

Building Sustainable Forward Momentum

4 Strategies for Sustainable Growth

Learning and integrating these simple (but not always easy) tools can reduce the stress and overwhelm we often feel when starting out to learn a new skill or pursue a new goal or vision.

1. Get Crystal Clear on Intention

Initial motivation often isn't enough to bring long-term projects and goals to fruition (without a lot of suffering along the way). When we get clear on WHY we want to start a new project or pursue a new goal, we go past motivation to our inherent drivers and values. This helps us align our energy and resources to achieving our goals WITHOUT stressing us out or leaving us discouraged and overwhelmed.

A clear WHY brings energy and clarity and helps us push through the tough times when motivation is low.

Getting clear on our intention can also help us "clear our plate" of projects that we may have the idea to start, but we realize are not in alignment with our values or do not bring us what we truly desire.

2. Fall in Love with the Small Steps

Build momentum towards the Big Bang moments by falling in love with the small steps that are always present in the present moment. It is good to have a vision for where we want to go, but to focus on that end point and not on our next step leads to a lot of frustration.

*"Small changes often appear to make no difference until you cross a critical threshold.
The most powerful outcomes of any compounding process are delayed.
You need to be patient."
~ James Clear*

3. Habit Stacking

"When it comes to building new habits, you can use the connectedness of behaviour to your advantage. One of the best ways to build a new habit is to identify a current habit you already do each day and then stack your new behaviour on top..."

Rather than pairing your new habit with a particular time and location, you pair it with a current habit. This method, which was created by BJ Fogg as part of his Tiny Habits program, can be used to design an obvious cue for nearly any habit."

For more on Habit Stacking...

explore [Atomic Habits](#) by James Clear.

4. Reflection

This is often one of the most underrated tools of great movers and thinkers of the world. Making a commitment to carve out time to reflect on our past actions can be a powerful tool to save us time, energy and a lot of frustration in the long run.

Reflect to Refine + Integrate

The power of reflection lies in synthesis – the ability to take past actions, evaluate their successfulness (or not-so-successfulness), and use this information to either amplify the positive results or refine to increase future success.

“If you don't like the results you're getting, but you don't have a plan to change, your current reality is a sneak peek into your future.” ~ Rachel Pedersen

Reflection gives you a chance to create a plan that brings your future trajectory back into your own hands. And this can ALSO be a stacked habit: If each morning you take time to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, consider utilizing those 10 minutes to reflect on the previous day and look for one thing that went well, and one thing you could improve on by 1% today. This practice alone, over the course of one year, has the potential for creating significant forward momentum.

Celebrate and Replicate!

We are often so quick to move past our successes that we have begun our next task before the dust has settled on the last one. And celebration? Forget it...it's not that important.

Think again.

Celebrating is good for your brain. No, really! When we celebrate, our body releases a happiness cocktail of dopamine, serotonin, oxytocin and endorphins, which are all natural feel-good chemicals that increase our energy, sense of wellbeing, confidence and ability to focus and think outside the box.

Your brain begins to think: “Hey! That feels good! What do I need to do to make this happen again?” And it starts to reflect on our most recent actions to find how it can replicate this experience. This is why celebrating in the moment is important...you don't need to wait for the right time. Even a smile and deep breath counts.

“Neurons that fire together, wire together.” ~ Donald Hebb (Neuropsychologist)

With celebration, we put our own subconscious to work for us in reinforcing good habits. Gratitude is another form of celebration, and its effects on the brain are equally powerful. Because our body feels so good with celebration and gratitude, it creates an upward spiral that encourages more of the things we choose to create and less of the things we'd rather leave behind.



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This article from [Forbes](#) dives deeper into the benefits of celebration for success, and [Psychology Today](#) gives a simple and clear overview to the neurochemistry behind celebration.