Habits

**Scientists now say it takes the human body 21 days to adjust its behavior. Half that, I suppose, for misbehavior. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**It is a shame when men and women approach new conditions with their old habits. Just as it is impossible to open a present-day lock with a medieval key, likewise it is impossible for people with old habits to unlock the door of the future. *(Agni Yoga Teachings)***

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**We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit. *(Aristotle)***

**Moral excellence comes about as a result of habit. We become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts. *(Aristotle)***

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**Growing old is a bad habit which a busy man has no time to form. *(Andre Maurois, author)***

**It's a bad habit to believe that things will never be better than they are. If you think this way, you're down on hope. You may not feel depressed, but when the possibility of change presents itself, it's very hard for you to see there could be improvement. When you first look at the possibility of change, you might say, "But if I do that, all that will happen is ..." and then you reel off a list of bad outcomes you're sure to see. When you're caught in it, it doesn't feel like negativity. It feels like realism. In fact, you take pride in seeing ahead to all the ways good things can't happen. This is a particularly bad habit in decision-making. Being so aware of how things can go wrong, you're super-cautious. If opportunity knocks, you don't throw yourself into its arms, and so you create a self-fulfilling prophecy. Bad habits get us into trouble and are hard to overcome, but people who make great decisions try to avoid them. There's an old expression: Forewarned is fore-armed. This is never truer than when it comes to biggest bad habits in making decisions. *(Charles Foster, in What Do I Do Now: Dr. Foster's 30 Laws of Great Decision Making)***

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**The best way to break a habit is to drop it. *(Leo Aikman, in Atlanta Constitution)***

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**To break a bad habit, drop it, *(Bits & Pieces)***

**The advantage of seeing one person a day is that they tell their story over and over, but after a while they get so tired of it that they break the tape, and they really start getting into deeper work. *(Dr. Paul Brenner)***

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**Before you do any more breathing, remember that it’s very habit-forming. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot Shots)***

**One dark night a New York cabbie picked up a passenger. When the man tapped the driver on the shoulder to ask him a question, the cabbie screamed, lost control of the car and nearly hit a bus. The cab was silent for a moment, and then the driver said, “Look, friend, don’t ever do that again. You scared the daylights out of me!” The passenger apologized, saying he didn’t know such a light tap would scare him so much. After a moment, the driver replied, “Sorry, it’s not really your fault. Today is my first day as a cab driver. I’ve been driving hearses for the past 25 years.” *(The American Legion magazine)***

**Many a person's downfall comes in trying to change a bad habit by focusing on an undesirable behavior instead of on a new behavior to replace it. *(Sybil Stanton, in Reader's Digest)***

**As a modern Mom who spends much of her time chauffeuring her children to various activities, I sometimes feel as though my life is spent in a car. At the end of one exhausting day, after I had put my kids to bed, I flopped into an armchair in the living room. Automatically my right hand reached over my left shoulder -- to fasten the seat belt. *(Bonnie Heatherly, in Reader's Digest)***

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**The longer a college dropout attended classes, the more likely said dropout will return to graduate. That's an old presumption that now has been confirmed by computer runs. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**College students who drink a lot did likewise in high school. College students who don't drink at all didn't drink at all in high school. With the inevitable exceptions. Surveys prove that. That's true of smoking, too, is it not? *(L. M. Boyd)***

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**Wife to husband: "You are such a creature of habit! Can't you ever do anything on a whim, just for the fun of it?" Husband: "I do fun things spontaneously all the time!" Wife: "Such as?" Husband: "I often just drop everything and go bowling!" Wife: "Yeah, every Friday night at 7:30!" *(Art & Chip Sansom, in The Born Loser comic strip)***

**People who eat plain foods repeatedly don't throw out as much as the daily dish changers. It's proportional. The more repetitious the diet, the less garbage. So report researchers. It's been found that many elders, who at first repeat meals just to avoid extra planning and preparation, wind up saving a lot of money. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Scientists say: An adult must taste a disliked food 10 times before learning to like it. *(Uncle John’s Unstoppable Bathroom Reader, p. 333)***

**My husband built a special door to the outside for our two little dogs. After it was finished, we pushed them back and forth through it so they would learn its purpose. The next day, the dogs woke up early, ran right to their door and waited for me to give them a shove. *(Jann Boyles, in Reader's Digest)***

**Creatures of Habit: Three trained dolphins escaped from their performing pen at a resort in Key Largo, Florida. They were discovered several days later in a lagoon off Key Biscayne, some 55 miles distant. At 10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. they performed tricks, apparently hoping to be fed on their Key Largo show schedule. *(Universal Press Syndicate)***

**My husband and I pulled into a drive-through restaurant. A voice from the intercom asked us what we would like. Yet to decide, my husband said, “Can we have a minute, please?” “Will that be a small, medium or large?” came the reply. *(Julia Martin, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Habit is either the best of servants or the worst of masters. *(Nathaniel Emmons, American theologian)***

**I know it’s summer if I hear the tinkle of bells on an ice cream truck. Mentally my feet start running and I’m hollering, “Mama, I need a nickel!” *(Linda Ellerbee, in Take Big Bites)***

**Habits are first cobwebs, then cables. *(Spanish proverbs)***

**My problem lies in reconciling my gross habits with my net income. *(Errol Flynn)***

**It was some unknown who said: “First we form our habits. Then they form us.” *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Word is you can never untrain a guard dog. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Near the end of a tense golf match, a temperamental player was thrown off his game. His caddie, it seems, had developed a severe case of hiccups. It continued for several holes and finally on the eighteenth hole the man’s drive sliced into a grove of trees. Slamming his club to the ground, he turned on his caddie. “That was because of you and your blankety-blank hiccups!” “But, I didn’t hiccup then, sir,” protested the caddie. “That’s just the point,” screamed the player. “I had allowed for it!” *(Bits & Pieces)***

**No human force, not even fear, is stronger than habit. *(Michel Houellebecq, novelist)***

**Old habits of inadequacy can be broken. They are not engraved in copper or sand-blasted into concrete, they are only old patterns that you have accepted for yourself. Oh, yes, you may find that when you reject them they will cry like banshees, but they are only screaming because they are dying. *(Jack E. Addington)***

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**All our life . . . is but a mass of habits. *(William James)***

**There is no more miserable human being than one in whom nothing is habitual but indecision. *(William James)***

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**The chains of habit are generally too small to be felt until they are too strong to be broken. *(Samuel Johnson)***

**Good habits are just as hard to break as bad ones. *(Colleen Mariah Rae, in Movies in the Mind)***

**Talk-show host Larry King describes the stringent security arrangements for a White House state dinner: No matter who you are, you have to bring identification with your picture on it. I got to the East gate, and the three men there -- the one checking IDs, the one in charge of security and the other guy -- all said, "Hey, Larry, how are ya?" The security head then added, "Man, we're up late at night a lot here, and you're our savior." "Gee, thanks," I replied. Then he said, "Okay -- ID please." *(Larry King with Peter Occhiogrosso, in Tell Me More)***

**You never know you’re hooked until you decide that you’re not going to do something anymore. *(William Dufty)***

**I went into a McDonald's yesterday and said, "I'd like some fries." The girl at the counter said, "Would you like fries with that?" *(Jay Leno)***

**After issuing driver's licenses for 20 years, a clerk was transferred to the marriage-license bureau. Almost at once, he was in trouble. Young couples were leaving his desk red-faced and angry. His supervisor asked what was wrong. "I can't seem to help it," muttered the dismayed clerk. "I just can't get out of the habit of asking whether they want the license for business or for pleasure!" *(Frank Schaff, in Reader's Digest)***

# Be mindful of the link between action and outcome. Ask yourself: “If I repeat today’s action 365 times, will I be where I want to be in a year?” *(Roz Savage, rower, who is training to be the first solo woman to row across the Pacific Ocean from California to Australia)*

**Many people look forward to the New Year for a new start of old habits. *(Anonymous)***

**If on a single occasion a man hits his wife, it's not a certainty he'll do it again. If on two different occasions he hits his wife, its highly likely he'll do it again. So say the students of family violence. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**What you're used to eating is what you miss most when you go places where it isn't. Or so says a scholar who also reports the less obvious: Even some paroled convicts have trouble getting used to the food on the outside. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Excellence is not a singular act, but a habit. You are what you repeatedly do. *(Shaquille O’Neal)***

**A long habit of not thinking a thing wrong gives it a superficial appearance of being right. *(Thomas Paine)***

**Auto salesman to customer: "And under our extended credit plan the payments never become a burden. They merely become a habit." *(Lichty, Publishers-Hall Syndicate)***

**The rabbi in my son’s Talmud class at Yeshiva University in New York City was always so involved in the text being studied that he never looked up. He would call on a student for translation and explanation, and – without realizing it – he often chose the same student day after day. Out of respect, the students wouldn’t point this out to him. After being called on four days in a row, a student named Goldberg asked advice from his friends. The next day when the rabbi said “Goldberg, translate and explain,” Goldberg replied, “Goldberg is absent today.” “All right,” said the rabbi. “You translate and explain.” *(Gisela Wolk, in Reader’s Digest)***

**One of the more commonly spoken expressions in ancient Rome was the Latin version of , "Repetition is the mother of learning." That according to historical footnotes. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Good ideas are not adopted automatically. They must be driven into practice with courageous impatience. *(Admiral Hyman G. Rickover)***

**Repetition is the only form of permanence that nature can achieve. *(George Santayana)***

**Bishop Fulton J. Sheen told this story on himself: In a city in upstate New York, a new auditorium had been built. For two years it had not been filled, although to draw crowds the promoters had tried dancing, wrestling, boxing and theatricals. “Well,” said one usher to another, “It’s going to be filled one night next week.” “Why, who’s coming?” “Bishop Sheen.” “Who’s he wrestling?” *(Treasure in Clay)***

**A habit is a shirt made of iron. *(Czech proverb)***

**Command Performance: While vacationing in the West, we arrived at a church just as the minister was asking the congregation to please stand for prayer. After he asked the blessing for the service, he said in a loud and authoritative voice, “SIT DOWN.” Looking up we saw a very red-faced minister who explained, “Sorry, our grandchildren have been staying with us this last week.” *(Barbara Shoup, in Reader’s Digest)***

**“Be careful what you pray for,” runs an old saying, “you may get it.” One who would agree with that was a man who lived in a squalid tenement on a side street in East Boston. He was a tailor and he worked long hours each day to eke out a meager existence. He allowed himself but one luxury: a ticket each year on the Irish Sweepstakes, the only lottery available in the United States decades before the many multimillion dollar state lotteries became legal. For fourteen years his life continued in the same impoverished vein, until one day there came a loud knocking on his door. Two well-dressed gentlemen entered his shop and informed him that he had just won the Sweepstakes. The grand prize was $250,000! The little tailor could hardly believe his ears. He was rich! No longer would he have to slave away making pant cuffs, hemming dresses. Now he could live -- really live! He locked his shop and threw the key into the Charles River. He bought himself a wardrobe fit for a king, a new Rolls Royce, a suite of rooms at the Ritz, and soon was supporting a string of attractive young women. Night after night he partied until dawn, spending his money as if each day were his last. Of course the inevitable happened. One day the money was gone. Furthermore, he had nearly wrecked his health. Disillusioned, ridden with fever and exhausted, he returned to his little shop and set up business once more. And from force of habit, once again each year he set aside from his meager savings the price of a Sweepstakes ticket. Two years later there came a second knock at his door. The same two gentlemen stood there once again. “This is the most incredible thing in the history of the Sweepstakes,” exclaimed one. “You have won again!” The little tailor staggered to his feet with a groan that could be heard for miles. “Oh, no,” he protested, “do you mean I have to go through all that again?” *(Bits & Pieces)***

**To fall into a habit is to begin to cease to be. *(Miguel de Unamun)***

**It’s the toads against the road builders. Toads, like salmon, go home every year to lay eggs. If a toad’s native pond is gone, the toad gives up and dies. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Our tribal media habits: Americans have unprecedented access to a wealth of information and opinion, said John Avlon, but they're "self-segregating into separate political realities." That's one depression conclusion of a new Pew Research study on political polarization and media consumption. The study found that the most partisan people -- "consistent liberals" and "consistent conservatives" -- quite deliberately choose media sources, friends, and Facebook feeds that support their worldview. Conservatives rightly cluster around Fox News as their primary source of information, while liberals split their allegiance among a myriad of sources, including NPR. The New York Times, MSNBC, and CNN. Conservatives deem 24 of the 36 main news outlets as "untrustworthy," subscribing to Fox News chairman Roger Ailes's view that any news group that strives for objectivity is "de facto liberal" and that only an explicitly right-wing source can be trusted. Not surprisingly, it's the most adamant ideologies in each party's base who drive the debate, "sucking up all the oxygen and exhausting people who have lives and increasingly see politics as an ugly waste of time." If we continue with this trend, "America is headed toward Tower of Babel territory." *(The Week magazine, October 31, 2014)***

**Nothing so needs reforming as other people’s habits. *(Mark Twain)***

**Love is an act of endless forgiveness, a tender look which becomes a habit. *(Peter Ustinov, British actor and writer)***

**First dog says as the two of them lay down on the beach: "Ahh - vacation -- to leave all your cares and worries behind!" Second dog: "Who's barking at the mailman?" *(Patrick McDonnell, in Mutts comic strip)***

**The worst boss anyone can have is a bad habit. *(Monta Crane, in Sunshine magazine)***

**A habit is something you can do without thinking -- which is why most of us have so many of them. *(Frank A. Clark, Register and Tribune Syndicate)***

**Zoo: a place devised for animals to study the habits of human beings. *(Oliver Herford)***

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