**What You Actually Need To Change A Bad Habit Part 2** (Hint: It's Not Willpower) By Locke Hughes

Here are a few ways to “hack” yourself so you can better achieve your goals, whatever they might be.

1. Adjust your environment.

What I suggest to my clients and do in my own life is to look to see which distractions and temptations you can eliminate completely. Ask yourself: Where can you automate good decisions? How can you eliminate the option to make a bad decision at all? For instance, if you’re trying to eat healthier, it’s time to toss all the chips and candy from your kitchen. Instead stock it with healthy foods that you actually want to eat ― not just carrots and celery.

Want to look at your phone less often? Turn it off, and place on the other side of the room. Or delete your most tempting apps from your phone altogether. Trying to save money? Set up an automatic transfer from your checking to your savings account every month so you don’t have to think about it. Want to work out in the morning? Sleep in your workout gear and sign up a class you’ll be charged for missing.

2. Take a break — a real break.

If you don’t give yourself a chance to rest and recharge, you will run out of willpower. Just as your muscles need rest in order to recover and grow stronger, your willpower needs time to recover as well. Especially in our world that’s so full of distractions, it’s essential to schedule in time away from it all. Take a real vacation where you can unplug and disconnect, or even just a daylong staycation somewhere peaceful.

This doesn’t just apply to taking a trip, either. You can take a break by taking it easy in another area of your life by easing up on ambitious goals. For example, if you’re trying to eat healthier or save money, it’s probably not the time to start training for a triathlon. In other words, cut yourself some slack in areas of your life where you’re not trying to exert your willpower. Pick one or two things to work on, but then give yourself some space ― don’t take on multiple challenges.

3. Revisit your “why.”

If you feel like you’ve lost sight of your overarching goal, consider it a sign that it’s time to reset. If you can’t remember why you really want to save money or why working out is important to you, you won’t be nearly as motivated to do it. Practicing visualization can help here. Essentially, you should imagine, in specific detail, those bigger goals. If you have an active imagination, you may be able to just conjure up those goals in a real, detailed way in your head.

4. Find a support team.

You’ve probably heard tips like “set a due date,” “mark it in your calendar” or “share your goal with others.” But the real trick to staying accountable is to have people alongside you, supporting you along the way. Whatever your goal is, doing it with people who you can get vulnerable with and who you trust will hold you accountable can make a huge difference. This can obviously be done with people you know IRL. But if you can’t rely on a support team in person, look online to find free support groups, and go from there.

5. Be kind to yourself, especially when you slip up.

The old adage “To err is human” holds true. You’re going to fail sometimes, and it’s important to be nice to yourself when you do. You’re still human, you’re still going to struggle. If you mess up or give in to temptation, don’t beat yourself up about it ― just forgive yourself and move on. Research shows that the more you judge yourself, the more likely you are to engage in that same behavior again, creating a vicious cycle.