



## 6 Good Habits to Enrich Your Life

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Habits can be healthy or habits can be harmful. They can be hard to break and hard to make. They can be difficult to clarify and even more challenging to keep. Habits are the daily attitudes or actions we choose that have the power to greatly enrich our lives. Here are six good habits to choose that will not only enhance your health, your relationships and your happiness, but also minimize much stress we do have control over.

### **Tell the Truth**

Begin by telling the truth to yourself. What negative or difficult aspect of your relationships, your work, your health or your life have you managed to keep swept under the rug? What have you become so comfortable with by denying it? We tend to hope and pray something we perceive as unmanageable will go away if we simply ignore it. The problem isn't there if we don't think about it, right? Wrong. *Denial is only a delay of a solution.* Tell yourself the truth about what is not working in your life. Admitting that change is needed and necessary is the beginning of a newfound solution and success in your life. You will begin moving and living in that success and be amazed how much time was wasted by not facing the truth to begin with.

### **Be Proactive**

Being proactive is an underutilized position of personal power. Reactive people sit and wait to see what life hands them. And then complain about it. Being proactive in the decisions of your life puts you in the drivers seat. You can't control the traffic or the weather when driving your car. But you can make many decisions that can move you beyond your house and to exciting places. Just as there are sometimes hazards on the highway, there are dangers and scary situations and circumstances in our lives. We can often feel that we are always behind and never able to catch up or catch our breath. What can you be proactive about now, that will reduce the stress in your life? What can you schedule, arrange or change that will steer you in a positive direction? *Being proactive is key to preventing a number of problems* – problems regarding your health, your wellness and your happiness.

### **Finish What You Start**

Sometimes we can be very creative in beginning new plans or projects, although finishing them is a whole other story. We tend to have a great start but a sad finish, or no finish at all. What is more irritating than a half complete home remodeling project? Perhaps the project leader just got lazy or disinterested in finishing the task, and you have to live in the middle of the mess. Being *halfway is a harmful habit* than can affect more than just the person with the habit. Follow through in what we say we will do demonstrates our integrity and our responsibility to our word. Unbroken promises have the potential to damage any relationship. *Our word should not just be wishful.* It should be a commitment to our self and to others.

### **Be Grateful**

While there is much going on in the world to gripe about, focusing on things to be grateful for is a habit that will greatly enrich your life. When someone asks, "How are you?" do you immediately think of the aches, pains and problems you have, or do you share the joys and fortunes in your life? Being grateful means more than just feeling and saying you are "too blessed to be stressed." Being truly grateful means living it. You must demonstrate it in your words, your smile, your attitude and your openness. Don't become caught up and consumed in trials and troubles you may have but instead, *be guided by the goodness in your life*. Be grateful and be conscious to *make the moments of your life meaningful!*

### **Keep Learning**

*Learning is not just for students.* Learning is a lifelong project that strengthens more than our brain. It enhances our mind, health and outlook on our future. Learning is exciting. It stretches our capabilities and equips us to lead and inspire others. To learn about something that interests us is a challenge that allows us to grow in many ways. It pulls us forward and can motivate us to be with others while encouraging our self worth and self esteem. *Learning adds life* to our living! What skill, hobby, family or work task can you learn about more today?

### **Always Have a "Plan B"**

Having a Plan B demonstrates acceptance to change and adversity. It is being flexible, not rigid. Sometimes our ideal solutions simply don't work out. When *our "A" plans do work, it is like icing on the cake*. But being aware of and open to other ideas and options is a helpful habit to cultivate, for any area of our life. It also demonstrates an attitude and ability of ease, not anxiety. When we feel we are able to *cruise through change and obstacles* that will certainly come our way, we alleviate much stress and are also more enjoyable to be around. Do work toward your ideal plans and solutions, but also be ready for an acceptable Plan B solution. It may even be better than your initial idea!

**To request Susan Gillpatrick, M.Ed., LPC, CTS to speak with your group or organization and to encourage them to live with healthy habits, contact her at (615) 460-4445. For counseling opportunities in Middle Tennessee that will enrich your life, your family or your relationships, contact Centerstone for an appointment at (615) 460-4357 or toll free at (888) 291-4357. Visit [www.Centerstone.org](http://www.Centerstone.org) for more information. Crisis services are also available.**