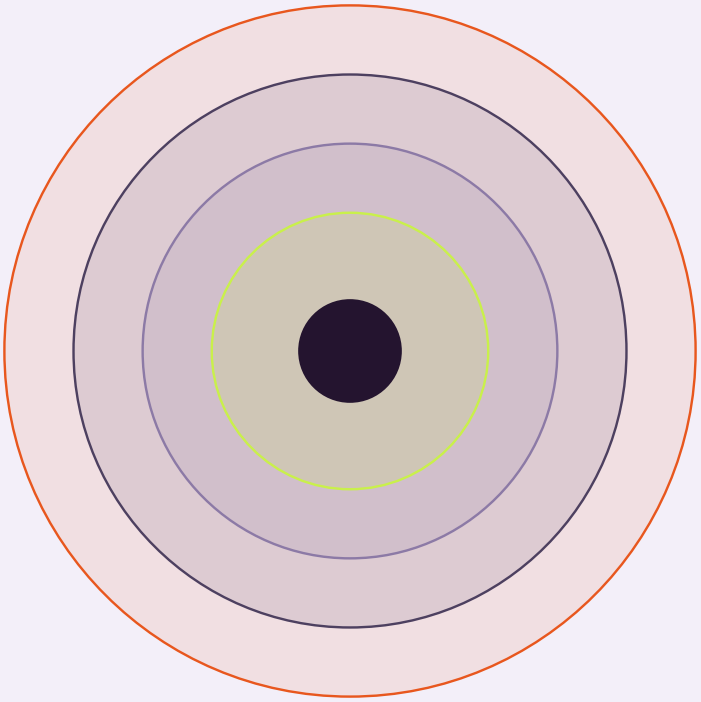


The Power of Discipline

A reading of the book by Daniel Walter (2020)

1. ACTION BOOK

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ABOUT THIS EDITION

This is HourLife's reading of The Power of Discipline, in our own words. It is not a substitute for the book.

BEFORE YOU START 01

The book in a minute

Daniel Walter's short manual on self-control, in ten chapters: the biology of willpower, the status quo bias, discipline disruptors and energy vampires, the 40% rule and the 10-minute rule, and a case for doing rather than trying. HourLife's takeaways are for the days motivation does not turn up.

Below are the 8 ideas HourLife readers vote up most, each in our words with a note on what it asks of you, and then the steps that put them to work.

WHAT READERS KEEP

The takeaways

1 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Discipline is not a personality you were issued. It is a capacity with an address in the brain.

The book opens with the biology of self-control and treats discipline as a skill that strengthens with practice, a very different proposition from a trait you either got or didn't.

2 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Motivation asks how you feel. Discipline never runs the survey.

HourLife's reading: the point is removing the feeling from the decision. You do not negotiate at 5am with a version of yourself who is asleep.

3 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

The 40% rule: when your body says it is finished, you have used about forty per cent of what you have.

The number is not the point — the point is that the stop signal arrives long before the actual limit, and knowing that buys you the next stretch.

4 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

The 10-minute rule: don't refuse the urge. Postpone it. Almost none of them survive ten minutes.

Refusal is a fight you can lose; delay is a fight the urge loses on its own, because cravings are waves rather than states.

5 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

The marshmallow was never about sweets. It was about whether the future felt real.

HourLife's reading of the delayed gratification research: you will not trade today for a future you cannot picture.

6 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Status quo bias is why the plan dies on day four: the brain scores the familiar as safer than the better.

The book has a chapter on the status quo bias. HourLife's takeaway: nothing has gone wrong when the new routine starts feeling threatening. That is the bias doing what it does, and it can be outlasted.

7 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Energy vampires are not villains. They are the people whose company reliably costs you the evening.

The book names energy vampires among the things that drain discipline. HourLife's reading: you can like someone and still notice that every conversation leaves you with nothing left to spend.

8 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Stop trying. Trying is a word that leaves the door open.

The book argues for doing rather than trying: "I'll try to go" has already written the excuse and "I'm going" has not.

PUT IT TO WORK

Your action book

Do the setup steps once, then keep the habits going. The setup changes your week; the habits keep it changed after the first good one.

The download puts this whole reading and a printable action book in one PDF: the setup checklist, then a page of real calendar days for each habit, starting on the day you choose.

SET UP ONCE

- [ ] Run a distraction ledger for three days
- [ ] Name tomorrow's hardest task tonight
- [ ] Remove the temptation instead of resisting it
- [ ] Write the morning as a fixed sequence, not a wish
- [ ] Audit the five people you spend the most hours with

KEEP UP DAILY

- ◯ Do the hardest thing before you touch the phone
- ◯ Apply the 10-minute rule to every urge
- ◯ When you want to stop, add ten per cent

30 days · Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026

Part two, after the reading, prints each of these as a page to fill in by hand.

THE LAST WORD

Before you go

Pick one step from the action book and do it today. An idea from a book starts to count once it changes what one ordinary day looks like.

PART TWO

The action book

Change the setup once, then keep it up. 5 setup actions to do once, and 3 habits to mark each day for 30 days.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026

Print it, or write on it in any PDF app.

SET UP ONCE

The setup checklist

Each of these is done once. Do one a day, and check it off when it is done.

- [ ] SETUP 1

Run a distraction ledger for three days

Every time you break off, write the time and what pulled you.

Three days is enough to see that it is the same four things at the same three hours, which is a scheduling problem rather than a character problem.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 2

Name tomorrow's hardest task tonight

One task, written down before bed, chosen while you are calm.

Deciding in the morning hands the choice to the version of you with the least willpower and the most excuses.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 3

Remove the temptation instead of resisting it

Willpower spent on a fight you could have avoided is willpower not spent on the work.

Take the app off the phone, leave the snacks out of the house, put the trainers by the door.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 4

Write the morning as a fixed sequence, not a wish

Four items in order, with times: up, move, eat, sit.

A sequence is executed; a list of intentions is negotiated. The first hour tends to set the tone for the rest of the day.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 5

Audit the five people you spend the most hours with

For each, write what you have after an evening together: more energy, the same, or less.

You are not firing anyone — you are deciding how often, and at what time of day.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

DAILY HABIT 1 OF 3

Do the hardest thing before you touch the phone

The first input of the day sets what your attention expects.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
16 ○	17 ○	18 ○	19 ○	20 ○	21 ○	22 ○
23 ○	24 ○	25 ○	26 ○	27 ○	28 ○	29 ○
30 ○						

December 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○	6 ○
7 ○	8 ○	9 ○	10 ○	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 2 OF 3

Apply the 10-minute rule to every urge

Not "no" — "not for ten minutes".

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

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EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 3 OF 3

When you want to stop, add ten per cent

HourLife's small version of the 40% idea, made small enough to actually use: one more set, one more page, five more minutes.

Nov 11 - Dec 10, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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December 2026

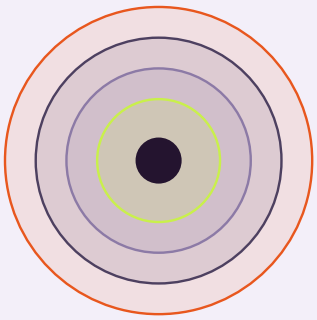
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EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP



Character is built in the hours nobody audits.

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY