

Adding habits to your life

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1 Question

How can I effectively and consistently add habits into my life?

2 Answer

I use the Loop Habit Tracker (an android app) to track any new habit I want to have and keep. Its purpose is two-fold: to remind me through notifications that I need to do something and to observe how consistent I am with the habit.

When adding new habits, I've found I was more successful by creating transition habits, that is, start with something that is easily achievable and is similar to the habit I want to have, then slowly transition the habit to be closer and closer to the habit I want to have. An example of this might be that I want to do 20 minutes of jogging daily, but since I've never done jogging consistently in the past, I should start with 1 minute instead of 20 and do it consistently. After a week of consistently jogging 1 minute per day, I can increase the habit to be 2 minutes. Each week that goes by the amount of jogging that is done is increasing while the habit is in its formation phase.

It may take up to 20 weeks to do 20 minutes consistently every day, which is preferable to me to trying to do 20 minutes of jogging right from the start and giving up after a few times because my body is not accustomed to such effort.

This same metaphor can be applied to mental efforts. If you're not used to spending hours of focused effort on a task, trying to do it right away is likely to be very difficult. But if you slowly transition from doing none of it, to doing it a little bit, then more and more, until you reach your target, it will make something that initially appeared impossible manageable.

As you add more and more habits into your life, it may become difficult to keep doing all of them regularly without missing them. That is why an application such as Loop Habit Tracker will help you remember to do the habits you want to have.