

I will

(MAKE IT EASY)

when _____

(CHOOSE YOUR TIMING)

in _____

(PICK A PLACE)

and use _____

(MAKE IT TANGIBLE)

to cue me to start.

I will do this with

(FIND YOUR FRIENDS)

and _____

(MAKE IT PLAYFUL)

to keep it engaging for my whole family.

MAKE IT EASY

- Forgive yourself.
- Make it easier than you think.
- Write it down.

MAKE IT TANGIBLE

- Set a cue that...
 - ... you can touch.
 - ... you trip over.
 - ... distracts you from your phone.
 - ... works for you, not for us.

PICK A PLACE

- A convenient place you pass often.
- A place that is inviting and free of distractions.
- A place that has items conducive to the spiritual habit.

CHOOSE YOUR TIMING

- Day to day, prioritize evening and morning
- Season to season, pay attention to temporal landmarks.
- Embrace the grace of the restart.

MAKE IT PLAYFUL

- Be playful!
- Play is a spiritual habit.
- Say yes in advance to the playful moment.

FIND YOUR FRIENDS

- Friends increase our confidence.
- Friends give us encouragement.
- Friends provide accountability.
- Friends multiply our enjoyment.
- Friends fix our mistakes.
- Friends give us a sense of purpose.

INTRODUCTION: THE HUNT FOR CONGRUENCE

1. Eugene H. Peterson, *As Kingfishers Catch Fire: A Conversation on the Ways of God Formed by the Words of God* (Colorado Springs: WaterBrook, 2017), xvii–xix. Peterson’s use of the term “congruence” almost certainly draws from the field of social psychology, where the term has been used for years. Psychologist Carl Rogers described “congruence” as the state in which a person’s self-image matches their “ideal self.” Another way to put it: A congruent person’s *heart* matches their *head*. Saul Mcleod, “Carl Rogers Humanistic Theory and Contribution to Psychology,” *Simply Psychology*, January 29, 2024; <https://www.simplypsychology.org/carl-rogers.html>.
2. See James Clear, *Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones* (New York: Random House, 2018).

CHAPTER 1: WHO GOD IS (AND WHAT THAT MEANS FOR YOUR SPIRITUAL HABITS)

1. Philip Yancey, *What’s So Amazing About Grace?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1997), 45.

CHAPTER 2: WHAT IS A SPIRITUAL HABIT, ANYWAY?

1. James K. A. Smith, *How to Inhabit Time: Understanding the Past, Facing the Future, Living Faithfully Now* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2022), 128–29.
2. Andy Crouch, *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 191.

CHAPTER 3: MAKE IT EASY

1. I know this is a fictional anecdote, but I feel the need to be crystal clear here: Kristen is dead wrong with this statement, because Nicolas Cage is a gem.

- (Some might even call him a national treasure.) I don't want anyone walking away from this book with the wrong impression.
2. The term "decision fatigue" was coined in 2011 by social psychologist Roy F. Baumeister. John Tierney, "Do You Suffer from Decision Fatigue?," *New York Times*, August 17, 2011, <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/21/magazine/do-you-suffer-from-decision-fatigue.html>.
 3. Chip Heath and Dan Heath, *Switch: How to Change Things When Change Is Hard* (New York: Crown Currency, 2010), 52.
 4. James Clear, *Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones* (New York: Random House, 2018), 71.
 5. Heath, *Switch*, 17.
 6. Clear, *Atomic Habits*, 153.
 7. *Ibid.*, 162.
 8. *Mary Poppins*, directed by Robert Stevenson (Burbank, CA: Walt Disney Productions, 1964).

CHAPTER 4: MAKE IT TANGIBLE

1. There are several versions of this out there. Here's the one I saw (and yes, it really did trick me): <https://youtu.be/xNSgmm9FX2s?si=g60hXIhtttODU8LX>.
2. John Mark Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry: How to Stay Emotionally Healthy and Spiritually Alive in the Chaos of the Modern World* (Colorado Springs: WaterBrook, 2019), 54.
3. *Ibid.*, 219–44.
4. Personal conversation with Matthew Sleeth. Dr. Sleeth's book on Sabbath, *24/6: A Prescription for a Healthier, Happier Life* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2012), is well worth the read.
5. Thanks to Amy Kavanaugh for pointing us to this passage to illustrate this idea!
6. Kerry Patterson et al., *Influencer: The New Science of Leading Change* (New York: McGraw Hill Education, 2013), 83.
7. James Clear, *Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones* (New York: Random House, 2018), 86.
8. Andy Crouch, *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017), 35.
9. My favorite is still Andy Crouch's *Tech-Wise Family*, which is both insightful and beautifully written. Sociologist Sherry Turkle's *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age* is another great one, especially when it comes to the issue of technology and attention. For a more accessible and

playful approach, John Mark Comer's *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* is a delight. And Justin Whitmel Earley has written helpfully about cultivating wise tech habits in his books *The Common Rule: Habits of Purpose for an Age of Distraction* and *Habits of the Household: Practicing the Story of God in Everyday Family Rhythms*. I tend to geek out about this stuff. So don't feel the need to read all these. But great stuff is out there if you're interested.

CHAPTER 5: PICK A PLACE

1. If you want to explore it yourself, this bookstore-toilet connection is often called the "Mariko Aoki phenomenon." Legitimate research (in English, anyway) is a bit tough to find, but here's a decent summary of the phenomenon: Jonathan Jarry, "The Unbearable Poopness of Bookstores," January 22, 2022, McGill University, <https://www.mcgill.ca/oss/article/general-science/unbearable-poopness-bookstores>.
2. James Clear, *Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones* (New York: Random House, 2018), 84.
3. "How Much is 1 Ton of Gold Worth?," BullionByPost (Birmingham, UK), <https://www.bullionbypost.com/index/gold/how-much-is-one-ton-of-gold-worth/>.
4. Boyce Rensberger, "Solomon's Mine Believed Found," *New York Times*, May 24, 1976, <https://www.nytimes.com/1976/05/24/archives/solomons-mine-believed-found-75249297.html>.
5. Lily Bernheimer, *The Shaping of Us: How Everyday Spaces Structure Our Lives, Behaviour, and Well-Being* (San Antonio, TX: Trinity University Press, 2017), 146.
6. Kaleidoscope—Kids' Bibles Reimagined, <https://readkaleidoscope.com>.

CHAPTER 6: CHOOSE YOUR TIMING

1. James K. A. Smith, *How to Inhabit Time: Understanding the Past, Facing the Future, Living Faithfully Now* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2022), 102.
2. Daniel Pink, *When: The Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2018), 54–60.
3. Ibid., 32.
4. Ibid., 26–40.
5. Eugene H. Peterson, *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 68.

6. James Clear, *Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones* (New York: Random House, 2018), 79.
7. Pink, *When*, 93.
8. Smith, *How to Inhabit Time*, 61.

CHAPTER 7: MAKE IT PLAYFUL

1. Catherine Price, *The Power of Fun: How to Feel Alive Again* (New York: Random House, 2023), 17.
2. Mike Rucker, *The Fun Habit: How the Pursuit of Joy and Wonder Can Change Your Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2023), 5.
3. Price, *The Power of Fun*, 76.
4. G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy* (Colorado Springs: Shaw Books, 2001), 20.
5. Stuart Brown with Christopher Vaughan, *Play: How It Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul* (New York: Penguin, 2009), 5.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., 6.
9. Ibid., 17.
10. Price, *The Power of Fun*, 18.
11. Ibid.
12. Brown and Vaughan, *Play*, 7.
13. Brené Brown, *The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are* (Center City, MN: Hazelden Publishing, 2010), 128.
14. Brown, *The Gifts of Imperfection*, 127.
15. Price, *The Power of Fun*, 37.
16. Ibid., 34.

CHAPTER 8: FIND YOUR FRIENDS

1. We've often seen this pithy statement summarized as "an African proverb." The sentiment certainly matches many of the more communally minded societies of sub-Saharan Africa. But there isn't any clear source for the quote. Best we can tell, the current phrasing was influenced by an African proverb but popularized by an American author, Bill Hull, in his book *Choose the Life: Exploring a Faith That Embraces Discipleship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004), 107. See also Andrew Whitby, "Who First Said: If You Want

- to Go Fast, Go Alone; If You Want to Go Far, Go Together?,” blog, <https://andrewwhitby.com/2020/12/25/if-you-want-to-go-fast/>.
2. Daniel H. Pink, *When: The Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2018), 103, 181; Kerry Patterson et al., *Influencer: The New Science of Leading Change* (New York: McGraw Hill Education, 2013), 203, 208; Mike Rucker, *The Fun Habit: How the Pursuit of Joy and Wonder Can Change Your Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2023), 127.
 3. Charles Duhigg, *Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business* (New York: Random House, 2012), 85.
 4. Pink, *When*, 181.
 5. Pink, *When*, 103; Patterson et al., *Influencer*, 203, 208.
 6. Pink, *When*, 181; Patterson et al., *Influencer*, 210.
 7. Justin Whitmel Earley, *Made for People: Why We Drift into Loneliness and How to Fight for a Life of Friendship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2023), 200.
 8. The word for “man” in Hebrew is *adam*, so Genesis 2:18 could be read either as “It is not good that the man is alone” or “It is not good that Adam is alone” (as I’ve put it here).
 9. As a starter, we’d suggest Michael Reeves’s book *Delighting in the Trinity: An Introduction to the Christian Faith* (Westmont, IL: IVP Academic, 2012).
 10. Rucker, *The Fun Habit*, 120.
 11. Chip Heath and Dan Heath, *The Power of Moments: Why Certain Experiences Have Extraordinary Impact* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2017), 211.

CONCLUSION: GOD FINISHES

1. Kerry Patterson et al., *Influencer: The New Science of Leading Change* (New York: McGraw Hill Education, 2013), 133.
2. Ed Catmull and Amy Wallace, *Creativity, Inc.: Overcoming the Unseen Forces That Stand in the Way of True Inspiration* (New York: Random House, 2014), 7.
3. “*Stare in via Dei, hoc est retrocedere, et proficere, hoc est semper de novo incipere.*” Pauck’s translation reads, “To go forward means ever to begin anew.” Martin Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, The Library of Christian Classics, vol. 15, trans. and ed. Wilhelm Pauck (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), 370.
4. Kaleidoscope—Kids’ Bibles Reimagined, <https://readkaleidoscope.com>.
5. Tara-Leigh Cobble, *The Bible Recap: A One-Year Guide to Reading and Understanding the Entire Bible* (Bloomington, MN: Bethany House, 2020). Learn more at: <https://www.thebible Recap.com/>.

6. BibleProject, <https://bibleproject.com/explore/>.
7. Alexandra Moe, "Singing Is Good for You. Singing with Others May Be Even Better," *Washington Post*, June 25, 2023, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wellness/2023/06/25/singing-with-others-mental-physical-health/>.