

What Health Habits Are You Practicing?

Lately, I've been thinking about the word *practice*, which the dictionary defines as "performing an activity or skill repeatedly to improve or maintain your ability."

You might think only athletes or musicians practice, but you practice too. Think about your daily health habits. Every time you do them, you are getting better at them.

Do you want to get better at the habits you are currently practicing? For some, it is a depressing thought rather than a joyful one!

You see, practice is great if your health habits benefit you, but it's bad if they are destroying you.

The Apostle Paul wrote about struggling with this issue in Romans 7:15: "For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do" (NLT).

Paul recognized he was practicing a habit he hated. And he felt powerless to stop it. He was right—in his own power, he was at a disadvantage. But then came the revelation: Through the power of the Holy Spirit, he could change what he was practicing! He could start practicing those things he wanted get better at daily—and with daily practice, he could see change.

Regarding your health, what habits do you want to practice in order to become better at them? Write down them down. These are habits you know will change you for the better and enable you to fulfill God's purpose for your life.

Be specific. A habit like "Eat better" is too general to do

anything with. What does eating better look like to you? An example of a specific goal can be “Eat fruit for snacks at work instead of candy.”

Now, here is a way you can practice the above goal. If you have a candy dish on your desk, then that will interfere with your practice, won't it? So, to make it easier, replace the candy with fruit that you love.

At the normal time you reach for candy, there is the fruit. You've made it easy to practice. Every day, make sure to bring your fruit to work and keep the candy away. In this way, you are supplying yourself with the necessary “equipment” to practice.

What if you make a mistake? Well, when you view your efforts as “practice,” you realize mistakes are just a natural part of learning, not to be used as an excuse to give up.

What if you are practicing a destructive habit you want to change? Think of it as a building block tower that you need to dismantle, block by block.

You can start dismantling the habit by changing one or more of the following:

- **What:** What is the specific habit you want to work on, and can it be replaced? In the example above, you replaced the daily candy (destructive) with daily fruit (helpful). Both satisfied your hunger.
- **Where:** Where is this habit being practiced? For example, if you are overeating, you are probably doing it in the same location every time. To make yourself more mindful, test out changing your eating location so that the automatic practice of the old habit is interrupted.
- **When:** You are probably engaging in the habit around the same time as well. If it is a habit that you want to get rid of, then you need to think of another activity to fill that time and occupy your mind.

- **Why:** This requires deeper thought. What circumstances led you develop the habit to begin with? If you are having difficulty with figuring it out, then ask God in prayer. With your new understanding you can make different, more empowering choices.

I've got a challenge for you: Read and meditate on Romans 8 in the New Living Translation for inspiration today. This is the revelation Paul got that gave him hope that he could change. I pray that when you read it, you will feel encouraged and inspired to practice daily what you want to do. With that commitment and consistent daily practice, you *will* get better at doing it!

Kimberly Taylor is the author of The Weight Loss Scriptures and many other books. Once 240 pounds and a size 22, she can testify of God's goodness and healing power. Visit and receive more free health and weight loss tips.

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