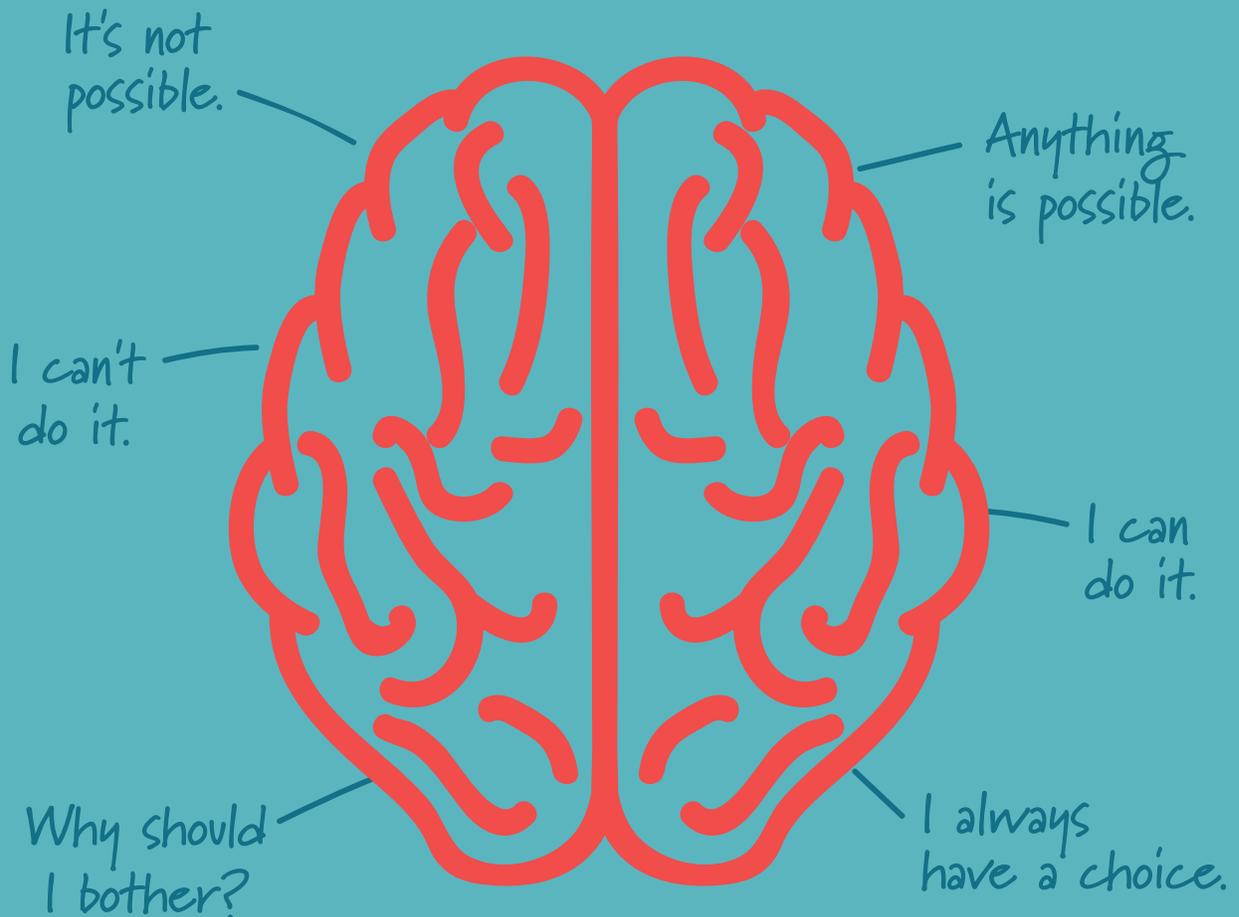


# 10 WAYS TO CHANGE YOUR MINDSET RIGHT NOW

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**In this guide, you're going to read about ten tangible things you can start to implement in your routine (right now!) to begin creating your own new brain pathways, improving your brain health, and creating a better mindset.**

**We used to believe that our brains stopped growing and changing once we hit our 20's, and from that point on, we only lose brain cells, so we should just forget about trying to improve our minds.**

Now, science has proved that old theory wrong. In the past decade, very smart neuroscientists have found the brain is like plastic: flexible and able to expand throughout our lifetime ... as long as we take care of it and continue to challenge how we think and learn.

Even better? We know that new neural pathways are formed with consistent effort.

To start improving your brain, do one thing each day that's listed in this guide.



# 1. GET YOUR GRATITUDE ON

Practicing gratitude is one of the most effective ways to boost your happiness and overall well-being—because gratitude rewires your brain to focus on the positive.

Hundreds of studies show us the many benefits of gratitude. Among those findings? People who express gratitude are more likely to see their lives as meaningful, feel a strong purpose, accept themselves, have positive relationships, experience positive moods, and experience higher levels of joy, pleasure, happiness, and optimism.

All of those benefits for less than 30 seconds a day? Sign me up! The easiest way to add a little gratitude into your life is by making it a part of your evening or morning routine. Grab a small notebook, designate it to be your gratitude journal, and leave it on your bedside table.

Each morning (or evening), write down just three things you're grateful for. Within just a few days, you'll see the amazing benefits of this simple, free, and fast exercise.

# 2. SAY "OM" TO A MEDITATION PRACTICE.

Meditation is one of the best ways to "control your brain" and science backs this up. It also makes you happier, less depressed and anxious, a better decision maker, and more compassionate.

The Marines use it to become more resilient in war zones and sports teams like the Super Bowl winning Seattle Seahawks credit meditation with improved performance. It's just like daily exercise for your brain. The purpose of meditation is not to quiet your thoughts; it's to get you to recognize them.

Often our negative thoughts are so much part of our autopilot that we just assume they are true. Meditation helps you to notice them as they are, just thoughts, and you are reminded that believing them is a choice.

Want to start meditating? Begin with just a few minutes of silence and focusing on your breath. You can follow a guided meditation on YouTube or use an app like Calm or Headspace.

## 3. SWEAT EVERY DAY

I can't underestimate what will happen when you start exercising. If you work out, you will be happier, healthier, look better, and feel more alive and energetic every day. Science continues to prove that exercise is one of the best forms of treatment for anxiety, depression, and negative thinking.

Richard Branson was once asked his #1 secret to productivity ... and he said working out, because it gave him four additional productive hours each day. You don't need a gym and you don't need a lot of time. Pick a type of exercise that works for you.

You can find minutes-long workouts online. My favorite style of exercise is using a tabata timer app on my phone. You pick one exercise and do 20 seconds on/10 seconds off for just four minutes. By the end, I'm gassed.

Four minutes is all you need and I guarantee you've got four minutes. No excuses. Pick any sort of movement that you enjoy. Walk, dance, bike, run, swim, play a sport, do a fitness class, garden ... anything that gets you moving.

## 4. PLAN YOUR DAY.

Each morning, before you even look at your phone, I want you to spend just ten minutes planning out your day.

According to Duke University professor Dan Ariely, the first 2 to 3 hours of the day are the best hours for your brain. This time is the peak productivity window where you can focus on your big-picture goals before you get derailed. It's easy to let those hours get away from you ... unless you plan out how you will spend them.

When you feel out of control, you lose your prefrontal functioning (aka rational thinking) and seriously cannot think straight. The simple fix? Plan your day. By planning your day, you increase your perception of control over your life—which in turn decreases your stress and makes you 66% more likely to feel happy and satisfied. Creating a concrete plan each day allows you to feel in control and completely change how your mind perceives your tasks.

I personally use [The 5 Second Journal](#), which helps me to define my top priority for the day, but you can use any notebook or planner. When you make planning your day a regular part of your routine, you'll find that your mindset changes from one of stress to one that feels more in control.

## 5. GET OFF THE SOFA AND OUTSIDE.

Studies have found that getting into nature reduces stress and blood pressure and improves the immune system, overall wellness, mood, and happiness levels.

When we are less stressed, we're less likely to live our lives on autopilot and more likely to notice the triggers and thoughts that lead to bad habits.

According to recent research from the EPA, Americans spend 93% of their lives indoors. Yes, 93%. You read that correctly. And if you're like many people, you may spend closer to 99% indoors. Without actively scheduling outdoor time into your routine, your default is to stay inside.

Each morning, when you plan your day, find 10-20 minutes in which you can be outside. It's even better if you can use this time to exercise, as outdoor exercise, like walking or hiking, has a huge impact on happiness and positivity. The best? Outdoor exercise with someone else. Ask your neighbor, friend, or colleague to take a walk with you outside and get triple the benefits.

People are not meant to spend 93% of their time inside. See what you can do to spend just 30 additional seconds each day outside—because over time, this compounds.

## 6. FUEL YOURSELF WITH THE BEST FOOD.

As best you can, eat foods found from nature and not from a package.

Recent studies about health find that a diet filled with a variety of foods, and lots of high-fiber plants, lead to better balanced gut health. Did you know that the health of your gut actually impacts the health of your brain? In fact, a better gut health means better emotional health.

Want to learn more about eating in a way that can actually change your brain and mindset? Check out "Change Your Brain, Change Your Life" by Dr. Daniel Amen. This book is an incredible resource on using lifestyle practices to manage brain health, anxiety, depression, negative thoughts, and more.

# 7.

## KEEP A "DID-IT" LIST.

The Progress Principle was created by Harvard Business School researcher Teresa Amabile. She studied 12,000 workday accounts to determine that the most important thing that leads to a positive work life is celebrating the "little wins."

When you keep track of your progress and celebrate the progress you make every single day, you are happier, more productive, and more engaged in your life. You can apply this principle to your own life by keeping track of everything that you accomplish each day.

My challenge for you is to keep a "Did It" list. It's the opposite of it a "To-Do" list. Fill it with every single small accomplishment that you complete. Keep it in a visible place. Whether you use a notepad or a Word document, keep track of what you accomplish each day (or every few days). Seeing your own progress boosts your confidence, helps you to realize what you have accomplished, and increases happiness.

# 8.

## HACK YOUR BRAIN TO BE POSITIVE.

According to Harvard researcher Shawn Achor, our brains are hardwired to perform at their best when we are positive. By making simple changes that put us into a positive mood, we become happier, more creative, smarter, and more productive. Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania also found that the happiest people don't actually have more good things happen to them. Instead, they're more tuned in to the small things that happen throughout the day.

How can you apply this to your own life? Simple: by using the three S's: **Story**, **Savor**, and **Smile**.

The first is changing your story. My favorite way to get into a positive mood is by looking at what's good in a situation rather than focusing on the bad. I recommend the book "Man's Search for Meaning" by Viktor Frankl. It's an incredible book that will inspire you to change your story and understand that your outlook on anything is always within your control—no matter.

The second thing to do is savor. It means taking time to really enjoy the positive things. You can make anything more fun and enjoyable by savoring it. Be present to what is going on right now. Remember, it's the little things of everyday life that have the power to boost your happiness. Little events, when savored and compounded, have the biggest effect of all.

Finally, if you can't bring yourself to change your story or savor—and your mindset is down in the dumps—start with a smile. Research shows that just smiling (even if you don't feel happy) actually makes you feel better. Smiling lowers stress and anxiety, boosts feel good hormones, and makes you feel happy.

## 9. MAKE SOMEONE'S DAY.

Researchers have found that 70% of your personal happiness can be explained by your relationships with others. If you don't invest your time and energy in your relationships, they will become weaker. However, with some deliberate planning and action, you can keep all of your relationships—with your friends, with your romantic partner, and with yourself—strong.

A powerful way to deepen your connections is by doing kind things for others. Research backs this up—researchers asked people to do 5 small acts of kindness in one day. The people who carried out the acts of kindness were happier for an entire week. It's easy to make other people's lives better—and it's a win-win, because it boosts both you and the person that you are helping.

Every week, commit to making someone smile. A text, greeting card, flowers, a meal, raking a lawn, offering to babysit, or kind words have the power to not only make another person happier, but will also make you happier in the process.

## 10. USE THE 5 SECOND RULE.

What is The 5 Second Rule? It's a metacognition tool that helps you bridge the gap between thought and action. In one sentence, here is The 5 Second Rule: If you have an instinct to act on a goal, you must physically move within 5 seconds or your brain will kill the idea.

To learn all about The 5 Second Rule, [click here](#) for a post that explains everything. How does The 5 Second Rule help you rewire your brain? Counting backward from 5 engages your prefrontal cortex, which means it takes you out of autopilot. The next time you find yourself being triggered by a situation or thinking familiar negative thoughts, catch them and count back.

**Now that you've read all ten of these mindset hacks, right now, pick one and commit to doing it for just five days. Then, let me know on social media how it's changed your mindset:**



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