

DR.OZ

Special Edition

# THE GOOD LIFE

Dr. Oz's  
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Diet

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## 🕒 Find a way to make a tough chore fun

For instance, save a beloved podcast for the day you have to clear out the garage or deep-clean the loo. Giving yourself something—anything—to look forward to as you tackle one of your least favorite tasks means you won't have to work so hard to make yourself do it. This might be helpful on the treadmill, too. In one study, participants hit the gym more often when they were given thrilling audiobooks to listen to during workouts.

## 🕒 Sleep more

A study published in *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience* found that sleep-deprived people were more likely to give in to impulses, have less focus, and make questionable decisions. "If you're exhausted, it's going to be much harder to stick to your guns when a tough choice comes up," explains Erin Falconer, author of *How to Get Sh\*t Done*. Hit the sheets for at least seven hours a night so you can get up in the morning and make choices that work in your favor.

## 🕒 Think about the "why" behind your goal

What's driving your desire to learn French? Would it help you communicate with your hubby's side of the family? Was it a childhood dream to travel to Paris? Get clear on what makes a goal so valuable to you, and it'll be easier to stay focused and complete it, says Eric Klinger, Ph.D., a professor emeritus of psychology at the University of Minnesota Morris.

## 🕒 Hit autopilot

When it comes to creating new habits, it's sometimes smart to take the human element out of the equation and simply automate your decisions, says Jean Chatzky, coauthor of *AgeProof: Living Longer Without Running Out of Money or Breaking a Hip*. That way you cut down on guesswork and temptation. If you automate your breakfasts and have the same

## ✗ Get clear on what makes a goal valuable to you, and it'll be easier to stay on top of your game.

kale and goat cheese omelet every workday, you won't have to wonder whether you should swing by the bakery—your meal is already accounted for. It can also mean doing as Chatzky does and setting up online banking to automatically funnel cash to a separate savings account each month.

## 🕒 Buddy up

If others are depending on you, that may make you even less likely to bail on a goal. Struggling to eat more veggies? Pal up with a friend to have a salad-for-dinner night once a week, or organize regular group outings to the farmers' market with the girls.

## 🕒 Set yourself up for success

"People who have high levels of willpower are good at structuring their environment to create habits that work for them," says Wendy Wood, Ph.D., a professor of psychology and business at the University of Southern California. So instead of beating yourself up because you just can't bypass a box of doughnuts without reaching for one, tweak your surroundings so you're less likely to run into those sugary saboteurs. Take a different route to the ladies' room at work so you won't be tempted by leftover pastries from the morning meeting. And during a big deadline week, use an app like SelfControl that helps you block time-wasting websites.

## 🕒 Word it differently

The next time you're ready to choose the couch over the gym, frame your goals in positive language ("I'm strengthening my heart") instead of negative ("I just have to do 30 minutes on that god-awful elliptical"). It'll help you find the extra push you need.

## 🕒 Pile on the incentives

If you usually give up on a goal after days or weeks, sweeten the pot. You'll be more likely to stick to your intention if you give yourself added motivation for success, says Michael Roizen, M.D., author of *This Is Your Do-Over*. Challenge a coworker to see who can squeeze in more gym workouts this month, or use cash as an enticement: Turn the page for health moves that might also earn you extra money.

## 🕒 Tell yourself you can go the distance

Get into the habit of pushing yourself just a little bit further each time you're ready to throw in the towel. Studies show that we often put more limits on ourselves than we should. "We aren't as mentally fragile as we perceive ourselves to be," says Clarkson. The next time you feel like dipping out of a tough new dance class early, find out what will happen if you don't quit. The likely outcome: You'll succeed, big time.



**DR. OZ SAYS...**  
I adore warm, doughy bread and am tempted to eat a slice with a nice pat of butter at dinner, but it makes me feel lethargic. So when I eat out, I preemptively cancel the bread basket. Eliminate temptation, and it gets a lot easier to do the right thing.