuck?

**Remember:** The #1 enemy you need to watch out for is the voice that tells you you're not doing enough or advancing quickly enough. Listening to that voice leads to burnout, not success. Also, it's a myth that it only takes 21 days for a new habit to stick. It's typically more like 60-90 days to get through all 5 stages.



STAGE 1

## Clarify

Choose the biggest-impact habits to focus on

**Danger:** Spreading yourself too thin across multiple new habits at once.

**Solution:** Focus on just 1-2 new habits at a time. Ideally, make them "keystone habits" that will ripple out to many parts of your life (e.g., improving sleep or practicing mindfulness affects everything).

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**Danger:** Focusing on habits that are trendy, novel, or not appropriate for your life situation.

**Solution:** Pick a habit that's truly aligned with your own values, goals, bandwidth, and current life context.



STAGE 2

## Train

Begin to rewire your brain via small wins

**Danger:** Trying to go too fast and chase big wins ("1 minute a day of meditation is useless. I need at least 20min!").

**Solution:** Start *laughably small* (so it seems ridiculously easy and you'll actually do it; then, only if you're consistently successful, make it harder).

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**Danger:** Hoping you'll just remember to do it, or waiting till you feel motivated.

**Solution:** Pick a specific trigger (e.g., after brushing your teeth). Design your environment to make your habit easier (e.g., remove junk food from your house, or put your running shoes right by the front door).



STAGE 3

## Shift Identity

Embed into self-concept to make it natural

**Danger:** Impostor syndrome, or comparing yourself to others who have been doing it longer.

**Solution:** Self-compassion, re-frame ("I suck at meditating" -> "I'm a meditator-in-training. I'm trying my best [which includes self-care, not pushing to burn-out]"). Compare yourself not to others, but to past-you.

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**Danger:** Returning to your prior identity (e.g., "I always procrastinate").

**Solution:** Try visualizations or affirmations (picture yourself as the person you want to become). Remember: A habit failure is just a data point to analyze, not a personal failing.



STAGE 4

## Tend

Keep the fire going, maintain momentum

**Danger:** Overconfidence, jadedness, or feeling like you don't need this habit anymore.

**Solution:** Remember what it took to get you where you are today (if you stop doing what you did to get here, you might backslide). Also, missing your habit once in a while is ok (don't beat yourself up), but try not to miss twice in a row. Aim for consistency over perfection.

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**Danger:** Complacency, or you stop paying attention to your system

**Solution:** Use a habit tracker, which can be as simple as marking an X every successful day on a paper calendar.



STAGE 5

## Evolve

Observe; then, reassess, refine, or pivot as needed

Notice you're making more and more excuses to not do the habit anymore? 3 choices:

**Let it go:** Look at data you've gathered. Is this habit still serving you? Have your goals shifted? No longer a good ROI?

**Adjust it:** Is it feeling stale? Return to Stage 1 and see if there's a better place to put your energy now. Or, find a fresh new way of reaching the same outcome you're wanting (e.g., biking -> running).

**New inspiration:** Reflect on your original why (or adjust it). Watch an inspiring video, or read the latest research. Hang out with other people who prioritize this habit.