

Jumpstart

**Using the Power of Habits to
Accomplish Anything**

Kendra Kinnison



Table of Contents

Part I: Why Habits Matter

Debunking the Myth of Motivation

The Hidden Layer

Your Life Is Your Habits

Meet Automaticity: the Human Autopilot

Part II: Programming Your Superpower

Clarifying Goals: Pick Your Destination

Designing the Program: Select Your Course

Writing the Program: Develop Your Key Habits

Part III: Following Through

The Daily March

Guardrails

Part IV: Resources

Destination Profiles

Course Checklists

Habit Development Guide

Daily March Template

Introduction

On January 16, 2012, my alarm went off at 5:15 am, as normal. I turned it off and snuggled underneath the covers, convincing myself that I needed an extra hour of sleep more than I needed to workout.

After all, *I was tired*. It had been a brutal few months by any standards, and I had at least another 30 days of this pace.

Then I found myself in the kitchen at 5:35, getting a spoonful of almond butter and a banana. I don't even remember the minutes in between.

Getting in the car at 5:40, I figured out what really happened.

Within a few hours, I recognized the significance of my morning, realizing that it was the culmination of more than a decade of study and five years of deliberate practice. I had proven a theory I didn't even realize I was testing, and the implications were incredible.

Over the next few months, I successfully tested my theory multiple times over and recruited a few close friends to do the same. I also discovered the scientific research that explains why it works.

Today, I believe I'm called to share my discovery so that you can use it to design the life you've always dreamed of.

Part I: Why Habits Matter

Debunking the Myth of Motivation

The Hidden Layer

Your Life Is Your Habits

Meet Automaticity: the Human Autopilot

Debunking the Myth of Motivation

You can't rely on feeling motivated to make good decisions.

For many years, I operated under the illusion that I could make decisions based on how I felt and was simultaneously frustrated that I wasn't getting the results I was looking for. I never realized the two were connected.

Cue the virtual 2×4 across my forehead.

Let's break this down.

First, we have to acknowledge that we usually think like this:

Motivation ----> Action

We wait to take action until we *feel* motivated, and we rely on those feelings to feed our willpower.

It's why we feel like working out after an inspiring movie or eat well for a few meals after visiting with a friend that's lost weight recently.

Then what?

We fail at continuing to take action. The *feeling* doesn't last.

In his book, *The 1% Solution*, Tom Connellan proposes that, “the more you get done, the more motivated you are to do things. So you do more things, and you get even more motivated. It’s a self-feeding cycle.”

In other words:

Action ----> Motivation ----> Action

Motivation comes from
having accomplished
something.

Intuitively, most of us know this.

After a workout, we experience the “high” of an endorphin rush. We make plans for the next one.

After a healthy meal, we feel great - satisfied and refueled. We may even talk about doing the same thing tomorrow.

But knowing this usually isn’t enough. It wasn’t for me, and I’m guessing it doesn’t work for you either.

Eventually, there’s an interruption in the actions, and we’re not able to continue the cycle.

The Hidden Layer

Then January 16 happened, and I realized there was another layer.

Habit ----> Action ----> Motivation ----> Action

We can use habits to trigger actions automatically.

Actions don't have to come first.

At first, it may not seem like much of a distinction, but there's a huge difference in influence and predictability.

We know that motivation is fleeting, and forced actions aren't effective for very long.

Habits are different, though. They're like the recipe for your Nana's delicious strawberry cake. They can be systematically developed and produce a consistent result time after time.

Here's the best part: your brain already knows the recipe.

It's your superpower, and the rest of this book will show you how to use it to accomplish anything.

Your Life Is Your Habits

“Ninety-nine hundredths or, possibly, nine hundred and ninety-nine thousandths of our activity is purely automatic and habitual, from our rising in the morning to our lying down each night,” reasoned William James, the 19th century psychologist.

Today’s science increasingly supports his discoveries, confirming that the great majority of what we do each day is based on habit, not goal-directed thought.

Think about it. From the moment you wake, you probably follow the exact same routine every morning. You listen to the same music or watch the same tv program. You take the same route to work, and you do the same things when you first sit down at your desk.

Unless there’s an interruption like a traffic accident or urgent meeting, I’ll bet you follow this pattern without exception every day.

We all do.

In an increasingly complex and evolving world, it’s the only way we can function. Stress makes it even more likely that our habits will take over, and that’s a reality for most of us.

"We are stereotyped creatures, imitators and copiers of our past selves."
- William James

Meet Automaticity: the Human Autopilot

Automaticity: the ability to do things automatically, without occupying the mind

Did you know that humans are pre-wired with an autopilot feature?

It's called "automaticity," and we've all experienced it. We use it when we ride a bicycle or drive a car, as our instincts take over and we don't have to think through every single motion.

In the past, it's caused me to eat too much, drink gallons of soda, and park myself in front of the television for hours. I've even created a "checking in" loop that can turn any device into a time-eating machine: Facebook, Twitter, Email, RSS Feeds, and then repeat. I can't be the only person that always eats to the bottom of the bag or cleans my plate.

It happens automatically; I don't even think about it until it's over.

Frankly, it's scary to think about how often I'm on autopilot.

Then I realized that I can decide how I want to use my powers. I can accept the "default" that I've unknowingly developed over time, or I can choose another setting.

You can too.

If we learn the code of automaticity, we can rewrite our autopilot programs.

Just like an airplane landing, we can decide ahead of time how we want to behave in certain situations. We can even choose a different destination as well.

Then, it's just a matter of doing the programming. And, we can use the proven principles of computer programming to guide this process, realizing that the outputs won't be found on a screen.

Instead, they'll be the actions of our own flesh.

Part I: Key Ideas

- ☑ Instead of waiting on motivation, we can use habits to trigger actions automatically.
- ☑ We're all given the superpower of automaticity, meaning that we can do most things automatically, using our habits instead of occupying our mind.
- ☑ We can accept our superpowers "as-is," or we can rewrite the programming to automatically take us to the destination we choose using behaviors we select.