

10 Actual Things You Can Do Today To Change Your Life for the Better

Living your best life means something different to every single person and it doesn't have to mean having fame and fortune. Your definition may be drastically different from that of your spouse or partner, too, and there's nothing wrong with that. What's important to remember is: No matter what your dreams, no matter what your circumstances, you CAN change your life's path by making small changes. These small changes compound over time to produce amazing results, without taking a tremendous amount of time out of your daily life.

Here are 10 things you can do right now, TODAY, to change your life and your level of happiness:

- 1. Figure out who you want to be, then plan the steps you need to get there.** Do you want to be CEO of your own business, a partner in a top law firm, or volunteer of the year at your kids' school? Every path requires different skills and knowledge base, so it's up to you to figure out what you need to be the type of person you desire.
- 2. Practice habit stacking – or multitasking.** If you've been meaning to read more but can't seem to find the time, take the 10 minutes it takes your coffee to brew in the morning to read. Don't reach for your phone; grab your book instead. This commitment is much easier because it's not a lot of time and you're already spending that time waiting for your coffee. Another example is to floss right after brushing your teeth. You're already in the bathroom so flossing is the next logical habit to start.
- 3. Incorporate the 2 minute rule.** Instead of committing to meditating for 20 minutes every day, commit to 2 minutes. Or add an extra 2 minutes to the end of your cardio workout. Relieve stress by doing some deep breathing exercises for 2 minutes. It's much easier to do something for 2 minutes than it is to carve out time for 20+ minutes.
- 4. Make clear boundaries.** Boundaries are necessary to keep us sane in both our personal and professional lives. Do you want to be on call with clients 24/7 or would you like to handle business only during business hours? Do you want toxic friends or family members sucking the fun out of your family events? Consider who you want at these events and invite who you want, not who you feel obligated to invite.
- 5. Identify as the person you want to be.** Use some adjectives to describe the type of person you want to be. Are you "someone who doesn't eat junk food" or are you "someone who's constantly tempted by snacks"? Are you "trying to quit smoking" or are you "a non-smoker"? The same is true in business. If you run your own business, you're a CEO, no matter how you slice it. Turning your description of yourself into a positive voice – and dropping the word "trying" – really impacts your mindset.

6. Find your community and join them to further sink into your identity. Surrounding yourself with like-minded people will help you keep that positive mindset; however, it takes more work to find that right community than just saying “I don’t eat junk food” or “I’m a wellness coach.” Dig deep, the same as you would to find your ideal client. The term “coach” alone is far too broad; an “Aruvedic Coach” is better but you’ll really find your community if you identify as an “Aruvedic Mom Coach” (or substitute Mom for whoever your target market is).

7. Get back on the wagon immediately if you slip. All is not lost if you make a mistake. If you overeat at dinner time, don’t eat any more snacks and plan a healthy breakfast. If you skip a workout, there’s always tomorrow. You’ve worked hard to develop this habit so don’t allow all your hard work to go to waste because you made one simple mistake. It’s far easier to start the habit immediately than it is to start all over again months down the road.

8. Set a concrete goal for a certain number of days and don't break the chain. Tracking your habits gives you a visual reminder of all the progress you’re making but make sure it’s an attainable goal. For instance, if you want to improve your writing skills and speed, consider a goal of writing 500 words per day for 30 days. At the end of 30 days, consider tracking for another 30 days. Setting a goal that’s too large – such as writing 10,000 words per day – is overwhelming and can lead to giving up. Seeing your progress will give you an increased energy to keep moving forward.

9. Choose concrete goals instead of abstractions. “Getting healthy” or “going to the gym” are not concrete goals; they are too abstract and they don’t lead to forming healthy habits. Instead, choose to do 5-10 pushups a day. You’ll still get healthy by doing this over time but the initial time investment is nominal. At some point it will become second nature – a new habit – at which point you can add another tiny habit to the mix.

10. If you start too big, don’t give up; make your tiny habit even smaller. So often we’ll set “tiny” habits that are still too big because we’re used to thinking of everything as oversized. If you can’t run for 15 minutes, drop it down to a time that is possible for you to complete. If you can’t get motivated to go to the gym, let your first tiny habit be getting your sneakers on. Then your second tiny habit can be filling your water bottle. These tiny habits are meant to become automatic movements that you just don’t think about once they’re ingrained. In the end, all these tiny habits build on each other and you will find yourself at the gym or running for 15 minutes.

Tiny habits are the stepping stones upon which we build our lifestyles. If something isn’t working to our liking, or we’re not living our best life, then it’s time to explore how to change our tiny habits so we receive the outcome for which we work so hard.