

THE 5 MORNING HABITS FOR A SUCCESSFUL LIFE

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"Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going."
- Jim Rohn

What do Oprah Winfrey, Lady Gaga, Mick Jagger, and Terri Savelle Foy have in common? Other than loving heavy eyeliner, we all have morning rituals and routines that have led us to our dreams. Before most people have even taken the Pop-Tart out of the toaster, high-achievers have typically read two chapters, jogged two miles, and heard two mentors give exceptional advice.

I didn't realize (until 2002) that each morning I lost the battle of the bed, took me further from success. Each morning that I slept an extra 30 minutes was compounding to an extra 10 hours each month that could change my life or keep me stuck.

The most successful people in the world have something in common: They practice mind over mattress. They conquer the covers! From political leaders and ministers, to famous athletes, CEOs, and celebrities, they cherish the morning hours to get up and invest in themselves while the rest of the world chooses to snooze.

Arnold Schwarzenegger said, "People say, 'I need 8-10 hours of sleep.' No. Sleep a little faster! Make the most of the hours you have each day!"

I like to think of this change in mindset like a car stuck in the mud. You need just enough traction to move an inch; then you can gain momentum to move out and move on. That's what happens when you start waking up a little earlier each day. It's the shove you need to gain that traction to catapult you miles ahead of where you need to be.

Benjamin Franklin said, "Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise." More than 200 years later, early risers are still among the most productive, wealthy, and successful people. Waking up early enables you to take control of your day first thing in the morning rather than the day controlling you.

Waking up one hour earlier each day would give you an extra 15 days each year. What could you accomplish with an extra two weeks added to your life every year? Take an inventory of your current routine. You already have one, but the question is, does it support your goals? Is it helping you get closer to where you want to be? Are you waking up with determination and even better, going to sleep with satisfaction that you seized the last 24 hours? Or are you in that place I was in for 11 years of waking up frantic, rushing, trying to dash out the door hoping you haven't forgotten anything and going to sleep feeling dissatisfied with all the to-do's left undone on the list?

The morning is a particularly critical time, whether you're a morning person or not. How you start the day can affect your mood and productivity throughout the day. Your morning sets the tone for the rest of the day and positions you to succeed before interruptions begin.

Check out the morning rituals of the following successful people:

 Bill Gates, founder of Microsoft, starts each day out with one hour on the treadmill while watching educational teaching.

- Howard Schultz, former CEO of Starbucks, wakes up at 4:30 a.m., walks his dogs, and works out.
- Richard Branson, founder of Virgin enterprise, leaves his curtains open, so when the sun comes up at 5:45 a.m., he rises with it. His routine consists of playing tennis with someone younger and more fit than him or swimming around his island before eating a healthy breakfast.
- Jack Dorsey, founder of Twitter, wakes up at 5:30 a.m., meditates, and jogs for six miles.
- Mick Jagger, lead singer of the Rolling Stones, credits his morning ritual of working out six days a week to helping him reduce stress and keep up his stamina.
- Lady Gaga begins each morning with yoga as well as five minutes of self-directed love.
- Stephen King begins each day with a glass of water or tea, takes his vitamins, listens to music, and sits in the same seat to help him clear his mind and be more focused.

As you can see from this list of familiar names, it doesn't matter what profession a person pursues, a morning routine is key to success. While the average person rolls over, the high performer rolls out and gets a jump start on the day. Could you imagine if you woke up on purpose with purpose every morning?

Fitness guru, Jack LaLanne, hosted the longest running, on air fitness program, *The Jack LaLanne Show*, for 34 years. It's no surprise that he had a ritual which led him to prominent success. At the age of 94, he was still working out two hours a day with 90 minutes of weightlifting and 30 minutes of cardio. He was fond of saying, "I cannot afford to die. It will ruin my image." Your repetition is your reputation.

Why is the morning the greatest time to establish a success routine?

In the morning hours, you have the most control over your day. You can be most productive first thing in the morning because people and priorities haven't invaded your attention. Willpower is at its highest in the morning. The longer the day goes on, the more fatigued we become.

Your morning affects your outlook on the rest of the day. Start the day feeling productive and accomplished. Invest in YOU before you invest in everything and everyone else.

Join the 5 a.m. Club

Successful people are proactive about their day—not reactive. They take care of themselves first before they attend to those around them.

On every airplane flight I've ever been on, before the pilot takes off, the flight attendant explains the "in case of emergency" procedures. Notice, they always caution you to put your oxygen mask on first before you attend to anyone else, even small children. Once your mask is in place, you are able to assist other passengers. It's the same with your daily agenda. Once you've invested in yourself first thing in the morning, you are well-prepared to invest in those around you.

Bestselling author Jon Acuff tells how the only way he could learn to be consistent in his personal growth (in addition to working a full-time job and raising a family with his wife) was to start "being selfish at 5:00 a.m." He began the discipline of getting up at the crack of dawn to read, to listen to messages, to journal, to write and to pray. He reported that since he began this early morning ritual, "Not one time has my wife complained that I wasn't spending time with her at 5 a.m. Not one time has my daughter asked me to ride bikes with her at 5 a.m. nor has my other daughter asked me to jump rope." He says, "That's *your* time to focus on you, your personal development. Own your mornings."

If the idea of setting your alarm 30 minutes earlier for you sounds horrible, then you may not be ready to get out of a rut, to rise above average, and to live your dreams. Jon Acuff challenges, "If your dream isn't worth 30 minutes, you've either got the wrong dream or you're just pretending you have one."

That's the realization I had to come to if I was ever going to change my life. In fact, I heard someone define the word *poor* as "Passing Over Opportunities Repeatedly." You might say, "But, Terri, that's just it. I haven't had any opportunities." My argument is this: Yes, you have. Every morning at 5:00 a.m. (or 6:00 or 7:00), you have another opportunity to get up and invest in your future. What you commit to each hour is building your future.

Legendary motivator Zig Ziglar encouraged goal-oriented people to replace the term "alarm clock" (which is negative) with the word "opportunity clock" (which is positive). Immediately, when the "opportunity clock" goes off, your mind is headed in a positive direction about what the day will bring!

Notice the wake-up calls for these high-achievers:

- Xerox CEO gets up at 5:15 a.m.
- Chrysler CEO gets up at 3:30 a.m.
- General Motors' CEO rarely sleeps past 4:30 or 5:00 a.m.
- Apple CEO gets up at 4:30 a.m.
- AOL CEO gets up at 5:00 or 5:15 a.m.
- Disney CEO gets up 4:30 a.m.
- PepsiCo CEO gets up at 4:00 a.m.
- Brooklyn Nets CEO gets up at 3:30 a.m.
- Oxygen Channel CEO gets up at 6:00 a.m.

You don't have to get up before sunrise, but those who wake up early on a consistent basis are more productive than others who sleep late. Start this new routine by setting your alarm 20–30 minutes earlier than normal.

Author Tom Corley conducted an in-depth, five-year study documenting the daily activities of 233 wealthy people and 128 people living in poverty. He discovered more than 50% of wealthy people wake up three or more hours before they go to work. Why? To invest in themselves. Conversely, only 3% of the poor people surveyed arose early to contribute to their goals.

You may have seen me post on Instagram: "Obsessed is a word the lazy use to describe the disciplined." Be prepared for people to call you "addicted, workaholic, insane, obsessed, etc.," but just smile and go back to setting your morning alarm because pretty soon they'll call you "boss, CEO, President, Mayor, Principal, successful!"

First Decision of the Day

Morning rituals can change your life and lead you to success. Now that we understand successful people wake up earlier than most, what are they doing after they beat the sun up? Are there certain habits that successful people have in common? If you applied these habits, could your life drastically change?

Before I answer that question, let me ask you this, how can you expect to achieve your goals when the first decision you make each morning is to procrastinate by hitting the snooze button?

When most people hear success stories, they only see how the person looks after they're successful. It's easy to get inspired and motivated by their achievements, but if you really want to learn from someone's success, then you need to learn how they got there. You need to know what they're doing in private that promoted them in public.

A Journey of Continuing

My father, Jerry Savelle, felt called into the ministry back in 1969. He knew he needed to prepare as much as possible to deliver sermons that

could impact lives. His preparation included learning God's Word, reading the Bible, and studying it intensely.

One day, he came across a familiar scripture in John 8:31–32 that reads, "If you continue in my word, then are you my disciples (disciplined ones) indeed, you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (KJV). Although he had read that verse many times before, this time, the word *continue* stood out as the biggest word on the page. He thought, "That's my problem! I quit everything. I quit college. I quit working at the Chevrolet dealership. I quit working at the Ford dealership. I quit the Mercury dealership. When things don't go my way, I quit. I've never *continued* anything."

In that moment, my dad began the journey of *continuing* by disciplining himself. He was so undisciplined about getting up early, at the time, but he knew he had to start investing in himself if he was ever going to pursue his big dream! So, he set the alarm for 6:00 a.m. the next morning. The alarm sounded, he got up immediately full of determination, walked into his guest bedroom, laid across the bed with his Bible open, and began reading. An hour later, he woke up!

This routine repeated itself day after day until he got so frustrated, he realized the bed was too tempting; he needed to sit up in a chair. Unfortunately, the chair was equally as cozy, and it rocked him right to sleep. Desperate for change in his life and his habits, he was so determined to continue that he walked in his bathroom, stood on the edge of the bathtub (literally, balancing himself), holding his Bible in his hands saying, "Jerry Savelle, you better not fall asleep or you're gonna bust your head! You better continue!"

That was the beginning of a lifetime of discipline.

This comical, but life-changing story of desperation worked! My dad is one of the most disciplined persons I know! His resolute decision back in 1969 to change his habits has resulted in establishing offices all over the world, airing a television broadcast in over 200 nations, authoring over 70

books, ministering in thousands of churches in nations across the globe... because he continued!

What you do every day is far more important than what you do every decade.

Creatures of Habit

Successful people are simply those with successful habits. To change your life, change your habits.

Habits are some of the most powerful forces that easily predict where you're headed in life, good or bad. They are what you repeatedly do and who you ultimately become. In essence, habits are the foundation for your success or failure.

Bad habits lead to failure, loss, debt, poor health, obesity, addictions, missed opportunities, failed relationships, and a host of other problems. Once you learn the importance of changing your daily patterns, this skill will be useful in overcoming eating disorders, addictions, procrastination, laziness, and unconscious habits that are holding you back.

When you look at a person you admire for the success they have attained, what you don't see are the hours, days, months and years they have routinely performed the *same* behavior day-in and day-out with nobody watching. From entrepreneurs to authors, celebrities and ministers, nearly 100% will attribute their success to the daily disciplines they've adapted in their lives. These seemingly small, behavioral adjustments lead to long-term results.

A *habit* is defined as "a recurring pattern of behavior or a series of repeated actions." It's not what you do once in a while that causes you to live an exceptional life; it's what you do consistently.

- 95% of those who lose weight will regain their weight loss. Why?
 Habits.
- 30% of those who set New Year's goals quit the first week. Why? Habits.

80% of those who win the lottery file bankruptcy within five years!
 Why? Habits.

If you're ready to take your life to the next level and you're wondering why you haven't achieved the dreams that are in your heart, it could boil down to what you're doing at the break of dawn.

Aristotle said, "95% of everything you do is the result of habit."

We are creatures of habit! Research indicates that you wear 20% of your clothes 80% of the time. You go to the same restaurants and order the same things. You brush your teeth the same way every day. You put mascara on the same way. You put your socks and shoes on the same way. You take your vitamins, make your coffee, drive to work, park in the same spot, greet your coworkers and check your emails the same way day-in and day-out.

The problem with being habitual is that the habits you currently have are only good enough to get you what you have currently got! To go higher, achieve greater, and earn more, you will have to get some new habits!

Keystone Habits

We are bombarded by commercials tempting us with age-defying, waist-reducing, wealth-producing products without any indication of the effort, dedication, self-discipline, and time it will take to achieve it. Success comes through hard work. There is no shortcut or easy path to get to your dreams. Success is a marathon, not a sprint.

"I want it, and I want it now" is the cry of the undisciplined and unsuccessful. And that's why developing good habits is so difficult for them. Habits imply a lifestyle; not a temporary experiment.

How do you develop a new habit? By repetition.

"Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out."
- Robert Collier You will notice in this chapter that none of the five habits demand a major life overhaul. Instead, it's about making small tweaks and adjustments to your daily agenda that lead to stellar results. After researching and observing the common habits of ultra successful people, I have been amazed to discover that these general habits are the same ones I began practicing in 2002. Although, there are dozens more that contribute to their overall success, these five, in particular, are foundational for adapting other positive habits.

Charles Duhigg, bestselling author of *The Power of Habit*, calls them keystone habits. ¹⁷ A keystone habit is one that leads to developing other good habits. In other words, one keystone habit starts a chain effect that produces a list of positive behaviors.

For example, let's say your keystone habit is to sleep at least 7-8 hours every night. Your goal is to practice getting more rest, but this initial habit leads to other positive, unexpected results such as:

- Less time wasted watching television each night because you go to bed earlier.
- Exercising each morning because you have more energy.
- Becoming more productive in the morning because you're well-rested.
- Being more pleasant to be around because you're not cranky.

And you thought you were just aiming to get some sleep.

These keystone habits are a vital part of your personal growth. I never knew that's what I was forming back in 2002 when I made my list of five things to do each day. But these five keystone habits produced a trickle-down effect impacting every area of my life.

You don't have to make a list of a dozen habits to reach your goals. When you change a handful of these building block behaviors, it will impact your entire lifestyle. Small changes that you introduce into your routine will unexpectedly carry over into other aspects of your life. It truly is remarkable!

5 Things Successful People Do Before 8:00 A.M.

Let me introduce you to the five habits of success that transformed my personal routine and life. There is so much I want to share with you about each habit, so I will briefly introduce them to you here. Then I will dedicate an entire chapter to each habit.

MY DAILY ROUTINE

Gigi Butler Founder of Gigi's Cupcakes Daily 5:

- 1. I start with a prayer of thanksgiving for having another day.
- 2. I take my vitamins and eat a healthy breakfast.
- 3. Working out or walking really keeps my stress level down and it makes me have more energy and feel better about myself.
- 4. I have a list of goals I would like to accomplish that day and check them off. They could be as simple as "wash the dog" or "water the plants". When I have a list and can check them off, it gives me a sense of accomplishment.
- I read Psalms and Proverbs every day. Even a single verse will center my soul and start my day off right. These two books are chock-full of wisdom.

1. They pray/meditate.

No matter what religion they are affiliated with, successful people make prayer/meditation a top priority in their day. People from all religions, backgrounds, and careers have discovered this "success habit" as a form of helping them relax, unwind, and improve their personal lives.

Doctors even prescribe meditation to lower stress levels and help with

pain management. "Science has shown that it may even improve memory and brain function," said Benjamin Neal. "It's being taught in schools, to help kids focus and learn in the classroom. It's used by actors, artists, and innovators as a way to boost creativity and get in the zone." 18

Actors Jennifer Aniston, Kristen Bell, Tom Hanks, Hugh Jackman, and Cameron Diaz (to name a few) find meditation helpful. Supermodel Gisele Bundchen, singers Sheryl Crow, Paul McCartney and Katy Perry, Comedians Ellen DeGeneres, Jerry Seinfeld, and Steve Harvey, authors Tim Ferris, Tony Robbins, and many more use meditation as a part of their daily ritual to prepare them for the day.

Oprah Winfrey, who went from extreme poverty to becoming one of the wealthiest women in the world, spends at least 20 minutes once or twice a day meditating. "Only from that space," she says, "can you create your best work, and your best life." 19

"One of the things—and this comes from someone who was highly self-critical and a type-A personality—that has changed my life is meditating." - Sheryl Crow

I am not endorsing or condoning all types of meditation as a habit you should incorporate. I am simply pointing out that these highly successful celebrities have tapped into a habit that comes from the Word of God, even if they don't realize it. Prayer and meditation of God's Word is a solution for success prescribed by God Himself.

Now, people from all walks of life find the habit of getting still and quieting the noise around them as key in helping them get centered, focused, and relaxed before they begin the day. Some recommend focusing on the Universe; however, I communicate with the Creator of the Universe. I am only endorsing praying and meditation with the One true God and His Word, *The Holy Bible*, which is our manual for success.

"Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; *meditate* on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful" (Joshua 1:8, NIV emphasis added).

So, according to God, you have to meditate on His Word if you want to be successful. Meditation isn't just for monks or hippies; it is a necessary part of the Christian life. Prayer is simply talking to God. It is our direct line to Heaven. Meditation is listening for God. It is where we sit quietly and direct our thinking on Him and His Word.

In Chapter 3, I will help you develop a habit of prayer and meditation as a keystone habit that will lead to a series of other life-changing patterns of behavior.

I don't use the words life-changing haphazardly. This single habit of prayer and meditation is the forerunner for all others. It is the one you need more than any other habit. If you just incorporate this one, primary change in your routine, it will dramatically affect everything in your life.

This is the cornerstone of success. Prayer and meditation is where you can experience relationships restored, receive God-inspired ideas that produce streams of revenue in your life, obtain energy in your body to go after the other habits, develop a sense of appreciation for where you currently are in life, gain strength to make it through any trial or challenge you're facing, and hear God's voice more clearly than ever before.

2. They read. (A lot!)

"Your life will be determined over the next 5 years by the people you hang around and the books you read."

- Jim Rohn

Do you know what you are most likely to find by a wealthy person's nightstand? Well, if you're from Texas, it could be a gun, but in most cases it's books. In fact, they discovered the largest homes of the wealthiest people

had something in common that lower income homes do not have: a library.

Leaders are readers. The old adage that you must "learn more to earn more" is still true today. Wealthy, successful people approach a \$30 book as though it has the potential to make them millions of dollars. I read where (did you notice that I read) Bill Gates and Warren Buffet were asked if they could have any superpower what would it be? Keep in mind that these two men are in the top five of the wealthiest people in the world. They realize that this superpower could get them anything they wanted in life. They both responded that they would want to be able to "read super fast"! The proof is in the pudding!

One major K.E.Y. to success is Keep Educating Yourself.

Actor Ashton Kutcher said, "The sexiest thing in the entire world is being smart, and being thoughtful, and being generous." Success is tied to your personal development. You can't grow any more if you don't learn anymore. This is something I had to force myself to do because reading was always an obligation not an opportunity in my mind. In chapter 4, I will walk you through how and why my view on reading changed.

Remember, you have to change your mindset from viewing growth as a period of life to a way of life. According to Jim Rohn, "What a man reads pours massive ingredients into his mental factory and the fabric of his life is built from those ingredients." The Bible says, "As (a man) thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7, KJV).

Bishop TD Jakes says, "I ought to be able to look in your surroundings and know your dream." Jakes continues, "Are the books you're reading taking you to your dream? Are the seminars you're attending taking you to your dream? Is what you're doing in private taking you to your dream? Is where you're spending your money taking you closer to your dream? Show me your checking account and I'll show you your priorities."²²

This is another keystone habit in which other great habits will emerge. Opportunities will open as your mind opens. Ideas will flourish as you turn the pages of a book. And it begins by building your personal library.

3. They listen to audio teaching.

This is the easiest of all the habits to adapt in your life. It only requires two words and very little physical effort: Push play! As we discovered in Habit #2, successful people read each morning, but they also take advantage of every available means to increase their knowledge by listening to audio teaching. Whether that includes during their jog or their commute to the office, they grow as they go.

"The person who stops studying merely because he has finished school is forever hopelessly doomed to mediocrity, no matter what their calling." - Napoleon Hill

In our busy world where time is the most valuable commodity we have, many do not have an hour each day to simply read a book (or three hours like Mark Cuban²³). But we do have time to listen. With this habit, you don't need to stop everything you're doing to commit to it, you can simply incorporate it with your current activities.

Beyond establishing just any good habit, this tradition changed my entire mindset. The Bible says that "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17, NKJV). Every time you hear God's Word through a faith-building, motivational message, faith comes. *Faith* is defined as "trust or confidence." My trust in God grew, and my confidence dramatically increased.

When you add this habit to your drive time ritual, you can literally learn everything from marketing and business to finance and leadership, nutrition advice and spiritual guidance, as well as learning a foreign language all behind the steering wheel. You can go to college in your car while running errands, shopping, picking up the kids, waiting in traffic, and driving to work each way.

4. They write (and review) their dreams and goals.

"It is only a dream until you write it down, then it is a goal." - Emmitt Smith

This is why 3% of the Harvard graduates in 1979 made 10 times as much as the other 97% combined! If you're familiar with this famous research, it shows the powerful effect of goal-setting and specifically, writing your goals, to contribute to your overall success.

Psychology professor at Dominican University, Dr. Gail Matthews conducted a similar study on goal-setting using 267 participants. She found that you are 42% more likely to achieve your goals just by writing them down.²⁴

Writing your dreams and goals is a clear key to success!

Everyone seems to agree on the importance that goals should be written down; however, only 3 out of every 100 adults write their goals on paper. The act of penning your aspirations on paper is a powerful motivator. It forces you to get specific about your ambitions. Tony Robbins says, "Setting goals is the first step in turning the invisible into the visible."

As we study this further in Chapter 6, you'll see the ripple effect this keystone habit has on your life. If you have a goal of weighing a certain amount, it will affect your exercise and nutrition habits. If you have a goal of owning a business, it will affect your reading and networking habits. If you have a goal of being debt-free, it will affect your spending and budgeting habits.

The world's most successful people agree that what you get by achieving your goals isn't nearly as important as who you *become* in the process.

5. They exercise.

It's no surprise that physical fitness and success go hand in hand. The most

successful people consider exercise integral to their overall achievements in life. They know that working out consistently is the key to mental and physical health. It is one of the most important habits you should develop to transform your life and live your dreams.

In addition to losing weight and improving your overall physical appearance, this ritual alone can build your self-esteem, reduce stress, improve sleep, boost your memory and concentration, and consequently make you happier. Even knowing all these rewarding benefits, CBS reported that 80% of Americans adults don't get enough exercise.²⁵

As a rule, when you start exercising habitually, you start changing other patterns in your life. Traditionally, people begin eating healthier foods, drinking more water, smoking and/or drinking less, and even spending less money on eating fast food. Not only is exercise considered a keystone habit, but researchers have even said that something about it that makes other good habits easier.²⁶

Inc.com reported that 70% of successful business individuals discover a way to exercise each day. They know they need energy to get ahead, and the best way to have that is to eat healthier, exercise and get proper rest.

In Chapter 7, I'm going to show you how to make exercise a part of your lifestyle in a simple, beneficial way. It will become like brushing your teeth. You will no longer make your decision based on how you feel, you just do it. This is not necessarily about being bikini ready (unless that's your goal) or competing on stage for Mrs. Universe. It's about getting in shape, inside and out, to be fit for your life assignment. It's about creating routines in your life that bring about the best you imaginable.

Change Your Routine, Change Your Life

So, the early bird does, in fact, catch the worm. When I joined the ranks of early-risers and established those five simple habits, I never dreamed something so unspectacular would enable me to stand before Presidents, launch books in several languages, and stand onstage in arenas of thousands

of people simply sharing the secret of my success.

Today, when people (like the woman in the introduction) ask me, "How did you get a life like this?" I simply say, "My routine."

- I stopped rolling over...and started rolling out at 5 a.m.
- I stopped making excuses...and started making time to pray.
- I stopped scrolling through Facebook...and started reading books.
- I stopped listening to fear...and started listening to faith-building, motivational messages.
- I stopped keeping up with the Kardashians...and started keeping my commitment at the gym.
- I changed my routine, and it changed my life.

Now that you know the five habits you need to start, let's dig deeper into the first pivotal habit that explains why successful people spend time alone.

MY DAILY ROUTINE

Lisa Osteen Comes Associate Pastor of Lakewood Church, author Daily 5:

- 1. I read my Bible, pray, worship, and make positive declarations over my life the first 30 minutes in the morning.
- 2. I write in my gratitude journal.
- 3. I do Pilates and walk for exercise.
- 4. I eat healthy meals. This recent change has given me more energy and I simply feel better.
- 5. I laugh and have fun EVERY day (even on the stressful days)!