

WHEN HABITS STOP MAKING SENSE

A CALM ORIENTATION FOR WHEN CHANGE
FEELS HARDER THAN IT SHOULD



INTRODUCTION: WHY THIS EXISTS

Most advice about habits and change assumes one thing: That the world we're trying to change in is basically reasonable.

That we have:

- stable energy
- supportive environments
- enough time and attention
- and systems that reward what actually matters

For many people, that's not the reality.

If you've tried to build habits but keep feeling like you're pushing against something invisible, there may be nothing wrong with you.

Your struggle might make sense.

This short workbook exists to help you:

- understand *why* habits often fall apart
- stop blaming yourself for predictable breakdowns
- and find a more honest starting point

Before fixing anything, it helps to understand what you're actually working with.

A DIFFERENT WAY TO LOOK AT STRUGGLE

When habits don't stick, we usually assume:

- "I'm inconsistent"
- "I lack discipline"
- "I should try harder"

But many habit struggles are not personal failures.

They are reasonable responses to unreasonable conditions.

Modern life often includes:

- constant distraction by design
- pressure to do more, faster
- blurred boundaries between work and rest
- information overload
- conflicting expectations

Trying to build calm, meaningful habits inside this environment is not neutral work.

It's harder than it looks on paper.

That doesn't mean change is impossible.
It means we need to start from reality, not ideals.

WHY HABITS BREAK (COMMON REASONS)

Habits usually stop making sense when they are designed for conditions that don't exist.

For example:

- habits that assume high energy every day
- routines that only work when nothing unexpected happens
- systems that rely on motivation instead of design
- goals that ignore emotional and mental load

When those habits break, people often conclude something is wrong with them.

More often, the design was simply mismatched to real life.

Understanding this changes everything.

REFLECTION 1: RECOGNISING THE PATTERN

Take a moment to reflect. You don't need to fix anything yet.

Where do your habits most often fall apart?

Write a few notes. (Bullet points are enough.)

- What kind of days tend to break your routines?
- What usually changes right before things stop working?
- What do you tend to blame yourself for in those moments?

FROM SELF-BLAME TO INFORMATION

When habits break, there are two possible responses:

1. Self-judgement
2. Curiosity

Self-judgement sounds like:

- “I should be better by now”
- “Why can’t I just stick to it?”
- “Others manage, why don’t I?”

Curiosity sounds like:

- “What conditions were present here?”
- “What was I expecting from myself?”
- “What might need to change in the design, not in me?”

Only curiosity gives you useful information.

This workbook invites you to move from judgement to information.

REFLECTION 2: WHAT CONDITIONS ARE YOU ACTUALLY IN?

Answer honestly. This is not a test.

On an average week, how would you describe your reality?

Circle or check what applies:

- fluctuating energy
- unpredictable schedule
- high mental load
- frequent interruptions
- emotional stress
- limited quiet time
- competing priorities

Now look at the habits you've been trying to build.

Do they assume a different version of your life?

RESPONSIBILITY WITHOUT BLAME

Understanding that your struggle makes sense is not an excuse to give up.

It's a way to reclaim responsibility **without punishment**.

Responsibility here doesn't mean:

- forcing yourself harder
- lowering your standards to nothing
- ignoring what matters to you

It means:

- telling the truth about your conditions
- designing for reality instead of fantasy
- choosing where you're willing to invest energy

You're not responsible for the world you were handed.
You are responsible for how honestly you respond to it.

REFLECTION 3: WHERE ARE YOU FORCING?

This question often changes things.

Where in your life are you currently forcing yourself to cope with something that doesn't really make sense?

This could be:

- a routine
- a goal
- a pace
- an expectation
- a way of working or living

Write freely. No fixing yet.

A SMALL REFRAME

Before moving on to habits, systems, or goals, pause here:

Instead of asking:

“What should I do better?”

Try asking:

“What would make more sense here?”

That question shifts you from self-improvement to self-leadership.

It opens up new options:

- smaller steps
- different timing
- fewer but more meaningful habits
- changes to environment, not just behaviour

This is where real change usually begins.

A GENTLE NEXT STEP

You don't need to redesign your whole life.
You only need a starting point.

Choose one area of life where habits currently feel hardest.

Then answer:

- What feels misaligned here?
- What assumptions might I be making about myself or my situation?
- What would feel more honest or realistic right now?

You don't need answers yet.
Noticing is enough.

CLOSING: ORIENTATION, NOT ACTION

This workbook is not meant to motivate you or push you into action.

It's meant to help you:

- understand your situation more clearly
- stop blaming yourself for predictable breakdowns
- and find a calmer place to start

From here, you can:

- untangle which expectations you're carrying
- choose what you want to stand for
- and design habits that actually fit your life

But that comes next.

For now, it's enough to recognise this:

When habits stop making sense, it's often a signal, not a failure.

