

# Transform Your Eating Habits

## By Applying The Principles of Atomic Habits

By James Clear

### Workbook / Journal

*The goal of this journal / workbook is not to change all your habits overnight. Instead, the goal is to develop one small habit that will have a big impact on your life. When that habit starts becoming automatic, you can print a new copy of this workbook and work on your next habit. These small changes will accumulate and eventually change your life!*

# Transform Your Eating Habits

## By Applying The Principles of Atomic Habits



**Build small habits:** Make gradual and sustainable changes to your diet over time. Instead of trying to completely change your eating habits overnight.

**The key to building lasting habits is to focus on creating a new identity first.** Shift your focus from "What do I want to achieve?" to "Who do I want to become?" Shift your focus from specific goals to defining the identity of someone who values and prioritizes nutritious food choices.

### 4 RULES TO HELP YOU MAKE HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES

# 1

#### MAKE IT OBVIOUS

**Create an environment and cues that make it easier for you to make healthy food choices and avoid unhealthy ones.** Here's how to apply this rule:

- 1. Visibility:** Make healthy food options more visible and accessible. Store fruits, vegetables, and other nutritious foods at eye level in your fridge and pantry, while placing less healthy options out of sight. This makes it more likely that you'll choose the healthier options when you're hungry.
- 2. Preparation:** Prepare healthy meals and snacks in advance. When nutritious options are readily available and require minimal effort to eat, you're more likely to choose them over unhealthy, convenience foods.
- 3. Meal Planning:** Plan your meals and snacks ahead of time. This helps you make intentional choices about what you'll eat, reducing the likelihood of impulsively grabbing unhealthy options.
- 4. Use Visual Reminders:** Post visual cues or reminders to make healthy choices. For example, you can put up a list of your dietary goals on your fridge or set a healthy food-related screensaver on your computer or smartphone.
- 5. Healthy Snacking:** Have healthy snacks, like cut-up veggies or nuts, readily available and within arm's reach at home and work. This can prevent mindless snacking on less nutritious options.
- 6. Food Journaling:** Keep a food journal or use a mobile app to track your eating habits. This not only helps you become more aware of what you're eating but also provides a visual record of your choices.
- 7. Social Support:** Enlist the support of friends or family members who have similar dietary goals. Sharing your intentions and progress with others can provide motivation and accountability.

# 2

#### MAKE IT ATTRACTIVE

**Focus on making healthier food choices more appealing and enjoyable. By associating positive experiences with nutritious foods, you can create a mindset that encourages better eating habits.**

- 1. Flavorful Cooking:** Experiment with various herbs, spices, and seasonings to make healthy dishes more flavorful. Cooking techniques like grilling, roasting, and sautéing can enhance the taste and texture of foods.
- 2. Healthy Recipes:** Explore and try out new healthy recipes that you find exciting and enjoyable. There are countless creative and nutritious recipes available online and in cookbooks.
- 3. Colorful Presentation:** Create visually appealing meals by incorporating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables. The vibrant hues of fresh produce can make your plate more attractive and appetizing.
- 4. Food Pairings:** Pair healthy foods with ingredients you genuinely enjoy. For example, if you love hummus, use it as a dip for vegetables rather than chips.
- 5. Mindful Eating:** Pay attention to your eating experience. Savor the flavors, textures, and aromas of your food. Eating slowly and mindfully can enhance your appreciation of healthier choices.
- 6. Food Artistry:** Get creative with your food presentation. Arrange fruits, vegetables, and other healthy items in an artistic or visually appealing manner on your plate.
- 7. Healthy Substitutes:** Find healthier alternatives for your favorite indulgent foods. For example, replace regular potato chips with baked sweet potato fries.
- 8. Social Dining:** Share healthy meals with friends or family. Dining with loved ones can make the experience more enjoyable and create positive associations with healthy eating.
- 9. Culinary Classes:** Consider taking cooking classes or workshops that focus on preparing healthy and delicious dishes. Learning new cooking skills can make the process of eating healthily more attractive.
- 10. Positive Reinforcement:** Reward yourself for making healthy choices. This could be as simple as acknowledging your achievement or treating yourself to a non-food reward.
- 11. Variety:** Incorporate a variety of foods into your diet. Experiment with different fruits, vegetables, grains, and proteins to keep your meals interesting and satisfying.
- 12. Food Education:** Learn about the nutritional benefits of the foods you eat. Understanding how specific foods contribute to your well-being can make them more attractive choices.
- 13. Temptation Bundling** - After I eat my salad I will eat the other food that I enjoy more than salad.

### 3

#### MAKE IT EASY

Simplify the process of making healthier food choices. If a behavior is easy to do, you're more likely to do it consistently.



- 1.Meal Planning:** Plan your meals in advance. Create a weekly meal plan that includes healthy options, and make a shopping list accordingly. Having a plan reduces the temptation to order takeout or opt for unhealthy convenience foods.
- 2.Prepare Healthy Snacks:** Pre-cut fruits, vegetables, and other healthy snacks and store them in easy-to-grab containers. When you're hungry, you're more likely to reach for these nutritious options.
- 3.Healthy Food Accessibility:** Keep healthy foods easily accessible in your kitchen. Store fruits, vegetables, and whole grains at eye level in your pantry and fridge so that they are the first things you see.
- 4.Portion Control:** Use smaller plates and utensils to help control portion sizes. Smaller tableware can trick your mind into thinking you're eating more than you actually are.
- 5.Cook in Batches:** Prepare healthy meals in larger batches and store portions in the freezer. This way, you'll have nutritious options available even on busy days.
- 6.Healthy Meal Kits:** Consider using meal kit delivery services that provide pre-portioned ingredients and recipes for healthy meals. This eliminates the need for extensive meal planning and shopping.
- 7.Kitchen Organization:** Keep your kitchen organized and clutter-free. A tidy cooking space can make meal preparation more efficient and less daunting.
- 8.Limit Temptations:** Minimize the presence of unhealthy foods in your home. If they're not readily available, you're less likely to consume them.
- 9.Hydration:** Keep a water bottle nearby throughout the day to encourage regular hydration. Sometimes thirst is mistaken for hunger.
- 10.Healthy Cooking Techniques:** Learn and use healthy cooking techniques that require less added fat and fewer calories. Steaming, baking, grilling, and stir-frying with minimal oil are good options. By making healthy choices easier to implement in your daily routine, you can reduce the barriers to adopting and maintaining healthier eating habits. The "Make It Easy" rule simplifies the process of choosing nutritious foods, making it more likely that you'll consistently make positive dietary choices.

### 4

#### MAKE IT SATISFYING

Find ways to make healthier food choices enjoyable and rewarding. By focusing on the pleasure and satisfaction derived from nutritious foods, you can create a positive relationship with your diet and increase your chances of maintaining healthier eating habits over the long term.

- 1.Reward Yourself:** Rewarding yourself for eating well with non-food rewards can reinforce healthy habits and provide motivation, such as treating yourself to a spa day, buying a new book, or enjoying a relaxing movie night.
- 2.Track Progress:** Keep a food journal to record your meals, your feelings of satisfaction, and any improvements in your eating habits. Tracking can help you stay motivated and recognize patterns.
- 3.Positive Reinforcement:** Celebrate your successes and milestones in your journey toward healthier eating. Acknowledge the positive changes you've made and the benefits you've experienced.
- 4.Set Realistic Goals:** Set achievable goals for your eating habits. When you reach these goals, you'll feel a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction.
- 5.Variety of Flavors:** Incorporate a variety of flavors into your meals. Experiment with herbs, spices, and seasonings to make your food more flavorful and enjoyable.
- 6.Texture and Presentation:** Pay attention to the textures and presentation of your meals. Combining different textures, such as crunchy vegetables with tender protein, can enhance the eating experience. Arrange your food on the plate in an appealing way to make it visually satisfying.
- 7.Cooking Skills:** Improve your cooking skills to prepare delicious and satisfying healthy meals. Learning to cook can empower you to create dishes that you genuinely enjoy.
- 8.Balanced Meals:** Ensure your meals are balanced and include a mix of macronutrients (carbohydrates, proteins, and fats) to keep you feeling full and satisfied.
- 9.Mindful Eating:** Practice mindful eating by savoring each bite, chewing slowly, and fully experiencing the flavors and textures of your food. This can enhance your satisfaction with the meal.
- 10.Healthy Snacking:** Find satisfying and nutritious snacks to prevent excessive cravings for unhealthy options. Examples include Greek yogurt with fruit, mixed nuts, or hummus with veggies.

# YOUR IDENTITY

Your current behaviors are simply a reflection of your current identity. The way you behave is a mirror image of the type of person you believe that you are (either consciously or subconsciously). If you want to change your behavior you need to first change your identity (i.e. change the things you believe about yourself).

**The most effective way to change your habits is to focus on who you wish to become, not on what you want to achieve. Make the habit part of your new identity.**

“It is a simple two-step process: Decide the type of person you want to be. Prove it to yourself with small wins.” “Ask yourself, “Who is the type of person that could get the outcome I want?” Then be that person.

Describe the person you are now in the table below. Categorize your descriptions into positive beliefs and negative beliefs.

|                  | Who am I today? | Who do I want to be? |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Positive Beliefs |                 |                      |
|                  |                 |                      |
|                  |                 |                      |
|                  |                 |                      |
| Negative Beliefs |                 |                      |
|                  |                 |                      |
|                  |                 |                      |
|                  |                 |                      |

List the habits you need to develop or break in order to be the person who you described that you want to be and then prioritize these habits.

Select the habit that you want to work on first. Ideally, this habit should be one that won't take much effort but will create the greatest impact over time.

| The habits I need to develop in order to be the person I want to be | Order of Priority |
|---|-------------------|
|   |                   |
|   |                   |
|   |                   |
|   |                   |
|   |                   |

# THE HABIT YOU ARE GOING TO CHANGE

Think of a new habit that you find difficult to develop or an old habit that you cannot get rid of but one that will result in a change in your life. Ideally this should be the habit that you ranked top priority on the previous page.

This workbook will help you develop or change that habit.

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Describe the change you want to make.

How will your life improve if you are successful?

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List the challenges that you have experienced in the past when you tried to develop this habit.

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Why will it be different this time? How can you overcome obstacles you encountered in the past?

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# BREAK THE HABIT INTO SMALL COMPONENTS

Break the habit into small components.

*For example, if you want to develop healthy eating habits, you may decide what you will eat, how often you will eat, when you eat, how you make your food, what food you keep in your home, etc.*

For each component, identify small changes you need to make to ensure success.

| Habit: | COMPONENTS | CHANGES YOU NEED TO MAKE |
|--------|------------|--------------------------|
|        |            |                          |
|        |            |                          |
|        |            |                          |
|        |            |                          |
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|        |            |                          |
|        |            |                          |

## USE HABIT STACKING

Identify a habit you already do every day and then stack your new behavior on top. This is called habit stacking.

*For example, after I brush my teeth every morning I will eat a healthy breakfast.*

How can you use habit stacking to combine your new habit with an existing habit?

After [current habit] \_\_\_\_\_, I will [new habit]

## USE IMPLEMENTATION INTENTIONS

**(A CLEAR PLAN OF ACTION, SETTING OUT WHEN AND WHERE YOU'LL CARRY OUT THE HABIT YOU'D LIKE TO CULTIVATE)**

An implementation intention introduces a clear plan of action, setting out when and where you'll carry out the habit you'd like to cultivate. Research shows that this is the most effective way to cultivate a new habit.

### My Plan of Action

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| WHEN  |  |
| WHERE |  |
| WHAT  |  |







**4 MAKE IT SATISFYING**

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- 3. Positive Reinforcement:** Celebrate your successes and milestones in your journey toward healthier eating. Acknowledge the positive changes you've made and the benefits you've experienced.
- 4. Set Realistic Goals:** Set achievable goals for your eating habits. When you reach these goals, you'll feel a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction.
- 5. Variety of Flavors:** Incorporate a variety of flavors into your meals. Experiment with herbs, spices, and seasonings to make your food more flavorful and enjoyable.
- 6. Texture and Presentation:** Pay attention to the textures and presentation of your meals. Combining different textures, such as crunchy vegetables with tender protein, can enhance the eating experience. Arrange your food on the plate in an appealing way to make it visually satisfying.
- 7. Cooking Skills:** Improve your cooking skills to prepare delicious and satisfying healthy meals. Learning to cook can empower you to create dishes that you genuinely enjoy.
- 8. Balanced Meals:** Ensure your meals are balanced and include a mix of macronutrients (carbohydrates, proteins, and fats) to keep you feeling full and satisfied.
- 9. Mindful Eating:** Practice mindful eating by savoring each bite, chewing slowly, and fully experiencing the flavors and textures of your food. This can enhance your satisfaction with the meal.
- 10. Healthy Snacking:** Find satisfying and nutritious snacks to prevent excessive cravings for unhealthy options. Examples include Greek yogurt with fruit, mixed nuts, or hummus with veggies.

What can you do to make it satisfying:

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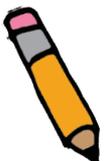
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In the weekly planner on page 12, allocate time for some of these activities to be done in the upcoming week.



In the weekly planner below, designate time slots for some of the tasks mentioned in the preceding pages, or any other tasks you prefer, that will aid in the cultivation of this new habit.

WEEK OF:

MONTH:

YEAR:

|          | SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|----------|--------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| 5:00 AM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 5:30 AM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 6:00 AM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 6:30 AM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 7:00 AM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 7:30 AM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 8:00 AM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 8:30 AM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 9:00 AM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 9:30 AM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 10:00 AM |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 10:30 AM |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 11:00 AM |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 11:30 AM |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 12:00 PM |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 12:30 PM |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 1:00 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 1:30 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 2:00 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 2:30 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 3:00 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 3:30 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 4:00 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 4:30 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 5:00 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 5:30 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 6:00 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 6:30 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 7:00 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 7:30 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 8:00 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 8:30 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 9:00 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 9:30 PM  |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 10:00 PM |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |
| 10:30 PM |        |        |         |           |          |        |          |

# MINDFULNESS

## Autopilot

Sometime we react to certain things automatically without giving them much thought.

*For example, when you are trying to develop good eating habits you might eat junk food without thinking about it.*

One of the ways to prevent this is by mindfulness. Make an effort to be present during the times you would otherwise be on autopilot.

Describe a bad habit that you do subconsciously or automatically because it has become habit?

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Describe how this makes you feel.

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What can you do to avoid acting on autopilot?

I will:

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List ways on how you can keep yourself mindful and aware of your habits.

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# YOUR ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

One of the factors that influence our behavior and our habits is our environment. Visual cues strongly influence our behavior which is why stores position items that they want us to purchase at eye level. Habit formation begins with a cue. Therefore, if we want to influence our behavior and change our habits we should arrange our environment so that we see the things related to the habit we want to develop.

For example, if you want to eat more vegetables then put them at eye level in your fridge.

How can you arrange your environment to help you develop your habit?

I will:

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What can you do to make your cues visible?

I will:

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Go ahead and arrange your environment. Describe the changes you made.

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# FAMILY AND FRIENDS

## The Role of Family and Friends in Shaping Your Habits

“We tend to imitate the habits of three social groups: the close (family and friends), the many (the tribe), and the powerful (those with status and prestige).”

“One of the most effective things you can do to build better habits is to join a culture where (1) your desired behavior is the normal behavior and (2) you already have something in common with the group.”

“If a behavior can get us approval, respect, and praise, we find it attractive.”

Look for people who succeeded in developing the same habit and learn from their experience.

I will:

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List the things you can do or change. For each item on your list, mark what you consider manageable and identify what will make it work.

I will:

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# MONITOR YOUR PROGRESS

A habit tracker is an effective technique to keep your habits on track since one of the most satisfying feelings is the feeling of making progress. "Habit trackers and other visual forms of measurement can make your habits satisfying by providing clear evidence of your progress."

James clear suggests that you never miss twice. If you miss one day, try to get back on track as quickly as possible.

Mark the habit tracker below. Don't break the chain. Try to keep your habit streak going for as long as possible.

|    | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 3  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 4  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 6  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 7  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 8  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 9  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 10 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 11 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 12 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 13 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 14 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 15 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 16 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 17 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 18 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 19 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 20 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 21 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 22 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 23 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 24 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 25 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 26 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 27 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 28 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 29 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 30 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 31 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

# HABIT CONTRACT

A habit contract is a good framework to keep your habits on track since it imposes negative consequences if you fail to do so.

Use either of the habit contracts below. In the habit contract, you will commit to doing something and you will identify specific habits that will help you reach that goal.

You then set up penalties for not doing those things. Once you have completed it, sign it and get two people you respect to sign it as well. Choose people who you will not want to disappoint or lose face in front of if you don't do what you commit to doing.

There is one version with specific objectives and habits and a blank version that you can fill in with your own objectives and habits.

# HEALTHY EATING – HABIT CONTRACT

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ [Your Full Name]

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ [Today's Date]

**Start Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ [The day you will start your healthy eating habits]

**End Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ [When you hope to have fully incorporated this habit into your life, or a review date]

## Objective:

To cultivate a healthy and balanced eating habit, which includes consuming nutritious foods and maintaining proper portion sizes to nourish the body adequately and support overall well-being.

## Habit Commitment:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ [Your Full Name], commit to adopting the following healthy eating habits and understand the positive impact it will have on my physical and mental well-being.

## Specific Habits:

- 1. Eat Balanced Meals:** Include a variety of fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains in my daily meals.
- 2. Control Portion Sizes:** Be mindful of portion sizes to avoid overeating.
- 3. Limit Processed Foods:** Minimize intake of processed, sugary, and fatty foods.
- 4. Stay Hydrated:** Drink at least 8 cups of water daily.
- 5. Regular Meals:** Eat regular meals and snacks every day to maintain energy levels.

## Implementation Plan:

- 1. Meal Planning:** Plan meals ahead of time to ensure a balanced and varied diet.
- 2. Mindful Eating:** Eat without distractions and listen to hunger and fullness cues.
- 3. Healthy Snacks:** Keep healthy snack options available and within reach.

## Tracking and Review:

I will track my daily food intake and review my progress weekly. I will adjust my habits as necessary to continue progressing toward a healthier lifestyle.

## Immediate Rewards:

To make this habit more satisfying immediately, I will reward myself with \_\_\_\_\_ [a non-food reward] each day I successfully stick to my healthy eating habits.

## Consequences for Non-Compliance:

If I fail to adhere to my healthy eating habit contract, I will \_\_\_\_\_ [insert a consequence, like making a small donation to a charity] as a reminder of the importance of my commitment to my health.

## Support:

To support my journey, I will

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[share my progress with a friend, join a community, etc.] for accountability and encouragement.

## Signature:

I fully understand and agree to commit to the terms outlined in this contract to improve my eating habits and overall health.

\_\_\_\_\_ [Your Signature]

\_\_\_\_\_ [Today's Date]

## Witness/Accountability Partner (Optional):

\_\_\_\_\_ [Name of a friend or family member who can support you and hold you accountable]

\_\_\_\_\_ [Their Signature]

\_\_\_\_\_ [Today's Date]

# HABIT CONTRACT



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**My goal is**

\_\_\_\_\_

**To reach this goal I will do the following:**

(for each habit, state what you will do, when and where)



- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Penalty: If I do not do the things above then**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature