

The Incredible Progress of Daily Practice

Lately in my life, I've been repeatedly reminded of the power of practicing something regularly.

Daily is best, I've learned, but several times a week works well too.

You'd be surprised how much progress you can make with even a small amount of practice, applied regularly.

Some examples in my life recently:

- **A daily yoga practice of just 10 minutes:** I am not an experienced yogi, I'm very inflexible, and because I only practice yoga sporadically, I don't really make any progress. But recently I committed to practicing yoga for just 10 minutes a day (a few sun salutations, mostly) ... when I started, my shoulders would get exhausted in downward dog fairly quickly. But now, I'm able to hold the poses for longer without tiring as much! I've really seen some solid progress with just 10 minutes of daily practice. Of course, that's not the point of yoga (it's a mindfulness practice), but it's still amazing to see that kind of progress.
- **Running 3-4 times a week with Eva:** Eva and I started doing a half-marathon training plan by No Meat Athlete about 6 or 7 weeks ago. We do 3-4 runs a week (depending on our schedules), and when we started out, we were both pretty out of shape. Eva had to stop a couple times even on a 2-mile run, and I was far from my peak running shape. But six weeks into it — just doing short runs — we can see a huge difference. At no point did we push ourselves too hard, but just doing it regularly really made a solid amount of progress.
- **Studying for just 10-20 minutes a day:** I've been studying the ancient Chinese game of go this year, and I'm still very weak at it. Honestly, if I had more time to study, I might be much stronger. But instead, I've been just doing about 10-20 minutes of studying a day, and I'm still making noticeable progress with my calculating ability. Still not strong, but I'm getting stronger slowly, just putting in a minimal amount of study time.
- **Chinups with my son 3 times a week:** In the last couple of weeks, my 13-year-old son and I decided to do a chinups challenge. Three times a week, we do five sets of chinups during the day. When I started out, I could only do 10-11 chinups per set, but now I can do 16-17 each set. In less than two weeks. That kind of progress is encouraging.
- **Daily focus sessions by a client:** I have a coaching client who does daily focus sessions, training himself to focus on something longer. He just does 15-minute sessions every day, which isn't a lot. But he's seen his ability increase noticeably, even

when he's not doing a focus session.

Just a small amount of daily practice, or at least a few times a week. It's powerful.

Here's what I've learned:

1. **If you're studying something, you forget less.** It's great to study for a couple hours, but if you don't study for a few days after that, you'll start forgetting. Daily study sessions, even if they're short, interrupt the forgetting process. Therefore it's more efficient, as you don't slip backwards but keep making forward progress.
2. **If you are weak, you get stronger without injury.** It's hard to get stronger when you're weak (at yoga, running, chinups, whatever). But small regular doses will get you stronger, slowly. If you give yourself big doses, hoping for faster progress, you're more likely to get injured, burn out, or get demotivated because of the difficulty level. Slow and small is better.
3. **Progress isn't noticeable in the first week, but it is after a couple of weeks.** If you're just giving yourself small training or study doses, you won't see any difference at first. That's OK, keep doing it. After a couple of weeks, you'll notice some solid progress, and a month into it, you'll see major improvement. Keep at it.
4. **Small doses make it easy to do daily.** If you want to train for an hour a day, that is only sustainable for awhile. Eventually you'll run out of energy, or things will get busy and you won't have the time for your hourlong session. Maybe you'll miss 2-3 days in a row — now you've lost motivation, and you're discouraged. It's better to do it in small doses, because it's easier to get started when you know you're just doing 10-15 minutes, and it's easier to find the time and motivation for small sessions.
5. **Make sure it's fun.** Doing a chore is boring and hard, and you'll put it off, even if it's just a 10-minute session. Instead, don't make it a chore that you have to get through. Make it a game that you look forward to doing. Or a mini-meditation session that brings peace to your life, a time to relax. Or a moment of magic and loveliness. Create an activity that you'll look forward to.

Bring the magic of small, regular practice to your life.

My Habit Mastery Course

If you'd like to get better at habits and daily practice, please join my new video course, **Habit Mastery**, which is designed to help you practice and level up your habit skills.

It's a 12-week course with two video lessons a week, daily practice, and interviews with 11 other amazing habit experts.

This is one of the best things I've ever created, and I really hope you'll join me.

The course includes weekly Q&A where I answer your habit obstacle questions, a Facebook group for support from fellow participants, and 7 bonus ebooks. All of this for \$299. The course will start on **Monday Oct. 23** (but you can start anytime) ... and it will run for 12 weeks.

What will we cover in this course? Basically, the goal is to get you from one level of mastery to the next:

1. **Beginner to Intermediate:** You struggle to create habits, and feel a bit lost in sticking to anything over the long term. We'll have you practice the basics and some key skills to overcome the most common beginner problems.
2. **Intermediate to Advanced:** You have successfully created some habits, but often have them fall apart when things get disrupted, and struggle with more difficult habits. We'll have you practice advanced skills, and your habits will get more solid overall.
3. **Advanced to Habit Master:** You are pretty good at creating habits, but are in a place where you're trying to optimize your day, and are dealing with the more dynamic aspects of habit creation. Also, you'd like to tackle some of the hardest habits — mental habits. You'll practice these and be amazing at everything.

Of course, it will all depend on how much work you put into it, but with the video lessons, daily practice, Facebook support group and ability to ask questions ... we believe you'll be in the optimal conditions for getting good at habits.

Read more here, and please consider joining me.