



HABITS ON PURPOSE

BY

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“Destructive habits aren’t flaws.
They’re coping mechanisms built to fill a need.”

Sarah Hays Coomer, The Habit Trip

What makes a “bad” habit bad?

All habits serve a purpose. They are behavioral adaptations that make life easier and less taxing on our conscious minds. They're shortcuts that support our survival—at least that’s what they’re designed to do. The problem arises when they run off the rails, luring us to come back again-and-again to patterns that don’t serve us. But there is a big difference between a toxic habit and one that is just not particularly helpful.

This introductory worksheet will help you discover:

- What your habits are, both good and bad.
- Which “bad” habits you genuinely enjoy too much to give up just yet.
- One truly toxic habit you’d like to leave behind—and why it matters.

We all need reinforcements. Some of them are unquestionably healthy. Others might be less so, but they bring us reliable sources of comfort or relief. The question is: which habits help us keep our balance and which ones throw us off? The answers might surprise you, especially if you follow your own instincts rather than submitting to conventional assumptions about what you “should” or “should not” be doing with your precious time and energy.



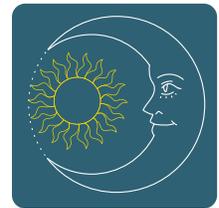


Beating ourselves up for not being able to change everything at once is counterproductive. It's also no fun! The truth is that we're not quite ready to give up all of our creature comforts. Some of them feel pretty great sometimes, but we feel guilty for indulging. So we try (and fail) to change and end up tumbling down a rabbit hole of frustration. I don't know about you, but I'm bored with this routine.

What if we try another way?

What if we select a few "bad" habits to keep so we can enjoy them *without the guilt*? Then we have comfort and pleasure built into our lives—so we can find the bandwidth to change toxic patterns that are substantially damaging our quality of life.

Let's start with the healthy habits:



Start at bedtime, and think your way through a full 24 hours.

What are the things you do on a regular basis that make you healthier?

You're looking for everything from brushing your teeth to wearing seatbelts, from connecting with friends to exercising, from healthy snacks to dog walking. Write them down below.

Next, go through the same 24 hours, and make a list of a few habits you find frustrating or that you have traditionally assumed were “bad.”

Do you stay up too late mainlining social media or eat cookies for breakfast? Do you shop online for things you don’t need or watch tv when you’d rather be moving your body? Below, make two columns. List the habits and the reasons why they are bad.



Which of these “bad” habits are still important to you? Which ones bring you relief that is worth the trade off?



Last, pick one habit that is genuinely toxic to your well-being and also doesn't seem completely impossible to change.



Why is this habit so toxic, and how would life be better without it?

To change habitual behavior for the better, we have to figure out a few key facts:

1. Why is changing this habit worth the effort right now?
2. What need is it filling?
3. And what is a healthier way to fill that need that also offers a quick reward?

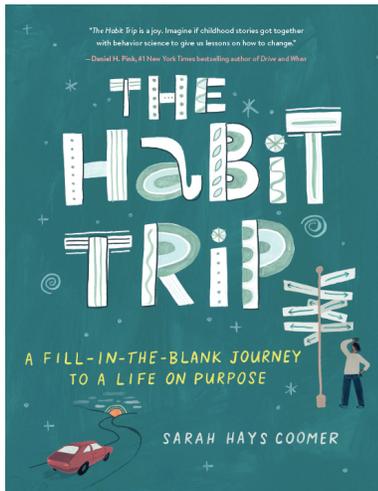
Upending entrenched patterns is a long and winding road. It's a process of play and experimentation, and the ultimate outcome is the freedom to pick your pleasures and your poisons *as you wish*.

Send me an email! I would love to hear how it feels to choose a bad habit to keep or which one you're thinking needs to go. You can reach me at:

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Additional Resources



[Pre-order](#)

The Habit Trip: A Fill-in-the-Blank Journey to a Life On Purpose is an interactive storybook in which you are the hero and the one and only expert, navigating through ten areas of well-being to determine what matters most and what behavioral reinforcements you can build to support that purpose. Your challenges, your solutions, your way. It's out December 1, 2020!

Pre-order to have it in hand as you step out of this year and into whatever comes next.

Nobody accomplishes much of anything in isolation. As Booker T. Washington said, "If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else."

The best way to support your own purposeful choices is to help support someone else's. Who do you know who makes you feel light on your feet? Who helps you feel more like yourself? **Find someone** in your inner circle who might like to be an accountability partner with you, to encourage whatever changes you each want to make in your own, individual lives. See if that person is interested in experimenting or working through *The Habit Trip* alongside you.



I am available for **one-on-one coaching**, speaking engagements, and group workshops. You can find more information about that and all of my books at:

www.SarahHaysCoomer.com