



14 Easy Habits *that build* Mental Strength

Mental strength is your mind's ability to keep working towards your goals regardless of the obstacles that stand in your way. Mental strength is also a set of skills that you can develop with practice. With each constructive decision you make, managing your feelings and thoughts becomes more automatic.

Cultivate habits that bring you greater success and peace of mind. Try these suggestions for harnessing your strengths.

Gaining Wisdom

- ▶ **Follow your curiosity.** Explore your interests. Approach each day with a sense of adventure and welcome new experiences.
- ▶ **Continue learning.** Commit yourself to lifelong learning. Sign up for adult education courses at a local university or study a foreign language online. Read a different book each week and attend lectures at nearby museums.
- ▶ **Indulge your creativity.** Take up a hobby. Decorate cakes or knit a sweater. Spend time making crafts with your children.
- ▶ **Develop mindfulness.** Use prayer and meditation to deepen your mindfulness. Concentrate on one activity at a time. Live in the present moment.

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Interacting with Others

- ▶ **Cultivate gratitude.** List the blessings in your life and recognize how much you depend on others. **Think about the services you receive from those around you** like the teachers who taught you how to read and farmers who grow your food.
- ▶ **Show respect.** It's easier to honor the value of each life when you appreciate how closely we are connected. Let your speech and actions express your esteem.
- ▶ **Be kind.** However strong we are, mishaps still occur. Be gentle with yourself and others during difficult times. They'll be more likely to return the favor.
- ▶ **Give generously. Share your time, talents, and wealth with others.** You'll feel richer and experience more joy and satisfaction. Surprise your family and friends with random gifts. Volunteer in your community and support worthy causes.
- ▶ **Practice forgiveness.** Letting go of resentments frees up your energy. Pardon others when they offend you. Show the same compassion for yourself when you slip up.

Other Mental Habits

- ▶ **Muster up your courage.** Growing stronger requires taking risks. **Give yourself credit for taking the plunge even if your first effort winds up being just a trial run.** Keep your sights on what you have to gain when you push yourself to speak in public or try a new sport.
- ▶ **Focus on integrity.** Align your actions with your values. Think through the long-term consequences of your decisions. Are you allocating your time in a way that serves your purpose in life?
- ▶ **Tolerate discomfort.** Uncertainty and setbacks are a part of life, especially when you tackle challenges head on. Enduring a temporary rough patch can be the first step toward a brighter future.
- ▶ **Delay gratification. Impulse control is one of the most important skills associated with happiness and high achievement.** The secret is to distract yourself from temptations so you can put them in perspective.
- ▶ **Hope for the future.** Whether you feel strong or weak today, better things may be in store for tomorrow. You'll be better prepared to handle any circumstances when you reinforce your inner strengths.

Accomplish more with less effort. Building up your mental strength puts you on the path toward enhancing your relationships and finding greater fulfillment. You'll have the inner resources to strive for what you want.

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