

Stephen King said, “Amateurs sit and wait for inspiration, the rest of us just get up and go to work.” To achieve any long-term goal, you must give up on motivation and focus on starting positive habits. Motivation constantly changes. However, habits will endure. [method]

February 28, 2017 | 1202 upvotes | by [KingWilliamKent](#)

In order to answer the question, *"How do you effectively start a habit?"* — first, we must understand what a habit is.

A habit is task that has become so consistently engrained that it begins to be carried out autonomously—by the unconscious mind—such as drinking a cup morning coffee every day.

Why are habits important for accomplishing long term goals?

[Watch This](#)

Because the moment you form a habit, it signifies that you have now transcended out the window pain that normally accompanies taking up a new task.

When something becomes engrained as a habit, it becomes much less unpleasant to carry out that task. **It just becomes natural.**

The reason it is so difficult to turn a productive undertaking into a consistent practice is because it is often painful to carry out productive task. If the task is drinking coffee, or sleeping every night, it is easy to turn those tasks into habits because they are pleasurable. However, **if the task is painful**, like writing and editing articles, getting up and going to the gym, setting aside to time to do affirmations, **then it is far more difficult to become consistent.**

We are hardwired to avoid pain. Pain is helpful. It instructs us what to avoid so we don't die, and our species can continue to reproduce.

The ease at which we can establish a habit, is **directly proportional** to how quickly we receive our pleasure or reward, and **inversely proportional** to how much pain or effort it takes to get there.

99% of the things you do are habits. The way you think is a habit. The way you present yourself to other people is a habit. Whether you start books and never finish them. They are all products of the thoughts you habitually tell yourself and the actions that you repeatedly carry out. **Whatever habit you have, in some way your mind believes it is serving you.**

If your lazy, perhaps it frees you up from trying and failing. If you have a victim mentality, perhaps it liberates you from personal responsibility.

In essence, you are automatic creature. However, fortunately, habits can be changed.

That is where **self awareness** comes into play. Self awareness is the one variable in human existence, which separates us from all other species and allows us to accomplish amazing things. In our unique ability to be aware of our habits, we have the opportunity to reengineer them and establish new ones that serve us.

For a short period of time, we can choose to use our free will (**or DISCIPLINE**), in the face of resistance to push past the initial window of pain, make something become natural/expected, and thus, establish a new pattern.

Now there is a bunch of conflicting literature on how long it takes to do that. I have heard 21 days. 40 days. etc.

In my opinion, that's all nonsense and propaganda. The amount of time it takes varies from person to person. **There is only one way to tell if you established a habit.**

I have used this measuring stick time and time again, to determine whether I have finally established a new pattern in my life.

The answer is two-fold:

A) when it task becomes noticeably less painful to complete B) when you go to bed without doing it, it actually feels like your missing something

When you meet these to criteria, then you know it is engrained.

I hope this helps to establish habits that will serve you and your long term goals. By becoming aware of your patterns and reengineering them so that they meet this criteria, you will be surprised at what you accomplished.

Good luck

[This video](#) expands on this topic and details my experiences with this philosophy.

If you enjoyed this post, I invite you to subscribe to [this YouTube channel](#). I greatly appreciate your support, whether it is a like, comment, sub. On [this YouTube channel](#), I share my years worth of experience working with the subconscious mind—allowing you to reengineer your thoughts to magnetically attract happiness and success.

Archived from theredarchive.com

Comments

NotYourTypicalNurse • 104 points • 28 February, 2017 05:58 PM

Most people think inspiration, motivation, and action work in a linear progression. "I must be inspired, to motivate myself to action." But really it's circular, and you can enter it anywhere. If you don't have motivation or inspiration, just do something, anything. Action will give you inspiration on what to do next, and the motivation to do it. Then it compounds. Action, inspiration, motivation, more action etc.

theONE843663 • -50 points • 28 February, 2017 10:52 PM

Life's a motherfucking rollercoaster brah everything goes in waves. Even the quarks that you are comprised of. Perfect example is gym; you must plateau to get stronger.

The only two new year's resolutions that I still see in the gym... are the two skinniest (questionably gay) mofo's gay spotting each other on the squat. Most likely doing stronglifts.

Mb next time I'll explain to them that the primary purpose of the rack pins is mainly to ensure that gym rats don't look gay while squatting!

GenghisKhanSpermShot • 29 points • 1 March, 2017 12:28 AM

Sounds like you're projecting, maybe you should join them.

DarkCotton • 9 points • 1 March, 2017 03:29 AM

My favorite psychology term to throw at people. You have my upvote

theONE843663 • -11 points • 1 March, 2017 06:26 AM*

What if I told you... That the dude was projecting his own over-analytical attitude in that comment he made about projecting? But he included the word maybe... Which means he's also projecting his lack of trust in his own analysis!

Personally, I'd have have responded with this: "You're projecting when you say...'insert whatever'! Stop this shit fag!

Are people here just that socially autistic? I mean shit... The satirical subcommunication is pretty obvious in my comment. Obviously the literal message under the satirical outer coating is that they should use the pins while squatting rather than relying on the spotter... Because bracing someone's core while spotting is one thing... Completing half his rep for him is a whole another beast; hence the term 'gay spotting'.

With this attitude, how do you even be sarcastic or satirical around girls?

Here's the definition of satire: The use of humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices.

The two noobs are stupid to not use the rack pins in a rack with adjustable pins. The spotter can fail but pins never do. In my comment, I'm clearly using ridicule and exaggeration to criticize their stupidity... Yet I also commended them on not quitting the gym. It's constructive criticism masked under satire.

Simple shit guys not everything men say is literal and 100% serious all the time.

Footnotes: I'm projecting my Messiah complex here aswell because I should not have spent this much time and effort explaining my comment here! Also, my overuse of repitition projects my

condescending attitude. Also, this whole comment also projects that I'm even more over-analytical than the one I'm accusing...YaY!

theONE843663 • -5 points • 1 March, 2017 06:06 AM

Sounds like someone needs to work on their satire senses!

Satou4 • 1 point • 1 March, 2017 05:50 AM

I'm not sure why you should care. Looking gay shouldn't be a problem, even if you're straight at least people are talking about you.

theONE843663 • -3 points • 1 March, 2017 06:06 AM

Hmm... When someone claims that the primary purpose of a rack pin is to prevent gym rats from looking gay... IMO it should automatically trigger people's satire senses, no?

Apparently not here at TRP!

Arnoux • 2 points • 1 March, 2017 04:58 PM

There are non native english speakers here as well. Personally for me it is not always easy to find the satire in a foreign language

theONE843663 • -1 points • 1 March, 2017 05:13 PM

And am I supposed to pander to the minority? 90% or more of the doenvotes are incels who just got on here and have a too serious attitude towards life. They can't even take a damn joke... But I digress!

Satou4 • 1 point • 1 March, 2017 09:46 PM

Good point, not sure why I cared that he seemed annoyed about it. I was probably more annoyed about it than him in retrospect :D

TheReformist94 • 0 points • 1 March, 2017 05:35 PM

Dunno why you're getting downvoted.your post is fuckin hilarious

theONE843663 • 0 points • 1 March, 2017 05:44 PM

Sigh... It's because of the wave of new incels freshly turned Alpha who have a dick permanently stuck in their ass. Until they can remove that piece of dick, the butthurt will always remain lol.

Satire is always lost on the butthurt. I'm actually commending the skinny guys for staying in the gym in that comment lol. Actually talked to them today and they appreciated my advice on how to fail safely (with the pins) and how to brace the core during squats using Valsalva maneuver.

They could instantly squat more after doing the Valsalva and thanked me for it. These guys are going to get big soon.

reecewagner • 31 points • 28 February, 2017 06:45 PM

Motivation is a fickle and unreliable little dickfuck

EatmyShorts59 • 2 points • 1 March, 2017 01:25 PM

I needed this man!

Thank you so much !!!!!

TimmyTurnersNuts • 22 points • 28 February, 2017 11:33 PM

Discipline>Motivation. Fuck motivation once you're already out of that complete beta stage. Discipline is for those who have already smashed through a plateau

patrice_plz_come_bac • 6 points • 1 March, 2017 04:13 AM

The one quote that haunts me everytime i want to slack is one i learnt here: discipline is more reliable than motivation.

Hung_Chad • 1 point • 1 March, 2017 06:07 AM

I've never in my life had a positive "habit." It's discipline that makes any worthwhile long term goal achievable.

[deleted] • 20 points • 28 February, 2017 08:40 PM

"...and lots of coke. Lots and lots of coke."

-SK

adaman360 • 8 points • 28 February, 2017 09:38 PM

Someone share this advice with George RR Martin

[deleted] • 11 points • 1 March, 2017 02:41 AM

200+ days of duolingo. Painful every day. 10 years of working out. Still sucks. 15 years of guitar. Still hard as ever.

There is a huge flaw in your post:

A habit is the *same thing* over and over again. That's not what you want.

Sure, you can run X amount of miles a day over and over again and eventually it will become habit, but you've stopped improving.

You can play the same song every day on guitar till it becomes habit, but that won't advance your playing to the next level.

Going over your old lessons in duolingo involves zero pain. Starting a new one is hell.

You see where I'm going with this? The only time I feel like I failed in the gym is when I did what I knew I could do out of habit. I had a huge dry spell on guitar improvement for years when I just played only the songs I could already play.

I have bad news for you guys: You don't get to rely on habits either. The self awareness is the only thing that stuck out to me in this post. You have to **realize** that these things are going to blow forever, and you have to **accept** that once you can do the thing you set out to achieve, you won't feel as fulfilled as you thought. You have to know all this and go ahead with it anyway.

Sweet, you pushed through the *initial* pain and now you can play wonderwall. Congratulations, you have just settled. There is no initial pain followed by sunshine and rainbows, just another hill. Unfortunately you can't make a habit out of breaking habits.

Starting to ramble, but one final thought: If there's a spot where you feel comfortably ahead of the pack, (benching 225 for example) maybe it's fine to just plateau there and make it a habit. I just know for me that attitude wouldn't let me get to 225 in the first place.

zpiskin • points • 1 March, 2017 03:46 PM **[recovered]**

Good points. Especially relevant as I've started researching how to get past the plateau I've hit on guitar. Any book recommendations?

[deleted] • 1 point • 1 March, 2017 08:15 PM

No book recommendations, sorry. Anything on delayed gratification would have the core idea but I can't vouch for any of them.

rp_newdawn • 1 point • 1 March, 2017 07:06 PM

I love the stoicism in your post... just accept the suck and grow

[deleted] • 4 points • 1 March, 2017 12:02 AM

When it comes to habits, this book is a very good read and highly recommended: Change your habits, change your life.

Walks you through economics, training, work, goals etc.

BullshittingNonsense • 29 points • 28 February, 2017 04:41 PM*

Quote is definitely true. However, Stephen King was also a raging alcoholic years ago so doubt he was always following his work habit.

Edit: Why downvote a fact? I didn't even mention Stephen King's cocaine abuse.

stringz • points • 28 February, 2017 05:03 PM **[recovered]**

To be fair even Benjamin Franklin had trouble completely following all of his improvement methods even though he has a good one. It's outlined in his autobiography.

BullshittingNonsense • 19 points • 28 February, 2017 05:25 PM

Just anytime I read any of this stuff I always feel like shit about myself when in reality the people giving the advice weren't perfect either. Doesn't make the advice any less pertinent.

Des_O_Adams • 9 points • 28 February, 2017 09:43 PM

I think the old cliché applies here:

'Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars.' Norman Vincent Peale

That's exactly what men like King and Franklin did. They shot for perfection, and even though they didn't achieve it (because you can't,) they got so damn far.

It goes to show that even though you can't be perfect, you shouldn't let that stop you from doing everything in your power to be. If you shoot for mediocrity, you become mediocre OR WORSE.

Fighting for perfection is fighting to do the best you possibly can do. Actually the best. Not what you get if you try to 'do your best.' Real, honest, maximized potential.

BullshittingNonsense • 3 points • 28 February, 2017 10:25 PM

I've found striving for perfection to be pretty toxic in my life. It has not only destroyed my happiness but those around me. When you accept nothing less than perfection (which we can all agree is impossible and inherently subjective in a field like writing), you could literally never stop working. It destroys your quality of life because your entire life is work. And if we're going on writers, a writer that does nothing but write is probably gonna write some shitty books.

Not only that, a perfectionist makes people around them miserable. Look at Stanley Kubrick. Yes he is a master, but he did obscene amounts of takes that drove his cast and crew mad. Could he have gotten the same result with fewer takes? Probably.

I prefer to think of the old cliché: perfect is the enemy of good. There's an old saying among filmmakers that a film is never finished - it's abandoned. If you're a perfectionist, you'll never abandon any work.

Des_O_Adams • 7 points • 28 February, 2017 10:56 PM

Is there a difference between striving for perfection and accepting nothing less than perfection?

Can you strive for perfection but also be equipped to accept a result that is less than perfection?

Genuinely asking your opinion.

feelhuman • 1 point • 1 March, 2017 01:53 PM

I hate this quote. You wouldn't end up among the stars if you can't even make it to the moon. You'll end up likely in orbit around the earth until eventually you crash back into earth if you don't burn up in the atmosphere.

Des_O_Adams • 1 point • 1 March, 2017 03:48 PM

While you're correct, it's a colloquialism. I don't think its scientific inaccuracy diminishes its philosophical value or its sentiment.

WhySoRuff • 3 points • 28 February, 2017 09:56 PM

The better informed I get, the more the following sayings prove true.

"Those who can't do, teach."

&

"Do as I say and not as I do." (this ones especially true of parents and politicians)

sir_wankalot_here • 5 points • 28 February, 2017 07:26 PM

This is the paradox of some highly creative people.

Stephen King was also a raging alcoholic years ago so doubt he was always following his work habit.

Probably he was a functioning alcoholic, the oscillation between his sober self and drunken self is slightly destructive which causes creativity. I don't like Steven King's writing but he is a prolific writer. One account said he produces 10,000 words a day.

BullshittingNonsense • 2 points • 28 February, 2017 07:37 PM

I'm well aware of the link between the great writers and alcoholism.

Returnofthemack3 • 5 points • 28 February, 2017 08:33 PM

he wrote a lot of his best works in drunken stupors. He was definitely still working through it.

GC0W30 • 4 points • 1 March, 2017 12:32 AM

He may have spent years drunk, but he still hit the typewriter consistently.

He claims to not remember having written much of Misery, which suggests he spent a whole damned novel worth of writing drunk.

He didn't let his drinking habit get in the way of his writing habit.

AmericanHustle777 • 1 point • 28 February, 2017 10:25 PM

Because even when he was coked out and drunk he was still writing (and completing) novels, which makes his quote even more powerful.

lemming1607 • 1 point • 28 February, 2017 05:35 PM

Doesnt discount it being true. Youre just throwing shade to throw shade. Thats eh you're getting downvoted

BullshittingNonsense • 3 points • 28 February, 2017 05:45 PM

See below comment. Not throwing shade to throw shade, whatever the fuck dumbass new slang you wanna use.

lemming1607 • -1 points • 28 February, 2017 05:57 PM

You agree with the quote and then character assassinate for no reason. You're fucking dumb.

BullshittingNonsense • 13 points • 28 February, 2017 06:19 PM*

How is that character assassination? He literally wrote The Shining about his alcoholism.

Just being honest about a person.

lemming1607 • -1 points • 28 February, 2017 07:27 PM

Because it doesn't relate to the discussion. You agreed with the quote, and then throw in the alcoholism for the sake of it. It doesn't relate to the quote.

BullshittingNonsense • 5 points • 28 February, 2017 07:41 PM

I think it does relate to the quote. It's about habit and Stephen King had a hell of a habit of abusing alcohol and drugs. No matter how prolific he is, there's no way that doing drugs didn't affect him. Yeah, it may have had a positive effect in some ways, but to argue it doesn't relate to him is stupid.

lemming1607 • 0 points • 28 February, 2017 08:19 PM

it does not, it's simple character assassination trying to undermine the quote. You're saying that someone who had bad character can't say true things. You're just being dumb. I don't give a shit he had an alcohol problem, it doesn't change the truth of the quote, and you're just throwing shade for no reason

BullshittingNonsense • 5 points • 28 February, 2017 08:27 PM

Well Hitler said a lot of true shit but if he said something true about foreign policy, it would be retarded to not say something about how he invaded a host of other countries and started a world war.

And stop saying "throwing shade." You sound like a 12 year old girl.

lemming1607 • 1 point • 28 February, 2017 08:33 PM

go fuck yourself I'll say whatever the fuck I want.

Man you sound like those people that try to equate everything to Hitler

decimated_napkin • 1 point • 28 February, 2017 07:32 PM

You're getting downvoted because your logic is fallacious. Stephen King's alcoholism and drug abuse did not stop him from cranking out book after book after book. He is one of the most prolific writers of all time and most certainly has been "going to work" for decades now.

BullshittingNonsense • 2 points • 28 February, 2017 07:44 PM

He was a rampant alcoholic and drug abuser which inevitably affected his work, no matter how prolific he is. A quote about habit from a person who had a debilitating drug and alcohol habit certainly seems logical to me. Coulda helped him, but to say that his drug and alcohol habit didn't affect his writing habit in some way is stupid.

decimated_napkin • 1 point • 28 February, 2017 09:03 PM

But that doesn't change the fact that he went out and did work, day in and day out, which is what the quote is about. You can argue the quality of work, but that's a separate matter entirely. I have not read his work so I can't personally comment, but there is a metric fuckton of it, it is critically acclaimed, and he is widely regarded as one of the greatest living authors, so none of your arguments make sense here.

BullshittingNonsense • 2 points • 28 February, 2017 10:16 PM*

Did you not read anything I said?

And then we could get into the fucking definition of success and whether he's successful which is futile because the only definition of success that matters is your own. I was pointing out a bit of hypocrisy in the Stephen King quote, the same thing I would do to anyone. Just because he's written books that have sold well doesn't make him immune to criticism.

elruary • -4 points • 28 February, 2017 05:35 PM

Bitch please, I'm on my most creative streak on cocaine. I don't abuse it but when that magic powder is in town, I go to town.

flashbang123 • 3 points • 1 March, 2017 12:41 AM

I'd just add to your point about how you know you have established a habit: not only is the task easier, but also you don't have any anxiety for voice inside you telling you to avoid it.

[deleted] • 3 points • 1 March, 2017 02:09 AM

Amen. Thats why I started going to a co-working space. To get in the habit of working. 2 weeks later and I have a job.

knapper45 • points • 1 March, 2017 09:03 AM **[recovered]**

I don't like Steven King's writing but he still hit the typewriter consistently.

[deleted] • 3 points • 1 March, 2017 12:27 PM

I work with mostly women, about 90% or more of our staff are female. I constantly hear them talk about how they need to be empowered and motivated to do certain things. Most of these women are the "we don't have male privilege therefore, we need empowerment" type of women. Just the other day one girl posted a terrible (very overweight) topless photo online. All of the girls in the office agreed that it was in fact empowering and

motivating while telling her that she is beautiful. Now these women have never really accomplished anything and most never will. Most blame it on the patriarchy and not being empowered or motivated to advance in life. I brought up the fact that I didn't even understand what being empowered was, I simply go out and take what I want. I work my ass off and go get it, motivation isn't something I wait for. A bunch of the women automatically started with the typical "you're a cis white male you're always empowered". I tried to explain to them that I don't need motivational speeches or encouragement from people I just go out and do it. The general consensus is that I actually only get where I'm at because of my gender. My consensus is that these women never get anywhere because they sit around waiting for a false sense of motivation, while feeling like victims of circumstances. I think feminism is to blame for this, if they didn't have this need to rely on something else then maybe they would actually go out and achieve things. Instead they make up excuses as to why they fail and usually sexism or racism is the go to. "I didn't get the promotion because I'm a woman" where as a man generally sees his failure as his fault and will learn to build on his failures.

legacyReasons • 3 points • 1 March, 2017 02:56 PM

I've been using a habit forming app called momentum which has helped me so far. I'm not shilling so google habit forming apps and try one, this just happened to be the first one on a list I saw.

rp_newdawn • 2 points • 1 March, 2017 07:16 PM

Dude that app is beautiful thanks for sharing

032473485 • 6 points • 28 February, 2017 07:36 PM

Thanks for reminding me to close reddit. Don't get sucked into alternative social media too much, friends.

The_Fuad • 11 points • 1 March, 2017 12:18 AM

Don't forget to immediately reopen reddit upon closing the window

Fusion_power • 5 points • 1 March, 2017 12:45 AM

A couple of nights ago, someone asked a question on a forum I visit. In 5 minutes, I solved the problem. In 20 minutes I built the required item. Before 30 minutes had passed, I posted directions and pictures how to build it. The next day, I spent 2 hours tweaking and tuning it so that it performs flawlessly every time it is used. It is nothing fancy, just an angle slide jig to use on a table saw.

The point being that a question resulted in 5 minutes of inspiration and the rest of it was hard work to create and adjust the required jig.

A benefit is that I needed one of these jigs anyway. Better yet, I'm going to give one to a friend because I know he will use it too.

BullshittingNonsense • 1 point • 28 February, 2017 11:25 PM

There's a difference but the way people are, the two inevitably become muddled.

limdi • 1 point • 1 March, 2017 12:19 AM

Ever heard of "I don't want you to play with him, he's bad influence!"?

I think it's the instinctual desire of the parent to not see the child adopt bad habits.

Buscemi123 • 1 point • 1 March, 2017 12:55 AM

I think a crucial point is that not every day is going to be a stellar day. You won't create 5 songs everyday nor write 5 pages everyday. The important thing is that at the end of the day you must have something you didn't at

the beginning of the day.

Novembercriminal • 0 points • 1 March, 2017 12:30 AM

Stephen king has many so-called "Ghost Writers" that help him with making best sellers only. Bad example but good concept

kutie-pie • 1 point • 1 March, 2017 06:04 AM

definitely some rumors out there but the majority doubt this is true

verify_account • points • 28 February, 2017 05:37 PM [recovered]

Is this the same Stephen King who had to quit social media when that big old mean bully Trump won? I'm not interested of the options of such a cuck.

SargentHaztagaspacho • 33 points • 28 February, 2017 06:05 PM

"When a wise man points at the moon the imbecile examines the finger."

KingWilliamKent[S] • 3 points • 28 February, 2017 06:58 PM

that is a tremendous quote. Way to upstage me haha.

SargentHaztagaspacho • 1 point • 1 March, 2017 12:42 AM

We all have moments where we do stupid shit we'd normally never do.

[deleted] • 16 points • 28 February, 2017 05:46 PM

He still knows how to consistently write popular shit. When people stick to what they know, I'm more than happy to learn

BullshittingNonsense • 1 point • 28 February, 2017 06:40 PM

Popular shit != good shit

empatheticapathetic • 1 point • 28 February, 2017 06:44 PM

He be makin dough. Who gives a Fuck.

[deleted] • 1 point • 28 February, 2017 06:46 PM

Is your goal to be Nietzsche, or tom Clancey?

clickclackasdf • points • 28 February, 2017 05:00 PM [recovered]

Your background ukulele music is gay

EpicLevelCheater[M] • 6 points • 28 February, 2017 07:00 PM

Stow the juvenile jeering.

Ugly_Merkel • -7 points • 1 March, 2017 01:49 AM

Stephen King is cucked liberal SJW with a fat ugly SJW wife why the fuck would i take any advice from him

Scriptopeia • 3 points • 1 March, 2017 03:12 PM

Because him being a SJW in your eyes doesn't make his advice bad.