

# 10 THINGS UNSUCCESSFUL PEOPLE DO

**“Good habits are hard to form but easy to live with. Bad habits are easy to form but hard to live with.”**

**S**potting a successful person with ambition, goals, determination, and a highly motivated, charismatic personality can be easy. But what about the ones who are habitually unsuccessful? Can you spot them as easily? I think you can. You have to wonder, are they practicing certain habits that are leading them to fail? And if they changed their habits, could it change their results? Absolutely.

The first successful man Darius Foroux ever met told him, “I just try to avoid being unsuccessful.” The entrepreneur told Foroux to study what makes someone “unsuccessful, unhappy, broke, fat, stupid,” in order to eliminate those things from your own life. “To this day,” Darius said, “I still live by that advice. I like his concept of trying not to be unsuccessful.”<sup>96</sup>

Now that we have identified the daily habits of the most successful people in the world, let’s take a look at some of the bad habits the unsuccessful demonstrate.

Nobody is perfect and even highly successful people fall prey to some negative habits now and then, but the truth is there are certain consistent behaviors that could be stopping your success. The first step is to recognize those bad habits. In this chapter, I have outlined 10 of the habits of unsuccessful people, so that you know what to avoid as you make an all-out effort to achieve your goals and live your dreams. If you closely identify with any of the following 10 habits, then it's time to reevaluate your routines.

I admit, there are times when I have indulged in some of these negative actions, but let's strive to steer clear of them when we find ourselves falling into these detours that derail our dreams.

This may sound like an oxymoron, but I encourage you to be gentle, but firm (gently firm) on yourself as you go down the list of bad habits to see which ones you may identify with. Don't get discouraged; get determined. This entire book has proven that you can reinvent your life by making a few small changes in your daily routine.

## **MY DAILY ROUTINE**

**Dave Martin**

**President of Dave Martin International**

**Daily 5:**

1. Order my day – set my daily schedule to maximize my time and effectiveness.
2. Spend time in the Bible – some days more than others, but each day some time.
3. Encourage someone and talk to someone who encourages me.
4. Give away something every day – maybe a coffee, maybe a kind word, maybe more...but this keeps me mindful of generosity.
5. Do something every day that moves me toward my goals – it may be a project, a phone call, research, a conference, or anything that propels me forward.

## 1. They complain.

**“Instead of complaining that the rosebush is full of thorns, be happy that the thornbush has roses.”**  
- German Proverb

People can identify exactly how successful or unsuccessful you are the moment you open your mouth. Ouch! I know, I don't like that either. The truth is, the only thing complaining does is convince other people that you are not in control. Complaining is a subconscious way of expressing that you are powerless to change your circumstances. When you complain about your debt, you are voicing hopelessness to be financially free. When you complain about your body, you are decreeing impossibilities to be in shape. When you complain about your job, you are expressing despair that it could never improve.

**“Don't complain about something you don't have a vision to change.”**  
- Joyce Meyer

If you're not going to make changes in your finances, to your body or place of employment, then don't complain about it. You chose it, you spent it, you ate it, you settled there. So don't complain about it. I know, that was a little more on the firm side than the gentle one.

Pay attention to how many things you complain about on a given day. You'll be surprised by how often a complaint comes out of your mouth. The traffic, the weather, how you slept, your hunger, your hair, the stoplight, your parking space, how crowded the restaurant is, the food is cold, your head hurts, your long list of to-do's, and how tired you are. The list is endless. And we do it without even noticing we're doing it.

Here's the result. When you complain about your life, the only thing you'll get is a lot more to complain about. You get what you focus on.

## 5 THINGS SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE DO BEFORE 8 A.M.

Remember that road trip game “Slug Bug” that kids would play in the car so that they could yell “Slug Bug” and punch each other every time they saw a VW Bug on the road? As soon as they start looking for Volkswagen Beetles, kids will find them all over the place. Complaining works the same way. It magnifies the negatives in your life so much that it crowds out the potential for you to see anything else.

Complaining has internal and external consequences. It drains your energy and causes you to subconsciously feel hopeless about your circumstances. Your self-esteem takes a hit when you believe you can’t change anything in your life. It’s also contagious. When you complain, it spreads to those around you and brings your entire atmosphere down.

With these results, I’m sure you can see how nothing delays your progress more than complaining. When you complain, you remain! Jim Rohn said, “Indulge in this slightly and you might as well forget the future. If you spend five minutes complaining, you have just wasted five minutes. If you continue complaining, it won’t be long before they haul you out to a financial desert and there let you choke on the dust of your own regret.” He was a little dramatic! But it’s true. Complaining is an utter waste of time, and it can ruin you.

Consider the story of the Israelites headed to the Promised Land, the land of abundance, when their trip was delayed by 40 years. Why? Because they obsessively complained. They griped about the water, the weather, the food, the leadership, the distance, the climate, the desert, the people. Here’s the shocking news: Their trip should have taken 11 days, but it took them four decades!

What circumstances are you circling year after year, making little progress, due to your enormous amount of complaints? Is it the mountain of weight loss you keep going around? Rather than focus on your progress, you’ve magnified the lack of results? Complain and you’ll remain.

Could it be the mountain of marital problems? Rather than pinpoint the good in your spouse, you zero in on the bad and magnify it to such

a degree that it crowds out any potential for restoration? Complain and you'll remain.

Could it be the mountain of financial problems? Rather than focus on paying off one debt, you get overwhelmed at the pile of bills and the empty savings account, so you gripe about the home, car and utilities that you used to see as blessings. Complain and you'll remain.

**“The more you complain about your problems, the more problems you'll have to complain about.”**

**- Zig Ziglar**

David Horsager, author of *The Trust Factor*, said, “Eighteen years ago, my mentor asked me to make a ninety-day commitment to stop complaining.” Horsager said, “It absolutely changed my life!”<sup>97</sup> He's now a bestselling author featured in *Fast Company*, *Forbes*, *Wall Street Journal*, and his clients include companies such as Wells Fargo, Goodyear, Dept. of Homeland Security, and the New York Yankees! It all began by making a commitment to stop complaining.

Philippians 2:14 says, “Do *all things* without grumbling and faultfinding and complaining...” (AMPC, emphasis added). That's a pretty clear command. No complaints!

Remember that every word you speak has some kind of outcome on your life. Are your words taking you closer to or further from your goals? Proverbs 18:21 says that our words have the power of life or death in them. What you say matters! Avoid complaining at all cost.

Think of it this way, on your road to success, what do you want people to hear when you open your mouth? Complaints or gratitude? When you complain, you sound powerless. When you're grateful, you sound powerful. I love this quote, “If we want to complain, there will always be things to complain about. If we want to be grateful, there will always be things to be grateful about. The beauty is that the choice is up to us.”<sup>98</sup>

## 2. They are always late.

Are you the friend who shows up to the wedding after the bride has already made it to the altar? You try to tiptoe in the ceremony hoping you haven't drawn away much attention from the vows and whisper your apologies to the *prompt* guests who quietly scoot over to make space for you?

Are you the patient who arrives 15 minutes late for the dentist appointment leaving the receptionist in a bind trying to move other appointments around? Or the family member everyone is waiting on while the food is getting cold?

"What late people don't understand about on-time people," comedian Mike Birbiglia says in a stand-up routine, "is that we hate them. Getting a reputation as a latie is not a good thing!"<sup>99</sup>

For some people, being on time seems almost impossible. Even if they have all day to prepare for an evening dinner out, they are still running around in a frenzy trying to get out the door 10 minutes late.

I was at a restaurant the other day with a group of ladies and one of them arrived about 15 minutes late. Laughing it off (as no indicator of being unsuccessful), she said, "I'm late to everything. It's the story of my life." To be honest, it's no laughing matter.

Chronic lateness communicates a subtle, yet strong, message: You're inconsiderate of other people's schedules, you're a procrastinator, you're not an effective time manager, you're selfish, you are unreliable, and you're not in control. Wow! I feel bad even typing those descriptions; however, study after study shows this to be the message you're unintentionally giving through your lateness.

I don't want to be too harsh in this chapter, so please don't get me wrong. I'm not saying that you should never be late and if you are, you're a loser. Even with the best intentions and scheduling ahead, it's impossible to not be late sometimes. It's happened to me. I get the unplanned phone call, the train crossing that I didn't factor in, the hair that refuses to style right, and the eyelash that won't stay on!

However, it turns into a roadblock to success when people anticipate your lateness with pristine accuracy. When you're always late to everything: church, dinners, sporting events, family gatherings, doctor appointments, weddings, funerals, airport pick-ups, and work, that's when it's a major problem, and it reflects your integrity (or lack of it).

I've spoken many times for Harvest Church in London, where they pay strict attention to starting their weekly services on time. Pastor Jo Naughton previously held a prestigious job in marketing for the Prince of Wales before she and her husband, Paul, began pastoring. With her adorable British accent, she said, "I can't, for the life of me, understand how anyone would consider showing up late for church." She explained, "When I worked for the Prince, you arrived early and were in place eagerly awaiting his royal arrival. To be late would be inconceivable." Her next statement struck me deeply, "Lateness wasn't tolerated for the Prince, why should it be for the King of Kings?!" Point well taken.

In his article (and I love this title), "Being Late Says a Lot About You and None of It's Good," John West says that when you break a "time promise" it's not without consequence. He says, "Every time you do it, you are sending a subtle message to the person you stood up that they are less important than you or whatever you were doing. It also says that you aren't dependable, reliable, or maybe even honest. And let's face it: all that adds up to making you an icky person to work with."<sup>100</sup>

So, if you think punctuality doesn't matter, think again. When you make this small but significant change in your routine, it instantly communicates a strong message that you care, you're responsible, you're in control, you're proactive, and you have the habits of a successful person.

### **3. They blame others.**

Unsuccessful people always point the finger at someone else for why they are where they are in life. Some call it a victim mentality. They will give you every reason in the book as to why they can't succeed: the government,

the economy, the lack of education, the lack of time, poor parenting, the ex-spouse, the President, you name it. It's never their own fault.

Truthfully, this started all the way back in Genesis when Eve blamed the serpent and Adam blamed Eve for why they couldn't keep God's instruction to not eat the forbidden fruit. Nobody wanted to take responsibility for that life-altering consequence.

Blaming others solves nothing. We make choices, and our choices have consequences. When you learn to take personal responsibility for where you are in life, it's a massive step on the road to being successful.

In the first chapter of Jack Canfield's life-changing book, *The Success Principles*, he states that the first key to success is to take 100% responsibility for your life. There is only one person responsible for the outcome of your life and that's you.

When you take personal responsibility for your life rather than blame others for your outcome, you are admitting that your decisions have led to your current health, your debt, your relationships, your body, your lifestyle, your success or lack thereof. It's all because of you. That's hard to admit, but it's also a forward step in taking responsibility and turning your poor choices into successful ones.

As a young aspiring speaker, Zig Ziglar heard the statement, "You are where you are because that's exactly where you chose to be." Ziglar said, at the time he was "broke, in debt, and down in the dumps. It came through loud and clear that I was where I was and what I was because of the choices and decisions I made!"<sup>101</sup>

We like to look for a cause, a reason, or an excuse so we can let ourselves off the hook. People will blame the bad hand they were dealt in life, that life isn't fair, and they spend their energy feeling sorry for themselves. But that's all one big excuse for their own failure to succeed.

The truth is, that it takes a big person to accept and admit that they messed up, made bad choices, took the wrong turn, and ended up in a less than desirable place in life. When everything that goes wrong in



your life is somebody else's fault, you're sending yourself the message that you are powerless, and you place yourself in the passenger's seat of your own destiny.

Are you truly that powerless? No! You have the choice today to get in the driver's seat by taking 100% responsibility for where you go from this day forward.

**“For we are each responsible for  
our own conduct.”  
- Galatians 6:5, NLT**

#### **4. They waste money.**

If money's always burning a hole in your pocket, you're setting yourself up for failure. Financially unsuccessful people—as I was for many years—have no idea where all their money is going. They aren't frugal with their finances, and they have a habit of making spontaneous purchases with no regard to the consequence of high interest payments or the foregoing of savings for the future. They tend to live in the moment.

This group of over-spenders lives beyond their means racking up credit card debt because they can't seem to delay gratification. If they want something, they get it...whether they can afford it or not. After all, they don't really know if they can afford it because they don't have a budget.

“Your money habits can make you rich or put you in the poor house,” Tom Corley of *Rich Habits* boldly states. He cites a study done by Brown University when he says, “Most of the habits we pick up in life come from our parents. This includes money habits. If your parents had bad money habits, it is likely those habits rubbed off on you. But in order to change bad money habits, you need to first become aware of them.”<sup>102</sup>

If your parents didn't place a high priority on saving and investing, you naturally won't either. Corley spent five years studying habits of the rich and the poor. He reports that, “Eighty-eight percent of the poor in my

study had over \$5,000 in revolving credit-card debt. Sixty-nine percent used those credit cards to purchase big-ticket items. And 77% had multiple credit cards.” Corley went on to explain, “Sixty-one percent of the poor did not own their homes—they rented them—while 100% of the rich owned their homes. When you don’t own your home, you are unable to build home equity.”<sup>103</sup>

Other items the unsuccessful tend to waste money on are: fast food, gambling, playing the lottery, expensive electronic devices, new cars, renting furniture and appliances, late fees, vacations, etc.

There are so many shiny items vying for our attention, and retail therapy definitely makes us feel happy! A weekend getaway, a spa treatment, or an expensive cupcake does wonders to boost our spirits. But in the long run, spending money we don’t have (in our bank, not on our credit cards) leads to the stress of living beyond our means.

The biggest drain on our money can be eating out. The lunch you didn’t cook because you weren’t in the mood adds up. If you spend \$10 a day (multiplied by four days a week), it’s costing you over \$2,000 a year on that salad, the burrito, the muffin, and the sandwich you could have made before you ran out of the house. Imagine that two grand going in a savings account or towards your dream vacation. Instead, your financial future was (literally) eaten up by poor decisions.

Proverbs 29:18 is true in every area of our lives. Where there is no financial vision, your money will perish. However, when you have a financial target, a goal, a clear, compelling vision to save \$1,000, to pay off a credit card, to go on a dream trip, to open an investment account (and secure your future), it’s amazing how it guides every financial decision you make.

Unsuccessful people don’t have financial goals; therefore, they spend and spend and spend. They spend more than they earn.

If you can’t pay cash for what you want, don’t get it. You can’t afford it right now. Save up for it. Earn it. Enjoy the thrill of knowing you truly earned this thing.

## **5. They surround themselves with other unsuccessful people.**

Remember when your mom came unglued because you started hanging out with the girl who could date way before you could or the guy who had a reputation for being a rebel? Well, adult friends have the same influence in derailing your success.

Nearly everyone knows that their closest friends can affect their life, but what most people don't realize is how profound this influence is on your level of success. They affect your self-confidence, your beliefs, your behaviors, your spending habits, your health choices, your religious and political views, your discipline or lack thereof and much more.

Do you want to get fit? Hang out with fit people. Do you want to be rich? Spend time with rich people. We tend to feed off each other's energy. If your friends typically swing through the drive-thru for lunch every day, you'll sit right beside them and join the ride. If your closest companions watch the latest reality TV shows, you'll swap stories on your coffee break. You become like those with whom you spend the most time.

In fact, an experiment was conducted between a monkey that never feared snakes and a monkey who was terror-stricken by them. They were placed in the same space together with the harmless reptile. The brave monkey began to show fear of the snakes when it saw the anxious response of the other monkey that was frightened. These little monkeys illustrate how behaviors, insecurities, and fears are contagious; but so is confidence and courage.<sup>104</sup>

How do you tend to behave when you're around your inner circle? Do your wildest impulses take over? Do you tend to drink too much alcohol, eat more junk food, talk negatively about other people, complain, or spend foolishly? If so, then these friends are not supporting your new mindset for success.

On the contrary, when you leave a dinner outing with your friends, do you jump in your car feeling inspired, stretched, encouraged, and challenged to come up higher? Then, you've got the right associations.

I'm not saying that you and your BFF don't have the occasional dump-it-all-out session where you vent everything that's bothering you. Like Dionne Warwick sang, "That's what friends are for." But that's not all they're intended to be. They should be supporters of your success habits and help to push you further along.

Jesus loved everyone. Tax collectors. Prostitutes. Thieves. Adulterers. Everyone. But He was selective about His inner circle. Yes, He had twelve men around Him, but He spent most of His ministry with only three: Peter, James, and John.

Successful people are careful and intentional about their inner circle. If you are the average of your five closest friends, look at the five people around you. What are their disciplines? What are their goals and aspirations for life? Do they support yours or derail yours?

**“Walk with the wise and become wise,  
associate with fools and get in trouble.”  
- Proverbs 13:20, NLT**

## **6. They watch a lot of TV.**

Life is meant to be lived, not watched. Unsuccessful people waste valuable time watching others live their dreams rather than eliminate even an hour to go invest in their own. It's easy to do. We have an unbelievable amount of viewing options. Anything from documentaries to weather-by-the-minute, fashion design, dramas, home makeovers, reality shows, and an entire network dedicated to nothing but food 24-hours-a-day.

Watching television is as much a habit as brushing teeth. We come in from work, plop down on the sofa, and grab the remote. Four hours later, we get ready for bed, and some even turn the TV on again. It's perfectly fine to enjoy watching television occasionally. But to be successful, your time should be managed properly, not wasted on way too much meaningless entertainment.

We've already seen how startling it can be to discover how much time you could be wasting glued to a flat-screened rectangle in your living room. When you see the numbers in black-and-white, hopefully, it will compel you to start eliminating as much wasted time as possible.

Our televisions have become major focal points in American homes. Think about it. We decorate our houses around our TVs. We point our furniture at them. We put them in multiple rooms. Ninety-five percent of Americans watch TV daily, and the typical American views over five hours of TV every single day!

What does that mean? If we break those numbers down even more, it reveals that the average person is watching close to 1,700 hours of TV each year! That's one thousand seven hundred hours of sitting on your bottom watching others fall in love, start businesses, travel the world, have families, and report gossip about people you don't even know! So, if the average lifespan is around 78 years old, that equates to about 15 years spent staring at a screen! Fifteen years of your life!<sup>105</sup>

These are the idle habits that are being ingrained and adapted into our children. Nowadays, TV's can be found in nearly every room of the house, but we don't even need a TV because we have access to the shows on our smart phones and tablets. Television entertainment has become a pacifier for babies, a comforter for children, and entertainment for the family.

With cities providing parks, schools providing extracurricular activities, neighborhoods adding sidewalks, and American garages full of outdoor toys like scooters, skateboards, and bikes, our families have multitudes of entertainment that add value to our lives. Unfortunately, U.S. residents are still spending more time than any other country sitting still, watching show after show.

"If you add up all the time that the *average* American spends with electronic media (TV, computers, smart phones, radio, etc.) it's around 11 and a half hours per day," says entertainment journalist, Dustin Rowles.<sup>106</sup> Most of us can probably admit that we indulge in this nonproductive habit

more than we care to admit.

Thomas Corley, whose study of the wealthy and poor I quoted earlier wrote, “Seventy-eight percent of the poor watch reality TV shows. The rich, on the other hand, are not big on TV. Sixty-seven percent watch less than an hour each day and it’s not reality TV that they tune in to.”<sup>107</sup>

When I share these startling facts at conferences, I jokingly say, “If the average American is watching 5 hours of TV each day, and you eliminate 20 minutes to go read, listen to a podcast, or go for a walk, you will have invested 10 hours of progress over the course of a month...and you can still watch your 4 hours and 40 minutes of TV!” Imagine what you could do if you eliminated more than 20 minutes.

**“Any successful entrepreneur knows that  
time is more valuable than money itself.”  
- Richard Branson**

## **7. They don’t take care of their health.**

Sixty-eight percent of American adults are overweight or obese.<sup>108</sup> Tom Corley found in his study that 76% of the wealthiest people exercise at least four days a week, whereas, only 23% of the poor. Most highly successful people realize the importance of taking care of themselves physically. So why doesn’t everyone consider this a priority?

Excuses.

Every single person has the same 24 hours in a day. Some find time to exercise and some find excuses to not. What we habitually do each day is either promoting health or destroying it. The choice is ours.

I grew up exercising by consistently being involved in sports. Whether it was gymnastics, cheerleading, or track, I was always moving. When I got married and started working a full-time job, I was no longer walking three miles a day to college classes and my days consisted of sitting at a

desk for eight hours straight (with a one-hour lunch break). The outcome was not what I anticipated.

I remember joining a gym with my best friend, and we enrolled in a water aerobics class. We had so much fun every Tuesday and Thursday night bouncing around the pool with a bunch of 60-year-old women. However, as the weeks went by, after getting off work at 5:00 p.m., making a hot meal, sitting down in front of the TV and getting comfortable, the thought of jumping into a cold swimming pool sent chills all over my body. It was the last thing I wanted to do. So, the Tuesday/Thursday plan went from some Tuesdays and no Thursdays to nothing. I was right there with the others full of excuses as to why I couldn't make it to class.

Thinking about their physical well-being is not a priority for unsuccessful people. They eat junk food, drink everything but water, and see exercise as something they'll get around to one day.

Here's a list of some excuses the unsuccessful make about their health:<sup>109</sup>

1. I don't have time.

It's hard to justify this excuse when we've uncovered how much time the average American is wasting watching television each day. And that didn't include the time invested scrolling Facebook, filtering photos on Instagram, and retweeting your favorite celebrity, not to mention playing Candy Crush.

I mean, if you have to watch at least four hours of your favorite dramas, at least grab a resistance band or jump on a mini-trampoline and utilize that time to exercise. Some activity is always better than none.

Rather than search for excuses, find solutions: Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Park the farthest from the grocery store. Walk during your lunch break or around the soccer field while your kids practice. We find time for things we value in our lives. When we start to value our health, we'll value our time to invest in it.

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2. I'm too tired. Remember, the funny thing is that working out actually gives you more energy. Your body produces hormones (endorphins) that produce energy when you exercise. In fact, Isaac Newton's first law of motion is often stated as: "An object at rest stays at rest and an object in motion stays in motion." This is not just about physics; it's about your physical health as well.
3. It's too expensive. You don't have to join the pricey health club or trendy cycling class to care about your health. You can simply walk around your neighborhood, go bowling, circle the floors at the shopping mall, play a game of laser tag, walk the dog, or ride bikes with your kids.
4. I'm not motivated. When you don't have a vision for your physical body, you'll lack the drive to stick with an exercise habit. Once you get a vision for how you want to look and the action steps to get there, you'll develop the habits that lead you to your dreams. You'll enjoy the positive comments from others and overall feel good about yourself for sticking with it.

### 8. They gossip.

Are you so busy talking about other people's lives that you miss out on your own? What about your unique goals, dreams, and aspirations? Don't forget who you are and what you should be doing instead of worrying about what everyone else is doing.

**“Gossiping is like throwing a boomerang—what you toss out, comes back to you.”**

Galatians 6:7 says, “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows” (NIV). From this scripture, we can see that when you talk bad about other people, you are *sowing seed*, so-to-speak, for others



to talk bad about you. When you put people down, you're *sowing seed* for others to put you down. When you make fun of someone, you are *sowing seed* for others to make fun of you!

Haven't you heard that when you point a finger at someone else, there are three fingers pointed back at you? Well, it's scientific. In fact, research has found that when you talk negatively to a friend about how terrible another friend, colleague, or relative is, the listening friend is more likely to associate the negativity to *you* rather than to the person you're describing. Behavioral psychologists call this "spontaneous trait transference." In other words, your subtle intentions of making someone else look bad backfires on you.

I love this quote from Eleanor Roosevelt as a way of identifying where people are at in their mindset and journey to success (and to even check up on myself from time-to-time): "Big minds talk about ideas. Average minds talk about events. Small minds talk about people."

When you get around someone who constantly talks bad about people, puts them down, makes fun of them, and tries to make them look bad, they just gave you a strong look into their limited mindset.

The truth is that it's so easy to get caught up in gossip. French social psychologist, Laurent Bègue found that "about 60% of conversations between adults are about someone who isn't present," he says. "And most of these are passing judgment."<sup>110</sup>

Some people get emotional satisfaction from talking about how awful other people are. Some are so bored with their own lives that they have nothing else to focus on than to critique, judge, and belittle someone who's doing something significant with their life.

One article I read put it this way, "Unsuccessful people are often unhappy as a result of refusing to take responsibility for their lack of effort and achievement. They compensate by trying to pull down the achievements of others. It all stems from their jealousy of those who put in the work, take smart risks, and achieve more success in their lives. It's an exhausting way

to live, and it rarely leads to anything good.”<sup>111</sup>

I like the Pinterest graphic that says, “I’m too busy watering my own grass to notice if yours is greener.” That’s the attitude of a successful person. They’re not watching everyone else, competing with their success, or feeling insecure. No, they stay in their lane, focused on their unique vision without concerning themselves with what others are doing. God is going to hold you accountable for what He’s called *you* to do not what He’s called others to do.

God’s Word reveals a chilling reality of gossip in Numbers 12:1, “Then Miriam and Aaron spoke *against* Moses....” The next verse says, “...And the Lord heard it” (Numbers 12:2). Wow! God hears us when we honor people, and He also hears us when we dishonor people. Doesn’t that make you think twice about what you say?

Remember, if you don’t approve of something someone is doing or you get in a discussion where others are gossiping, God is listening. And He’s not favorable toward it.

If you’re not experiencing a lot of favor, opportunities or growth in your life, take an inventory of what’s been coming out of your mouth. How have you been speaking about people? Are you trying to make others look bad so you can appear better? Are you intimidated by their success so you try to dim the light on them so yours can shine brighter? It’s not working. You can’t talk bad about people and not expect people to talk bad about you. It’s the law of the boomerang.

The good news is the opposite is true as well. When you talk well of others, you are sowing seed for others to talk well of you. I like the *Phillips* translation of Galatians 6:7, “Don’t be under any illusion: you cannot make a fool of God! A man’s harvest in life will depend entirely on what he sows.”

**“Silence can never be misquoted.”**

## 9. They procrastinate.

**“Tomorrow is the only day of the year  
that appeals to a lazy man.”  
- Jimmy Lyons**

So far, we have outlined eight bad habits of the unsuccessful, but the biggest guarantee for a life of missed opportunities is through procrastination. *Procrastination* is defined as “the act of putting off, delaying or deferring an action to a later time; to put off intentionally or habitually.” Procrastinators sabotage their own success.

“There is a tremendous cost in putting things off,” said Steve Pavlina, “You don’t get paid for your thoughts and plans—you only get paid for your results.”<sup>112</sup>

*Psychology Today* reported that 20% of people identify themselves as chronic procrastinators. “For them procrastination is a lifestyle,” the author writes. “And it cuts across all domains of their life. They don’t pay bills on time. They miss opportunities for buying tickets to concerts. They don’t cash gift certificates or checks. They file income tax returns late. They leave their Christmas shopping until Christmas Eve.”<sup>113</sup>

We all procrastinate, to a degree, on certain matters. We sit down to work on an important project and next thing you know we’re scrolling through Instagram, loading the dishwasher, eating a snack, and googling what our childhood celebrity crush looks like nowadays. Suddenly, the day is gone, and we’ve put the project off another 24 hours.

The difference is habitual procrastinators give in to the distraction of instant gratification from doing any task that requires great effort.

Procrastinators live by the “I’ll do it tomorrow” mentality.

- I’ll start the diet tomorrow.
- I’ll return the phone call tomorrow.
- I’ll get the oil changed tomorrow.

## 5 THINGS SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE DO BEFORE 8 A.M.

- I'll finish the report tomorrow.
- I'll start waking up earlier tomorrow.
- I'll start saving money, working out, reading more, spending time with God...tomorrow.

Second Corinthians 6:1 says, "...we beg you, please don't squander one bit of this marvelous life God has given us" (MSG). That's exactly what procrastination does: It squanders minutes and hours and days from this limited time we have on earth.

*The Washington Post* reported on an experiment conducted to help procrastinators make better decisions. They found that when chronic procrastinators were told to focus on their future selves rather than their current condition, they followed through with swift decisions. They even went as far as to digitally age the participants by using current photographs of themselves. "Those who were more in touch with their future selves—both two months and 10 years down the line—reported fewer procrastination behaviors."<sup>114</sup>

I love what Pope Paul VI said, "Somebody should tell us, right at the start of our lives, that we are dying. Then we might live life to the limit, every minute of every day. Do it, I say! Whatever you want to do, do it now! There are only so many tomorrows."

W. Clement Stone, who built an insurance empire worth hundreds of millions of dollars, used to hand out lapel pins for all his employees that read, "Do it now!" In addition, he would make them all recite it at the start of each workday. He was convinced that this chant would reprogram their thinking and stop delays in their tracks. And he was right.

When you get inspired to do something, to change a habit, to set a new goal, to establish a new routine, make the change within twenty-four hours, or chances are, you never will.

**“He slept beneath the moon; He basked  
beneath the sun. He lived a life of going-  
to-do; And died with nothing done.**

**- James Alberty**

## **10. They quit.**

Unsuccessful people have a pattern of quitting. They quit the diet when the dessert tray is brought out. They quit the debt-freedom plan when the shoe sale is too good of a deal. They quit the early-rise commitment when they hear the sound of rain outside. They quit the semester when the exams are too stressful. They just quit.

A quitter is defined as “a person who gives up easily or does not have the courage or determination to finish a task.” Statistics show that 80% of American’s who set New Year’s goals each year quit by February.<sup>115</sup> Nearly 25% don’t even last a full seven days! Forty-two percent admit to never succeeding and fail on their resolution each year. Only 8% of people achieve their New Year’s resolutions.<sup>116</sup>

Most of us have quit something we wish we hadn’t, but when this becomes our typical response in hard times, that’s when failure is inevitable. We will encounter delays, detours, and even discouragement on the road to success, but that’s part of the process. Obstacles are the very things that strengthen us to handle success when it comes.

There is a story of bumblebees being taken into space. These winged creatures floated through the air with such ease, no exertion required. The bumblebees adapted to a life of simplicity. However, on the fourth day, the bumblebees all died. It was concluded that the bees were not designed to live without any resistance. And neither were we. Resistance prepares you, strengthens you, and enables you to go to the next level.

Here are some of the excuses you’ll hear quitters make:

- 1. It wasn’t their goal to begin with.**

Have you ever set a goal that you didn’t truly care about? Did someone

else influence you to set this goal but you never truly took ownership of it? It could be a spouse implying you should spend less, co-worker convincing you to try a new gluten-free diet, or a parent hoping for you to complete your college degree. When it's not something you have bought into, then it's difficult to stay motivated when the going gets tough.

2. **It's taking too long.**

When we don't see results quick enough, it's tempting to quit altogether. Every successful person knows that achievement takes time. It's not that you're not doing the right thing, you're just not doing it long enough to see results. That's exactly why this book is about changing your habits and your routine.

3. **It's too hard.**

When reaching a goal is more grueling than we anticipated, it can be demotivating. When others reached their goal in half the time it's taking you, it can be quite convincing to throw in the towel. But the thing that's tempting you to give up will become what you're most proud of because you didn't give in.

No one's life is without struggles. Many times it feels like you're taking three steps forward and two steps back, but you're still a step ahead. The key is to teach yourself to focus on the positives. You are making progress. It all adds up over time. Focus on progress not perfection.

## **Be Encouraged**

This chapter lists 10 bad habits we should do our best to steer clear of, but don't let it be a discouragement. Don't be overwhelmed with tackling so many life changes all at once or you'll fall into the temptation to quit. Habits that took you years to build won't change in a few days. This book is designed to provide awareness to subconscious patterns that could be the anchor pulling you down when God is ready to lift you higher.

## **MY DAILY ROUTINE**

**Paula White-Caine**

**Founder of Paula White Ministries**

**Daily 5:**

1. Read the Word, pray and journal.
2. Spend time with my husband. We usually have coffee, enjoy conversation and our morning together!
3. Exercise or ride my horse.
4. Set my to-do list for the day.
5. Read a book or something I am studying or tackle my most priority emails.