



Habit

William James

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The habits to which there is an innate tendency are called instincts; some of those due to education would by most persons be called acts of reason. It appears that habit covers a very large part of life, and that one engaged in studying the objective manifestations of mind is bound at the very outset to define clearly just what its limits are. This volume illustrates the principles surrounding habit and its structure.

Habit Details

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From Reader Review Habit for online ebook

Srijan Shukla says

[This book is a trap. The trap is Maxim #3 (you'll come across it in the book)

Maxim #3 is recursive in nature. It essentially tells you to follow it, starting NOW, or it ceases to work. And if you don't follow it, you cannot use it for forming other habits.

So beware, the process of reading cannot be reversed..this is classic curse of knowledge.

(if you intend to use what you read)

(hide spoiler)]

Toby says

Very good read.

Considers the nature of habit from a solid, biologically oriented platform. By connecting the subjects of physiology and psychology in a simple, fundamental (read non-abstract) way, this short book provides useful, actionable advice on a subject where so many other similar productivity/self-help books obscure with unnecessarily technical language.

Without trying to sell you a system, or a "secret" way to do anything, the message is clear and self-evident that forming habits, good or bad, is what matters most when it comes to realising future outcomes.

Prince says

This book deserves more readers.

Ioana says

"Nothing we ever do is, in strict scientific literalness, wiped out. Of course, this has its good side as well as its bad one." - this are the words that made me want to read Habit by William James. It's that kind of reading that keeps making you feel like taking action to change your life in a better way. And if you don't have enough reasons to really start new habits this book might give you a couple of them!

"It is well for the world that in most of us, by the age of thirty, the character has set like plaster, and will never soften again. If the period between twenty and thirty is the critical one in the formation of intellectual and professional habits, the period below twenty is more important still for the fixing of personal habits, properly so called, such as vocalization and pronunciation, gesture, motion, and address."

"A lock works better after being used some time; at the outset more force was required to overcome certain roughness in the mechanism. The overcoming of their resistance is a phenomenon of habituation. It costs less trouble to fold a paper when it has been folded already. This saving of trouble is due to the essential nature of habit, which brings it about that, to reproduce the effect, a less amount of the outward cause is required."

"In the acquisition of a new habit, or the leaving off of an old one, we must take care to launch ourselves with as strong and decided an initiative as possible. Accumulate all the possible circumstances which shall reinforce the right motives ; put yourself assiduously in conditions that encourage the new way; make engagements incompatible with the old; take a public pledge, if the case allows; in short, envelop your resolution with every aid you know. This will give your new beginning such a momentum that the temptation to break down will not occur as soon as it otherwise might; and every day during which a breakdown is postponed adds to the chances of its not occurring at all."

fleetofhorses says

gets to the point, and delivers its point well.
