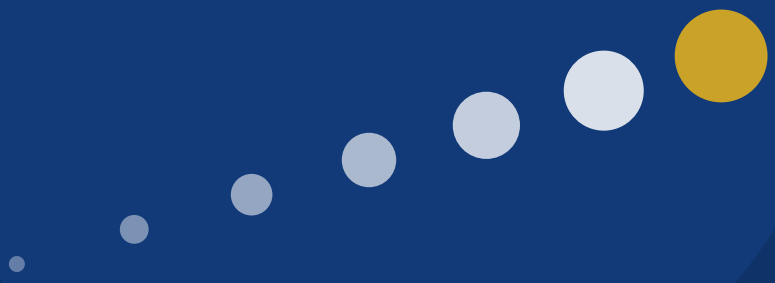
A LIFE MASTERY BOOK

ATOMIC HABITS

for Everyday Life



Build Better Habits, Break Bad Ones, and Transform Your Life One Small Step at a Time

SUMAN BISWAS

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About the stories. The people described in the chapter stories are composites created to illustrate common experiences. They are not accounts of specific individuals, and any resemblance to real persons is coincidental.

About the research. Studies are summarised in good faith from published sources listed in the References. Findings in psychology are revised as new evidence appears, and readers are encouraged to consult the original papers.

Not professional advice. This book offers general education and self-help. It is not medical, psychological, nutritional, legal or financial advice. Please consult a qualified professional about your own circumstances, especially before changing your diet or exercise, and if you are experiencing persistent distress.

The E.A.S.Y. Habit Method, The Daily Momentum Cycle, The Identity Growth Pyramid, The Consistency Compass, The Habit Energy Curve, The Motivation vs Discipline Matrix, The Tiny Wins Ladder, The 5-Minute Restart Rule, The Habit Recovery Loop, The Weekly Reflection Wheel and The Life Transformation Roadmap are names used by the author for the original models in this book.

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How to Use This Book

This book is meant to be used with a pen. You can read it straight through, and many readers do. You will get more from it if you treat it as a year's companion and keep coming back.

How the book is arranged

There are seven parts. **Part 1** explains how habits work. **Part 2** gives you a method for building them. **Part 3** shows how to replace habits you no longer want. **Parts 4, 5 and 6** apply the method to health, learning, money, relationships and work. **Part 7** deals with the inner habits that keep everything else going, and ends with a plan for your next 365 days.

What every chapter contains

Each chapter follows the same pattern, so you always know where you are.

- **An opening quote and introduction** to set out the idea.
- **A real-life story** that shows the idea at work in an ordinary life.
- **The science:** what research says, in plain language.
- **In everyday life:** practical examples you can copy.
- **An infographic** that puts the main idea on one panel.
- **Common mistakes** and how to avoid them.
- **Action steps** to take this week.
- **Reflection questions** and a **chapter summary**.
- **A daily challenge and a weekly challenge.**
- **A habit worksheet and journal prompts** with space to write.

Three ways to read

The full course. Read one chapter a week and do its weekly challenge. At that pace the book lasts a little under a year, which is about how long real change takes.

The quick start. Read Chapters 1 to 6, then go to the 30-Day Habit Challenge in the Bonus Toolkit. Return to the other chapters as you need them.

The targeted approach. Read Part 1 and Chapter 6, then go directly to the chapter that addresses your most pressing concern.

Navigating the PDF

Every entry in the Contents is a link to its page. The word "Contents" at the bottom left of each page brings you back. Each chapter opening has links to the previous and next chapters, and your PDF reader's bookmarks panel lists every part, chapter and tool.

Printing

The worksheets and the Bonus Toolkit are laid out on A4 for printing. Print the pages you need as often as you like for your own use.

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ONE REQUEST

Do not try to do everything. Choose one habit, apply the method and stay with it until it is steady. Then choose the next. That is how this book works.

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Introduction: Start Smaller Than You Think

I have started more self-improvement plans than I can count. For years they all began the same way, with a burst of resolve, a long list and a promise that this time would be different, and they ended the same way too, usually within three weeks. I assumed, as most people do, that the fault was mine. Other people seemed to have discipline. I seemed to have enthusiasm, which is not the same thing and does not last as long.

What changed my mind was not a moment of inspiration. It was noticing how the few good habits I did have had actually formed. Not one of them had come from a grand resolution. Each had started as something so small that it hardly seemed worth doing, had been attached to something I already did every day, and had simply never stopped. I had been looking for willpower when what I needed was a method.

This book is that method, set out as plainly as I can manage. It rests on a simple claim: **your life is shaped less by your big decisions than by the small things you do every day without thinking.** Change those small things and, given time, almost everything else follows. The claim is not new, and I make no pretence that it is. Researchers have been studying habit for more than a century, and I have leaned on their work throughout and credited it. What I have tried to add is a clear way to use it.

What you will find here

At the centre of the book is **The E.A.S.Y. Habit Method™**: Establish the intention, Attach the habit to an existing routine, Simplify the first step, and Yield to consistency, not perfection. Around it are ten further models, each with a diagram, that deal with particular problems: how to get going, how to keep going, how to see where you are and how to recover when things fall apart. You will meet them one at a time, in the chapters where they are needed, and they are gathered for reference at the back.

There are forty-five chapters because life has many rooms. A method for building habits is of little use unless you can see how it applies to your sleep, your studies, your bank balance, your temper and your marriage. Each chapter stands by itself, so you can go directly to the one you need.

Who this book is for

It is for students who cannot make themselves revise and professionals who end each day unsure what they achieved. It is for parents who want calmer mornings, freelancers and entrepreneurs who have no boss to impose a structure, and teachers who want to help others change. It is for anyone from fifteen upward who has tried to improve something and found that trying harder was not enough.

What this book will not do

It will not promise a new you in twenty-one days. The evidence does not support that figure, and I would rather tell you the truth: habits take weeks to months to form, and the hard part comes early. It will not ask you to get up at five or take cold showers, unless you wish to. And it will not tell you that change is only a matter of wanting it enough. Most people who fail want it badly. The usual cause is a plan that was too large, too vague and dependent on feeling motivated.

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A word on tone

I have tried to write the book I wanted when I was failing: practical, honest about the evidence and kind. You will find no shouting here. Shame is a poor teacher, and you will see in several chapters that the research agrees. If you slip, and you will, the instruction is always the same. Notice, shrink the step and begin again at the next opportunity.

Turn the page, then, and start with something small. I mean smaller than you think is worthwhile. That is where every lasting change I know of has begun.

Suman Biswas

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