# MARINE MA

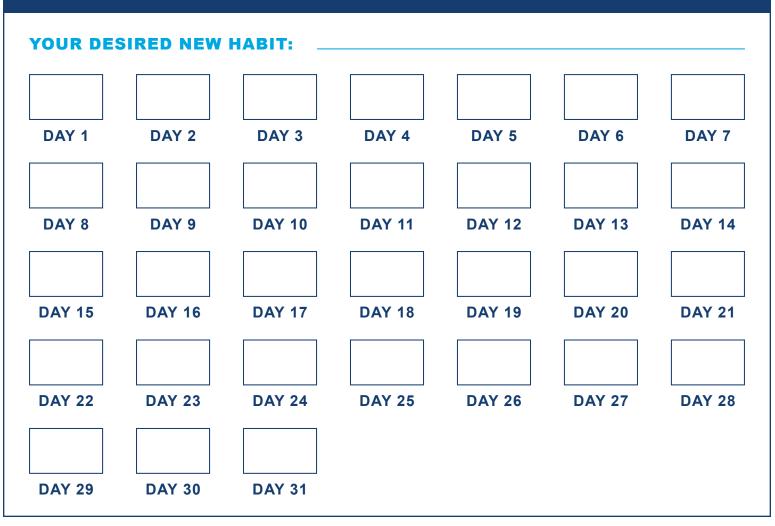
Experts have found a beneficial way to introduce a new healthy habit is to participate in "Habit Stacking." Our brains build a strong network of neurons to support our current behaviors – the more we do something, the stronger and more efficient the connection becomes. When we want to implement a new, healthy behavior it is suggested to identify a current habit we already practice daily and "stack" the new behavior or habit with it.



CURRENT HABIT	$\longrightarrow$	DESIRED NEW HABIT
Coffee is brewing	$\longrightarrow$	Prepare healthy snacks
Take off work shoes	$\longrightarrow$	Change into workout clothes
Sit down for dinner	$\longrightarrow$	Say one thing you're grateful for that day
After dinner	$\longrightarrow$	Meditate for one minute

### HABIT TRACKER

Check off each day that you successfully complete your desired new habit. At the end of the month, see how far you've come!

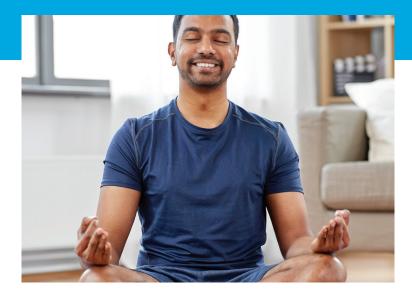


## **HABIT STACKING 101**

#### Steps for Building a Habit Stacking Routine

(from Habit Stacking: 97 Small Life Changes That Take Five Minutes or Less by S.J. Scott):

- 1. Start with a Five-Minute Block set a simple goal to keep it simple and set-up for success.
- 2. Focus on Small Wins focus on easy tasks at first to experience "small wins".
- Pick a Time and Location anchor your new habit to a specific location, time of day or combination of both.
- Anchor Your Stack to a Trigger focus on positive triggers. Examples of this is something you do every day already (showering, brushing your teeth, sitting at your desk), a specific time of day (waking up, eating lunch, driving home).
- Create a Logical Checklist includes the sequence of the actions, how long it takes to complete each one and where you will do them.
- Have an Accountability Plan suggest having an accountability partner, coach, or group to share breakthroughs, challenges and future plans.
- Create Small, Enjoyable Rewards can help to act as a motivator. Suggestions: watching your favorite TV show, taking 5 minutes to relax etc.
- 8. Focus on Repetition.
- Don't Break the Chain mark activity on calendar or journal.
- **10.** Expect Setbacks setbacks can be a good thing and teach resilience.
- 11. Schedule the Frequency of a Stack daily, weekly, monthly.
- 12. Scale Up Your Stack evaluate how you are doing and add time and handful of actions as able.
- 13. Build One Routine at a Time research has found conflicting information for how long it takes to form a habit. Anywhere from 18 to 254 days with the average of 66 days being found. It is suggested to not start a new habit until you have stopped thinking about a habit as a habit and are doing it everyday without thought.



The **purpose** of habit stacking is to create a simple and repeatable routine. Habit stacking allows you to leverage your stronger habits that you participate in daily to build new healthy habits and behaviors. The goal of creating a new habit is **consistency**. If you think about it, there are many habits you participate in now on a very consistent basis. For example, brushing your teeth, taking a shower, getting dressed, making a meal. Some habits you have participated in since you were very young and some you may have implemented more recently such as going for a walk, calling a loved one, practicing daily meditation. It can be hard to implement a new health behavior on a consistent basis, so why not use something you already know and practice daily to use as a trigger for the new behavior. You can also use this practice to eliminate or replace an unhealthy behavior.

#### **8 Elements of Habit Stacking**

(from Habit Stacking: 97 Small Life Changes That Take Five Minutes or Less by S.J. Scott):

- Each habit takes less than five minutes to complete
  - It's a complete habit
  - It improves your life
  - It is simple to complete
  - The entire routine takes less than 30 minutes
    - It follows a logical process
      - It follows a checklist
        - It fits your life



#### Suggested Reading

- Habit Stacking: 97 Small Life Changes That Take Five Minutes or Less by S.J. Scott
- Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones by James Clear
- Mini Habits: Smaller Habits, Bigger Results by Stephen Guise

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