

THE DISCIPLINED MIND



The Disciplined Mind Video
YOUR PRACTICAL GUIDE TO
IRON DISCIPLINE

Introduction



Why Discipline?

Let me tell you, success normally doesn't happen overnight. In fact, the people who seem to be able to pull off any kind of success in a very short period of time have actually paid their dues.

That's right. They weren't born that way. They had to go through a long process of disappointment, failure, and yes, pain. If you see a lot of winners around you, it's because they put in the time. The good news is, you can do the same.

Discipline is not just about achieving your goals. It's also about becoming a better person. Because let's face it, if given a choice, we'd rather do things that are pleasurable, quick and easy right here, right now.

Unfortunately, life reserves the biggest rewards to people who would rather wait until they eat their cookie. If you develop that skill as a little child, you will be able to become a very successful person indeed.

In fact, in a long term study conducted in the United States, children who were able to delay gratification by foregoing eating a cookie now, in exchange for a promise of eating two cookies in the future, turned out to achieve higher levels of career, personal and health success.

Discipline is closely related to how well you do in life. This is not something that you pick up to solve some sort of problem, and then promptly drop. Instead, this is a key part of you that you need to invest a proper amount of time, effort and energy in, which will continue to pay dividends long into the future.

Many Levels of Discipline

There are many levels to discipline. There is no one-size-fits-all set of features to discipline. In many cases, it requires adaptability, depending on the particular set of circumstances you're dealing with.

With certain people, you need more discipline than others. In certain aspects of your life, like education, you will need a certain type of discipline, whereas you would need different levels of self control when it comes to avoiding drugs, alcoholism or sexual addiction. This is also true when it comes to emotional self control.

Let me tell you, it's the easiest thing in the world to tell people what you're thinking. But let me tell you, that's also the easiest way to burn your bridges. If you want to become part of the solution, you have to know how to control your emotions and channel them in a productive way. All of this requires discipline.

Chapter 1

Discipline is Something YOU DO

Discipline is Something YOU DO

There are many misconceptions regarding discipline. A lot of people confuse it with other personal traits. What is discipline anyway? I have given you an earlier definition, but we're going to drill deeper in this section.

Discipline involves action. It really boils down to what you do and what you choose not to do. This is the most practical way to frame discipline based on how people actually perform.

Discipline is the ability to do things that you'd rather avoid. These are necessary things. These are things that can take your life to the next level. These are things that can set you up for greater success in life. These are the things that would resolve a lot of personally difficult issues, but most people would rather avoid them.

Let's face it, if given a choice between emotional confrontation and just letting sleeping dogs lie, most people would take the latter. That's just human nature. Discipline gives you the ability to attack these things head on.

Discipline also gives you the ability to do what you have committed to doing no matter how inconvenient or uncomfortable. If you have given your word to somebody and you have promised to do something, discipline enables you to follow through. You may not feel like it, it may not be all that convenient, in fact, it might even be a major hassle, but if you are a disciplined person, you will come through each and every time.

How come? You have given your word. You have committed to that person. As you can well imagine, this can help build a reputation.

Let's face it, most people would rather flake. Most people would get wobbly and eventually just drop out. It doesn't really matter if they have given you their word. It doesn't really matter if they made all sorts of promises. At the end of the day, it all boils down to whether they are willing to stick to their promises, regardless of how inconvenient it is, or whether they just take the path of least resistance.

Which brings me to the next point. Discipline also involves the ability to stick to a course of action, even if you're busy or you don't feel like it. You would be able to stick to something that you have committed to, even if you feel like you don't have the time.

Discipline also involves patience in relationships. Let's get one thing clear, the person that you're with is in your life for a reason. Of the 100 different traits that make up that person, you probably love 90 to 95 of them, but there are 5 traits that you really hate. This requires patience.

Everybody is a work in progress. None of us are perfect. If you want your relationship to blossom and survive, you have to be disciplined.

Finally, most people have principles, but not everybody is willing to stick to them. Not everybody is willing to sacrifice for them. When you have discipline, you find the strength to stick to principles. It may not be popular, it definitely may not be convenient, but you will stick to it anyway.

This builds character. This also builds reputation because you stick out like a sore thumb.

Most people would rather abandon their principles at the most convenient or most opportune period. Few and far between are people who are willing to stick to something because of personal principle. This requires discipline.

The Different Types of Discipline

What are the different types of discipline out there and why do these matter? Well, discipline is a broad concept that can be acted out or exercised. However, it's a good idea to classify this ability depending on certain areas of your life.

There are slight differences in these types of discipline. For example, there is mental discipline. If you're a mentally disciplined person, you are able to process information in a focused way.

It's very easy to slack off. It's very easy to kick the can down the road or postpone things. It's definitely very easy to procrastinate. When you're a mentally disciplined person, you can focus on tasks that you need to do as well as information that you need to process, and go all the way through.

It's hard for you to get distracted. It's hard for you to take a detour and lose focus. People who are looking to learn a trade or excel in school need a tremendous amount of mental discipline to become successful.

The next type of discipline is emotional discipline. This is a very practical form of discipline because every day we are going to find ourselves in certain touchy situations. Maybe somebody said something that offended you. Maybe you did something that was embarrassing. Whatever the case may be, there will always be situations where we will get on the wrong side of people.

It takes quite a bit of discipline to ignore our raw emotional state and focus on doing the right thing. Sometimes, when somebody pushes you, the best way forward is to just brush it off. It would have been so much more emotionally gratifying if you were to smack that person around, but if you were to do that, you must be ready to pay the consequences of that action.

Emotional discipline also involves your memories. If you're like most normal people, I'm sure there is somebody in your past that triggers or evokes strong emotions. You can't help but feel sad, enraged or feel guilty once you start thinking about that memory.

If you are a very emotionally disciplined person, you would be able to separate the thought from the emotional baggage it has. This enables you to preserve an even-handed disposition. You are more likely to make better decisions, you are more likely to preserve your relationships, you're more likely to be more optimistic about the future.

Next is physical discipline. This involves day to day decisions and behavioral patterns involving your body. If you are overweight, you know that you have physical discipline issues. You know that you should eat less and move around more.

Now, it's easy to intellectually accept these ideas, it's another matter entirely to actually carry them out. And physical discipline is really all about exercising full control and ownership of your body so you can be healthier and enjoy greater well being.

Let's face it, your physical decisions now can have a major impact on the quality of your life as well as the length of your life. Physical discipline also involves habits like smoking, drinking or drugs. If you apply discipline to the things that you do with your body, you can increase the quality of your life outcomes.

You don't have to die an early death. You don't have to develop cancer. You can decrease your chances of developing Type II diabetes. There are just so many great practical health effects of physical discipline.

Finally, there's sexual discipline. It doesn't really matter whether you're married or single. When you interact with people, there will be instances of sexual temptation.

It doesn't matter whether you are in a "committed relationship" or not, you have to practice sexual discipline. This is especially challenging if you are single.

Make no mistake, practicing sexual discipline not only has a profound impact on your health because you get to avoid all sorts of socially transmitted diseases, but it also impacts your relationships. Because let's face it, friendships get awkward and often change for the worse when sex enters the picture.

Also, in the United States and elsewhere, there is a heightened sensitivity to sexual harassment and gender relationships in the workplace and in school. So by exercising more discipline on the sexual side of your persona, you can actually prevent all sorts of unnecessary drama that can haunt you for a long, long time.

Every Day is an Opportunity to Become More Disciplined

As I've mentioned in the introduction to this book, I'm going to teach you how to become more disciplined on a practical level.

This book is short on theory and speculation. Instead, it's focused on taking every opportunity you have on a day to day basis and making the best out of them to develop discipline.

Make no mistake, every single day is packed with opportunities to become more disciplined. It also begins with the moment you wake up.

The moment you wake up, you can choose to press the snooze button on your alarm clock to get ten more minutes of sleep, or you can take that opportunity to wake up. It doesn't matter if you feel good about it, it doesn't matter if you're feeling groggy, it doesn't matter whether you're suffering from some sort of brain fog. You just commit to waking up at a certain time. That is an opportunity.

Similarly, you can choose to screw around in the breakfast area of your home until it's time to get into your car and head to work. Alternatively, you can take that time to run or walk around the block to get some exercise. That is an opportunity.

Similarly, if you find yourself waiting, for example, you're stuck in traffic or you're waiting in a line at a bank, this is an opportunity to practice discipline. You can easily do things in a way where you waste your time, or you can do other things that will build up your personal value.

For example, if you find yourself stuck in traffic and you're a carpool passenger, you may want to build up your intellectual capabilities and value by whipping out a book or listening to audio books, or you can play video games. Do you see how this works?

Also, when you come across people and you make a promise, sticking to that decision is an opportunity to build discipline. Sure, you're busy and there are just so many other things that you could be doing. You'd be easily forgiven for just blowing off whatever commitments you've made. But if you took the opportunity to stick to a decision, your reputation improves.

Let's face it, there are a lot of flakes out there. There are a lot of people that are not all that trustworthy. And if you are that person who people can say is reliable, your reputation improves. Chances are, people would entrust you with more responsibility. Chances are, people would seek you out if they need some sort of advice.

Another daily opportunity simply involves showing up on time. If you are the type of person who shows up fifteen minutes early to any appointment or to your work, this highlights your character. You're a very professional person. Your word is your bond. People can rely on you. This also means that you come prepared.

Finally, if you come across unpleasant people, maybe somebody cussed at you when you were trying to park your car or your boss is being mean to you, these unpleasant and uncomfortable situations can be golden opportunities to build your discipline.

It's very easy to just honk your horn at the other guy and cuss back at him. It's very easy to play a passive-aggressive game with your boss. But if you were to avoid the quick and easy and focus instead on the hard and necessary, you may be setting yourself up for greater success later on.

Chapter 2

Key Mindsets to Adopt to Become More Disciplined



Key Mindsets to Adopt to Become More Disciplined

I wish I can tell you that becoming more disciplined is just a simple matter of deciding to be disciplined. It would be so easy if that were the case. Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way.

You may have certain mindsets that you may not be aware of that can get in the way of you becoming a more disciplined person. That's right. You might be sabotaging yourself because you hang onto certain ideas, assumptions or expectations that can undermine your progress towards greater levels of self-discipline.

You need to adopt the following mindsets so they can either counteract whatever negative mindsets you have or they can turbocharge your ability to develop discipline.

Discipline is Like a Mental Muscle

Please understand that for your personal level of self-discipline to increase, you have to challenge it. You can't just say, "I'm going to be a more disciplined person" and refuse to put it into action. That's not going to work, not in a million years. You have to stress your level of discipline.

For example, if you're having a tough time showing up to work on time, you can't just slide back and say, "Well, it's not going to happen". You're not exercising your discipline mental muscles when you do that. Instead, you try again and again to show up on time.

Once you're able to do that, you step it up by trying to show up five minutes ahead of time then ten minutes then fifteen minutes. The more you stress or put pressure on your ability to act in a

disciplined way, the stronger it becomes. The worst thing that you can do is to fail to challenge whatever discipline you already have.

The More I Run Away from Difficult Things, the Weaker My Discipline Becomes

You have to adopt this mindset. You have to understand that when you react to your world out of fear, you become a less-disciplined person. In many cases, you don't even develop discipline in the first place.

You have to understand that there are a lot of scary things in life. There are a lot of things that you'd rather not deal with. However, that's what makes life so interesting. You have to lose your fear. You have to stop viewing these things as inconveniences, hassles or "things I hate to do".

Instead, you should turn around and embrace them. Sure, they are very inconvenient. Sometimes, they're downright uncomfortable but guess what? The more you do them, the more you get used to them. Most importantly, the more you do them, the more you're able to connect the dots and you're able to do more of them. That's how you become more efficient. That's how you become a more effective person.

Unfortunately, if you make it a habit to continuously give in to quitting, the weaker you become. You have to understand that in this life, you're going to be facing different challenges. If your number one instinct is to turn around and quit, you become a weaker person. Eventually, don't be surprised if it doesn't take much for you to want to quit.

This is why you have to turn things around. You have to make this process go in the other direction. In other words, it would take harder and harsher circumstances for you to take a step back.

That's the direction you should go because when you do that, you increase your levels of discipline but you also maximize your levels of personal confidence and competence. When most people would rather deal with a problem by just giving up or kicking the can down the road, you stand out like a hero when you're the only person looking to tackle that problem.

Please understand that this applies across the board. I'm not just talking about issues that you face at work or at school. This can also involve your relationships.

The More I Do Things, the Better I Get at Them

It may not seem like it, at this point in time, but you're actually building up competence the more you do something. Seriously. For example, if you make it a habit to walk around your block every single day, I can guarantee you that you're probably seeing different ways to make your daily routine more pleasant. You're probably seeing different details that you can benefit from.

Simple repetition gives you all sorts of opportunities to do a better job. Again, this applies across the board. This is due to the fact that the more you do something, the less intimidated you become.

Do you remember the first time you rode a bicycle? Chances are you bruised or scraped your knee constantly. After all, you were learning. However, after a certain point, you mastered your bike-riding skills, and it will take quite a bit of a hit for you to get thrown off your bike.

You probably went through this process without looking at the big picture. It was just something thought you had to do. Well, assume that same attitude when it comes to the big things in life that are stressing you out. Apply this same attitude to the things that you would rather quit on.

Another fact that you can take comfort in is the reality that the more you do something, the more routine it becomes. The reason people fail with certain tasks is because they're intimidated by them. They think that it's going to be too hard, that it will take too much time or it's just too hard to figure out.

However, the more you do something, regardless of how many times you fail, you take a lot of the emotional intimidation out. It becomes familiar and, once it starts to become routine, you start breaking things down and guess what? You start succeeding more often than your failures. Eventually, you reach a point where you basically get those results that you're looking for time after time. This really all boils down to the ability to connect the dots and see patterns.

Unfortunately, you're not going to get there if your number one instinct is to give up. Adopt the mindset of "the more I do things, the better I get at them", and you will become a more competent person in many areas of your life.

Competence Produces Confidence

In US educational institutions and school districts, the idea of self-esteem as the gateway to confidence has been the received institutional wisdom for several decades now. The idea is if you make kids feel good about themselves, eventually, they will become more competent. Eventually, they will be able to figure things out and achieve.

Well, it turns out that it's actually the other way around. According to research studies in the 1990s, when children become competent in something or anything, they become more confident. When they're more confident, they experiment more and they try harder and they increase their levels of competence. It turns out that competence produces confidence which enables people to develop even higher levels of competence.

Confidence does not flow from self-esteem. Instead, self-esteem flows from competence. Understand how this works. Adopt this mindset.

Let's face it. You may not be all that confident about certain things in your life right now. However, the more you master them, the more competent you become. You will then feel more confident to tackle more things and go out on a limb on many areas of your life.

The more confident you become, the more you try, and the more competence you build. This leads to even more confidence, so on and so forth. You just need to start somewhere, and this means doing.

You may think that you would do a lousy job today, but that's okay. You have to start somewhere. The good news is as long as you choose to put in the work to become competent, the confidence will follow.

Momentum is on My Side

Believe that momentum is on your side. If you believe this, you will eventually reach a point where it becomes harder and harder for you to stop than to start. I know this sounds crazy at this point. At this point, you're probably having a tough time staying from foods that you know are bad for you and sticking to foods that don't taste all that good.

The good news is the more you stick to it, the easier it becomes over time. In fact, you could reach a point of momentum where it becomes harder to stop your behavior than to start. All it takes is to keep trying and to keep on pushing.

When this becomes your routine, this action changes the way you look at things and the way you feel about things. This eventually becomes part of your identity.

Chapter 3

Build Discipline Using the Things You're Already Doing



Build Discipline Using the Things You're Already Doing

As I mentioned in the introduction of this book, what makes this book different is that you're going to choose to build discipline doing the things that you're already doing. You're not going to be assuming weird yoga poses. You're not going to adopt exotic meditation or mindfulness practices. You're not going to be doing any of that.

Instead, you're just going to look at what you currently do and build discipline doing those things. This may seem small. In many cases, they may even seem trivial. However, just as small streams combine to produce big rivers, all these small tasks when practiced routinely and mindfully pursued can lead to increasing levels of personal discipline over time.

Meet Deadlines

If you work, chances are you are dealing with deadlines already. There's also a high likelihood that you probably have blown through a deadline or two in your career. You can build discipline by making it a point to meet deadlines every single time.

I understand this can seem like a tall order right now. However, the more you commit to this, and the more you achieve it, the easier it becomes. You just have to consciously commit to doing it and understand what's at stake.

It is not just a matter of getting stuff done by a certain point in time so your boss would be happy. Instead, it's all about practicing discipline in a very practical way that you can repeat over and over again. Simply commit to meeting to meeting them more often and make it a point to put in the effort to meet your deadlines each and every time.

I understand this is probably not going to happen the first time you do it. That's okay. However, the more you try, the easier it becomes until, eventually, you don't even notice because it's become part of your routine.

Put in the Work

I know this seems kind of obvious. After all, if you have a job, it is easy for you to automatically think that you're already working. What if I told you that typical employees' eight hours can actually be condensed into one productive hour of work?

I know it's quite shocking, but it's absolutely true. Just pay attention to what you yourself are personally doing. Do you work all eight hours when you are at your job? Chances are you don't.

Chances are you spend a lot of time on the phone, checking e-mail, checking social media updates, shuffling paperwork, reading unrelated stuff, talking about unrelated stuff, and other activities. All these add up to quite a bit of time. When you just zero in on the stuff that actually matters, as far as your employer is concerned, you'd be lucky to get one hour of actual work done.

Use this as a golden opportunity. Put in the work. Commit to more output. I'm not just talking about random output here. I'm talking about output that actually contributes a tremendous amount of value to your employer.

Next, you should commit to pure work. In other words, cut down on the social media updates. Set aside the e-mail time. Restrict unrelated activities to a bare minimum.

If that isn't challenging enough, you should also commit to hitting quality guidelines. It's not enough that you are producing work at the right amount. You should also make sure that whatever work you produce meets the highest quality standard.

Let me tell you, you would always have this opportunity if you work for other people for a living. Every single hour you are at your job is an opportunity to do this.

The good news is if you consciously work to build up your discipline by committing to hitting high-quality guidelines and producing a lot more output, you stand to benefit in more immediate terms.

Not only does committing to more productive work help you become a more disciplined person, but it can actually help you get promoted more. It can also help you to get paid more.

Stick to Regular Meal Schedules

Believe it or not even the simple act of eating can build discipline. How? Well, if you're like most people, you probably have shifting schedules as far as your meals go. Sometimes you get so busy in the morning that you skip a meal. Sometimes things pop in the middle of the day and you have lunch at weird hours.

By deciding to stick to regular meal schedules, you actually build up your personal discipline level. The secret here is not just setting up a schedule. The secret is setting up the consequences of missing your schedule. I am, of course, talking about refusing to eat if you miss your scheduled meal time.

If you set things up this way, then there is a consequence to your action. This sets you up for meeting your regular meal schedules because you have an incentive to do so. This goes a long way in pushing you to eat at regular times during the day.

Your mind becomes more disciplined and, most importantly, your body becomes more disciplined. Don't be surprised if you regulate your weight more effectively just by simply sticking to regular meal schedules and refusing to eat if you miss your meal times.

Give Yourself Consequences

The big challenge in building personal discipline is the fact that a lot of people look at this whole project as something that “would be nice” if it happened. In other words, they’re setting it up as an option. It is not an option. You’re actually engaged in the most important things you could ever do with your life.

Like I described in an earlier chapter, it has a profound impact in many areas of your life. It also applies across the board. Unfortunately, if you were to view this as something that would be nice if it happened, you don't really set up any negative consequences for yourself.

If you don't show up to work on time, that's just another blown schedule. If you don't eat a meal on time, welcome to the club.

You have to get out of those mindsets. You have to instead give yourself consequences if you drop the ball. For example, if you did not stick to your regular meal schedules, you skip your meal. If you spend money in an unscheduled way, you reduce your budget.

There has to be some sort of negative consequent for your failure to act in a disciplined way. Unfortunately, nobody is going to step in and do this for you. You're going to have to do this yourself.

Remember: Baby Steps are Still Steps Forward

I know that the steps above can be a tall order for most people. Believe me I understand. This is why you shouldn't beat yourself up too badly if you stumble and fail. Keep in mind that even if you're just making small steps forward and you're able to get things done from time to time, you're still making progress.

After all, baby steps are still steps forward. At the very least, you're getting adjusted to the idea that you have to behave in a more disciplined way. You only need to compare your mindset now with what it was before for you to see that this is a good thing.

So, don't worry too much about any big improvements that you may have failed to achieve. Focus instead on the fact that you're making small changes. No matter their size, if you keep repeating them and you keep pushing, they can eventually take you to where you want to go.

Chapter 4

Build Discipline by Challenging Yourself Intentionally



Build Discipline by Challenging Yourself Intentionally

Many Americans have really low levels of self-discipline precisely because they have made their lives as comfortable as possible. In fact, if you were to look at the typical ad shown on prime time TV in the United States, a recurring pattern appears. The ad would tell you about a product or a service that would make your life so much more convenient, easy and simple.

That is the promise and people fall for this promise time and time again and, for the most part, these are the cardinal values of modern American life. It's all about convenience. After all, we live in a society where we want our pizza in fifteen minutes or we expect it to be absolutely free.

Well, here's the problem. When you set an easy life for yourself, it only takes a very small amount of challenge for you to get totally thrown off track. You can't handle it. You can't withstand even the softest challenge, and this is precisely why a lot of kids nowadays have a tough time with discipline. We have gone soft.

Well, if you want to build discipline, tighten things up a bit. Make it a little harder on yourself.

Here are some basic day-to-day practical ways to challenge yourself on both a mental and physical level. These go hand in hand.

You may be thinking that these are just physical challenges, but they also challenge you mentally. They can toughen you up mentally and emotionally so you are more likely to put up with a lot more inconveniences.

Take Cold Showers

Make it a point to use only cold water when taking a shower. I know this might seem masochistic, but there's a hard logic to this. When you take a cold shower first thing in the morning, you wake up quickly.

Second, you don't extra time in the shower. It quickly turns into a rapid in-and-out situation. You know that it's going to be cold. So, you soap up, you clean up and you rinse off very quickly. In other words, you save a tremendous amount of time.

Also, when you take cold showers, it enables you to focus mentally. You're not thinking about something else. You're not letting your emotions get the better of you. You're not suffering from any form of brain fog.

Instead, you just want to start your shower and get out of there as soon as possible. You remain focused. This is a great way to start your day.

This also toughens up your personal discipline because it would have been so much easier to take a nice, warm shower.

Wake Up Really Early

How early? How about 4:00 or even 3:00 in the morning? Wake up as early as you can.

When you wake up early, you actually tap into a tremendous amount of physical energy. Put this to good use by pairing it with some sort of daily morning exercise. When you wake up early, you are able to focus more clearly.

The downside, of course, is that your body is going to put up a fight. This is where you build discipline. Let's face it if given a choice, most people would rather keep clicking the Snooze button on their alarm clocks. In fact, most people would rather stay in bed for hours on end.

When you wake up really early, you challenge this part of your mindset. You commit to waking up by a certain time.

It doesn't matter whether you woke up on the right side of the bed. It doesn't matter what you're feeling. It doesn't matter whether things are lined up properly. None of that matters. What matters is that when the clock says 3:00 AM or 4:00 AM, you commit to waking up on time every time.

This is a great way of using physical discipline to build up mental discipline and vice versa because they actually reinforce each other. You end up in a situation where even if you're feeling really tired and sleepy, you still get up because you're mentally disciplined. Some days you don't really feel like it, but your body has gotten so used to this routine that it wakes you up.

So, set this process in motion by choosing to wake up really early morning after morning, week after week, months after month, year after year.

Park Farther and Farther from the Entrance

I know this is going to ruffle a lot of feathers especially with readers from California. In states like California, people have the luxury of huge parking lots. As you can well imagine, if you are going to Wal-Mart or Costco, your number one instinct will be to find a parking slot that is as close to the entrance as possible.

To build self-discipline, I want you to overcome and reverse this common mindset. Instead of driving around in circles trying to spy on a parking spot near the entrance that just opened up, make it a point to look at the farthest point of the parking lot and try to park as close to it as possible.

At first, you probably would only park a few more extra yards away from the main entrance of the mall. That's fine. However, as the weeks go by, make it a point to park farther and farther away from the entrance.

This should apply across the board. It doesn't matter whether you're going to Costco, to your office or to some sort of sports venue. Exercise this.

At first, it's going to be a hassle because you're used to looking for the nearest parking spot but, eventually, you'll get used to this. Eventually, you will see that when you park really far, you get to exercise and you get to see the venue from a different perspective. You start to see the big picture. This can go a long way in totally changing your mindset.

Reduce Your Snacks

Some people pretty much snack throughout the day. It doesn't matter whether you have more than three snacks or you only have one. Make it a point to start dialing down the amount of snacks you enjoy every single day.

For example, if you eat three major meals a day with snacks in between or a snack in the beginning and a snack at the end, you may be dealing with about five snacks per day. Dial that down to four. Get used to it.

Once it feels natural and it becomes part of your routine, dial it down again to three. Repeat the same process. Get it down to two then to one then to zero.

It can be done and it really all boils down to getting used to the process. You also get the additional benefit of losing weight because if you snack on sugary drinks, chances are the insulin peaks and crashes that you experience basically makes you hungry throughout the day. If you were to get off that insulin treadmill, you can reduce your overall calorie intake day after day.

Commit to Reading a Certain Amount of Words Daily

A lot of people think that they read enough materials every single day. Unfortunately, these are just all estimates. They're basically just going with their moods.

If you really want to become more disciplined, you have to put yourself on a hard quota regarding the amount of words you read every single day. You don't have to do overdo it. You don't have to be a hero. Start with one thousand extra words. This is basically just four pages of a typical hardbound book.

Once that becomes comfortable, step it up to one thousand five hundred then two thousand. Eventually, you should make it a point to read one two-hundred page book every week.

You may be thinking that this is a lot but if you went to college, you know that this is actually nothing because in many courses, you're expected to read four or five full books every single week. We're talking about hundreds and hundreds of pages.

So, get up to one full book per week then try to double it after a few a few months then try to double that after a few months. Not only would this build up your practical levels of discipline, but it also helps ensure you become a more knowledgeable person. Your conversations become more interesting. You also get to deepen your personal knowledge and expertise.

Why is this important? Well, we live in a modern, information-based economy. The more information you have that other people don't possess, the more credible you become. This can translate into bigger paychecks and greater economic opportunities.

Chapter 5

Build Discipline through Daily Opportunities



Build Discipline through Daily Opportunities

In addition to your existing routine, you should also look for opportunities to practice discipline. In fact, if you're really honest with yourself, these opportunities are all over the place. You don't have to look far. Here are just some of the things that happen on a day-to-day basis that you can choose to be more disciplined about.

Daily Occurrences

Did you know that if you experience hunger, it can be an opportunity to practice discipline? As long as you stick to your meal plan, if you feel hunger in between your set mealtimes, you can choose to ignore those hunger pangs. You can choose to power through them.

At first, this is almost impossible. It feels like murder but, eventually, you will get used to it. The best part? You get to lose weight, you look better and you feel better about yourself all thanks to discipline.

Next, if you find yourself waiting in line, maybe you're at the bank or you're at the DMV, this can also be a great time to practice discipline. You don't have to waste your time waiting in line. It doesn't have to be dead time.

You can whip out a tablet and try to do some work. You can read a book and improve your mind and personal knowledge. There are just so many ways you can turn what would otherwise be "dead time" spent waiting for something or someone into something more productive. You can use this to practice discipline.

The opposite of this, of course, is to wait in line impatiently. The more impatient you feel, the less disciplined you become.

Next, you might want to take special assignments at work. As you probably already know, your boss has no shortage of stuff that needs to get done. Volunteer for more of these projects. I know it's not all that convenient but the good news is the more you do these, the more you get used to them.

Also, you step up your skill levels and you become more valuable to your boss.

At first, it may seem like you're just doing mindless chores but, eventually, you stand out from the rest of your team. You are the "go-to" person that your boss can tap when things need to get done. You also end up exposing yourself to higher levels of responsibility.

It's only a matter of time until you get promoted or get a raise. If neither of those things happens, take comfort from the fact that you picked up more skill sets, which you can take to your next employer.

Finally, you can practice discipline by just simply hanging out with "toxic" friends. These are people who are constantly bitching and groaning about life. These are people who are complaining about their relationships or lack thereof. These are people who are projecting a tremendous amount of negativity.

You may be thinking to yourself, "Why would I want to spend a moment more with these people considering how toxic they are?" Well, guess what? Your normal inclination is to just leave them alone, but that doesn't build discipline.

When you make it a point to just hang out and listen to people and possibly guide them to solutions, you become more resistant to toxic, emotional situations. You're able to put up with a lot more things. You're less likely to get emotional. This can pay off tremendously in how you deal with other people.

Chapter 6

Discover Coping Mechanisms



Discover Coping Mechanisms

When you're building self-discipline, you're not just powering through unpleasant situations. You're not just choosing to take it all on the chin. You're also putting yourself in a situation to discover coping mechanisms.

For example, if you are working out because you're trying to be more physically disciplined, you can figure out a way to “read” by listening to audio books.

When you're running first in the morning, you can play mind games with yourself to keep you mentally alert.

If you are at work going through what would otherwise be thoughtless and mindless tasks, you can gamify them so they are more engaging. You're also setting yourself up to become more efficient with this work, and you might be able to automate more things or come up with some innovative solutions so as to do a lot more with less time.

Finally, you can learn to simply look at the bright side. This is probably one of the best coping mechanisms you could ever adopt. Instead of automatically thinking that there is no hope, this is the worst thing possible or you just can't wait to stop dealing with these difficult people, you can force yourself to look at the bright side of every situation.

For example, if you're dealing with a toxic person, in your mind, celebrate what's great about them. The toxic aspects of their personality may be obvious but when you make it a point to focus on what's so awesome about them, you're not only able to put up with them, but you can deepen your relationship as well.

Identify the Times You Wish to Quit

Let's face it if you try to be more disciplined, the temptation to want to quit is going to come up again and again. Instead of just dealing with this on a random basis, try to look for patterns. Figure them out. Once you notice that they do come in certain patterns or they're triggered by certain predictable events, people or situations, learn how to counteract them.

Maybe you need to adopt a certain attitude when these things happen or perhaps you need to adopt a certain routine. Finally, you can just choose to wait them out. Whatever the case may be don't just let a sense of hopelessness overcome you and push you to quit. Instead, anticipate that and prepare for them so you can come out on top.

Chapter 7

Track and Monitor Your Personal Discipline Journey



Track and Monitor Your Personal Discipline Journey

A lot of the tips that I have given you here involve your mind. They also involve your daily routine. Unfortunately, if you were to go on your personal discipline-building journey based solely on what you're feeling or your moods or what you “committed” to, you may be setting yourself up for failure.

Please understand that if you really want to become more disciplined in an efficient and effective way, you have to track your progress. At the very least, you have to monitor what you do on a day-to-day basis when confronted with certain stimuli.

This enables you to connect the dots better. This enables you to detect patterns in a more efficient way, which can lead to better coping mechanisms and improved solutions.

It's hard to stay on top of all that if you're just keeping it all in your head. Start a discipline journal. Get it all down in writing.

This doesn't mean that you have to write a novel like Dostoyevsky. You don't have to do that. There's no need to overdo things. You can start low and slow. Maybe just a few lines every day. Eventually, you will get so used to tracking your progress that you probably would write longer and longer entries.

Don't think that you have to start with long entries. There's no need for such massive journal entries. As long as you get a clear idea when you look at your journal as where you started, what you experienced and how you can overcome your challenges, you're in a good spot.

Scale Up Your Entries and Detail

The good news about keeping a journal is that it feels like you're engaged in a dialogue with yourself. This personal conversation gets deeper and more interesting over time. This is due primarily to the fact that you get used to writing a journal.

Once this has become second nature to you, allow yourself to get more and more detailed over time. Eventually, once you have made this part of your routine, you can write really detailed journal entries that can help you achieve breakthroughs as far as your coping mechanisms go.

Maybe you're hanging onto a very negative mindset. Perhaps you believe in uncertain limiting beliefs that actively get in the way of you improving your personal discipline.

Chapter 8

Build Greater Self-Control Using a System



Build Greater Self-Control Using a System

In this chapter, I want to open your mind to the concept of system building. The problem with building discipline really boils down to consistency, constancy and feedback. While keeping a journal can definitely go a long way in helping you monitor whatever solutions you have come up with over time, it's simply not going to be enough.

While a journal can do a good job of helping you compare where you are from where you started as far as your self-discipline level is concerned, you need to be more proactive. You need to adopt a pattern of behavior as well as a pattern of thinking that pretty much sustains itself.

Let's be honest here. If you're reading this book, at this point in time, you're really pumped up about getting more discipline. Maybe you have a clear understanding of the benefits of this trait. Perhaps you were trying to get yourself out of a difficult situation.

The problem is once you start building self-discipline, it's very easy to lose track. It's very easy to just let your emotions get the better of you. Maybe your work shift changes. Perhaps your relationships go through some turbulence.

Whatever the case may be you get thrown off track. You may not be as passionate or as energized before. Before you know it, your efforts at building self-control and discipline go down the tubes.

In other words, your personal journey starts to look more and more like how people tackle diets. If you've ever gone on a diet, you should know exactly what I'm talking about. In the beginning, you're all excited to avoid certain types of foods. You stick to your meal plan.

However, sooner or later, all sorts of details from your personal life kind of throw you off track. You start thinking that maybe I can cheat for one day and that “cheat day” turns to a “cheat week” which quickly turns into a “cheat month” and, before you know it, you're off your diet.

The same applies to building self-discipline. You can't just play it by ear. This is why I suggest that you build a system. When you use a system, you tap into a personal mechanism that is more sustainable.

Also, you tap into a way of doing things that can be broken up and diagnosed in modules. You don't have to either accept it wholesale or throw it away wholesale. You can break it up. You can mix and match and drop things that don't work for you.

Moreover, when you act in a systematic way, you produce more predictable results. You're more likely to get the outcome that you expect.

Setting Up Your Own System Framework

First, let me begin with the bad news. The bad news is I cannot out just cram my personal discipline-building system down your throat. This doesn't work on a one-size-fits-all, cookie-cutter basis.

What may work for me may not necessarily work for you because we all have different sets of personal circumstances. After all, we all come from different backgrounds and we have different experiences. You have to account for all those differences. This is why I'm just going to suggest a framework and then you fill it in based on what's going on in your life as well as your experiences.

First, you need to adopt a tracking system. This is your journal. Start out slow and low but, eventually, stick to common daily parameters when doing your journal.

Next, you have to adopt some sort of process. This is a multi-month plan. You have to hold yourself accountable by setting up targets. Say to yourself, “Now, I eat 3000 calories a day. Once a certain amount of months pass, I can get that down to 2500 or 2000”, so on and so forth.

Use such multi-month plans for discipline-building in different areas of your life.

Also, make it a point to actively identify and seek discipline-building opportunities every single day. When you look at your daily routine, see where those opportunities typically occur and make full use of them.

Constantly challenge yourself. You can even set up your daily tasks reorganized along your discipline goals. This is how you build a system that sustains itself and scales up results over time.

This is also how you hold yourself accountable. The chances of quitting decrease dramatically if you are using a discipline-building system.

Chapter 9

Scale up systematically



Scale up systematically

By this point, you should be getting used to acting in a more disciplined way. You should be doing the things that you need to do that are absolutely crucial to your success.

You have probably gotten over your fear or insecurity about the things that you normally would stay away from. Congratulations. But the problem is you can't become a disciplined person by choosing to practice self-control once in awhile or most of the time. You're going to have to do it all the time. This sounds impossible, but with the right system, you can get there sooner rather than later.

By this point, it should already be clear to you that scaling up discipline is all about stepping up when things have become easy. For example, maybe you used to park right next to the entrance at your local grocery store. After a few weeks, you may have managed to park fairly far away. This is great, but you shouldn't stop there. Things may be comfortable at this point, you may be thinking that this is a comfortable distance, and you're taking your time, parking at the farthest point away from the entrance.

When you scale up systematically, you focus on when things get easy. Believe me, walking from where you've parked now to the front door of your corner grocery store would have been unthinkable a few months or weeks ago. Now you're able to do it and it seems easy. Well, this is precisely the point where you scale up. Once things wanted become easy, you then scale up and decide to park farther and farther away.

Your cue is when things become easy. Unfortunately, if you're just going with your hunches, you're probably will end up sabotaging yourself, become impatient one day and backslide. You will find yourself where you started. To keep things going, you need to scale up systematically.

How do you do this? First, you need to scale up intensity. In the case of parking farther and farther away from the entrance, keep parking further away. Go for the halfway point now and the farthest parking slot from the entrance. Once you've gotten comfortable with that, pick the next. Then ultimately, you will reach the farthest point from the entrance

This also applies to workout. Maybe you are lifting 10-pound weights. Increase the intensity of your workouts by stepping up the number of repetitions you do. Next, scale up the weight of the dumbbells and bars you are lifting.

When you are practicing discipline with food, you may want to increase the number of foods you choose not to eat. For sample, if you started out by consciously avoiding bread, rice, mashed potatoes or any other high carbohydrate food item, you might want to increase the number of foods you're staying away from.

Similarly, if you are practicing disciplined by reading lots of books, try to increase intensity by reading more difficult books. These are fairly easy to find. Lots of a books out there take a lot of effort to read. Add a few more of those titles to your weekly reading list. Get used to them. Once you become comfortable with them, add more titles

Finally, if you are trying to step up your personal discipline by hanging out with toxic people, spend more time with very difficult people. People who are very hostile and with bad attitudes and overcome your personal reservations against them. Sometimes you have to immerse yourself with really problematic people to achieve a breakthrough.

You also might want to scale up volume

If you are trying to practice discipline by reading, increase your word count. If you are at 10,000 words per week, once things have settled down and you have gotten used to reading that many words, step it up to maybe 15,000 or even 20,000. It all depends on what you're comfortable with.

Also if you are hanging out with very difficult people, increase the amount of time you spend with them. This goes a long way in helping you control your emotions and help you become a less reactive person.

Scale-up scheduling

If you're using your current daily schedule to become a more disciplined person, you can scale things up by sticking to a narrower window to an hour time frame in which to cheat.

People are able to stick to a fixed schedule because they have a fairly wide window of when to show up or when to do certain things. You can scale up the discipline that you're getting from your daily schedule by narrowing this window. Previously, you needed to be somewhere between 4:30 and 5:00. You can narrow that between 4:40 to 5:00, then scale it up to 4:50 and 5 p.m.

The bottom line here is quite simple. You need to increase your discipline and patience by constantly challenging. It really all boils down to knowing when to scale up. Personally, the most effective approach based on my experience, is when things get easy. That's when you know you've achieved a routine. That's precisely what you need to break out of because it's very easy to feel like you can coast.

Chapter 10

Learn to fail systematically

Learn to fail systematically

I know this sounds crazy, but the more you prepare for failure, the more successful you will eventually become. How? Well, it all boils down to understanding that we live in an imperfect world and that things do fall apart. The best laid plans often do not pan out as we had expected. This is all par for the course. So do yourself a favor, expect setbacks. They will happen and there's nothing wrong with experiencing that.

The good news is when the setbacks do happen, they do not have to be a disaster. You don't have to backslide to where you started before you try to improve your discipline. You don't have to quit and give up. How do you do this? Well, since you're expecting a setback and you are preparing for it, you know what to do once it happens.

First, you don't give in. If you suffer some sort set back or fall back, don't give yourself an excuse to just give up. A lot of people cheat this way.

For example, if you're on a diet and you're supposed to avoid starchy foods. Well, one day, you get hit by really insufferable cravings for mashed potatoes or fried rice. So, you give in and you have yourself a big heaping bowl of fried rice, mashed potatoes, pasta or any other food that you're not supposed to eat. You tell yourself, "Well, there goes the diet for this day. So, I'm going to indulge myself by eating nothing but carbs for the rest of day, and I will get back on the program tomorrow.

What do you think happens next? That's right, tomorrow never comes. Once you give in whatever discipline you've managed to build up prior to that point, starts to erode. Worst yet, it erodes very quickly.

So prepare for this and tell yourself it's okay to fall off the wagon. That's fine, but do not use this as an excuse to stay off the wagon. Focus on getting back to the program as soon as possible and reducing the time you take to snap back to where you were before things fell apart.

This enables you to develop a tremendous amount of tenacity, perseverance, and adaptability. Get used to snapping back until it becomes second nature. This way, even if you get hit with a really strong temptation and you can't help but give in, the next thing you do is to go back to where you were before. This way, whatever damage you're "cheating" or "failure" dealt, will be small or inconsequential in the big scheme of things.

It all boils down to getting used to snapping back. Get so used to it that you lose any negative emotional association with it. This is no time to beat yourself up, this is no time to play emotional games with yourself. Adopt these best practices and you will be able to handle setbacks like a disciplined pro.