

HABIT CHECKER

cpas

A habit is a behaviour that occurs automatically, over and over, often unconsciously. Habits develop over time, sometimes deliberately, sometimes unintentionally, and they form us for good or bad. For example most of us brush our teeth in the morning, probably at the same point in our get-up routine. We don't really think about it.

During the lockdown we will have formed new habits, some helpful and some unhelpful, and lost some old habits, some helpful and unhelpful. As we come out of lockdown it is a great time to do a habit check. Take time to carefully identify your new habits, helpful and unhelpful, and list them in the relevant boxes below. Grade them on a scale where 1 = unhelpful and 5 = helpful. Then complete page 2 to identify your next steps, remembering that habits take a while to get in place, so be patient with yourself.

PHYSICAL

Good habit - a daily walk.

Poor habit - screen time without regular breaks.

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

RELATIONAL

Good habit - weekly connect with friends.

Poor habit - only talking about surface things.

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

SPIRITUAL

Good habit - using Lectio 365 App daily.

Poor habit - no longer attending church regularly.

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

MENTAL

Good habit - 15 minutes of daily personal time.

Poor habit - having your phone in the bedroom.

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

Habit: _____ 1 2 3 4 5

PRE-PANDEMIC

Which pre-pandemic habits do you want to re-establish?

Habit: _____

Habit: _____

Habit: _____

Habit: _____

Habit: _____

'We are all living according to a specific regime of habits, and those habits shape our life.'

KEYSTONE HABITS

Researchers suggest there are 'keystone' habits, micro habits that lead to bigger changes occurring. Here are a few smaller habits that can lead to big changes.

Spiritual

- Make the first words out of your mouth in the morning a prayer. Mother Theresa used to say 'Good morning Jesus', others have a single sentence prayer they use, others say the Lord's Prayer.
- Attend public worship at the same time at the same place (online or onsite) each week.
- Put aside 15 minutes a day to read the Bible and pray.
- Pray for five people who aren't yet Christians (see [Thy Kingdom Come](#) for ideas).
- Pray the [Examen](#) before you go to sleep.

Mental

- No phone the first and last hours of the day.
- Fast for 24 hours from something once a week (e.g. food, screens, alcohol).
- Keep a gratitude journal.
- Take 15 minutes a day to do something relaxing you really enjoy, but not on a screen.

Physical

- Take a walk each day (ideally at the same time).
- Drink eight glasses of water a day.
- Reduce the amount of sugar you consume.
- Download [Stretchly](#) onto your computer and use it to help you move through the day.
- Enjoy your caffeine before 2pm.

Relational

- Eat one meal around a table, with others if at all possible. Take your time.
- Have a leisurely chat with a good friend once a week.

NEXT STEPS

Identify one or two habits to start or maintain over the coming months, and perhaps one to stop.

RESOURCES

- **The Common Rule** Justin Earley introduces eight habits - four daily, four weekly - and really useful resources on his [website](#), along with the book by the same name.
- **Rule of Life** This article is a helpful [overview](#) on how to create a rule of life. Liverpool diocese has developed a specific [Rule of Life](#) website with lots of helpful ideas. Truro diocese has a wide range of resources for their [Way of Life](#), including youth materials. Or try an online tool called [Pattern](#).
- **Atomic Habits** by James Clear is a great book on the power of habits. Watch an introductory [video](#) to the four stages of habit formation.
- **Habit tracking apps** include [Habitify](#) or [Strides](#) (only on IOS).