

## *Habit Journal*

One negative habit I have is I will go right back to sleep after my alarm goes off in the morning. I think the reason I do this is because I know I have enough time to sleep in and still make it to school on time. In the beginning of the school year, I would push myself to wake up early so I would have time to go to the gym and get some homework done before I had to go to school. However, recently I've been waking up later, which means I'm trading the time I usually spend working out and doing homework for a few extra hours of sleep. Although a few extra hours of sleep isn't always a bad thing, I've noticed it's been affecting me negatively. I've noticed on the days that I do sleep in, I'm more tired, lazier, and my mindset is significantly more negative. To break this habit, I'm going to push myself to wake up earlier for the next 11 days.

A second negative habit I have is I often play on my phone right before I go to sleep. There have been numerous studies done that show just how unhealthy this habit is. For example, according to [SCL Health](#), the blue light emitted by cell phone screens restrains the production of melatonin, the hormone that controls your sleep-wake cycle. This makes it even more difficult to fall asleep and wake up the next day. I would like to swap this negative habit with the positive habit of reading for 30 minutes right before I go to sleep. According to [Sleep Hygiene](#), since reading a book before bed is known as a stress reducer, it can also help you fall asleep faster. I'm hoping that by reading before bed instead of playing on my phone, I will be able to go to sleep fast and fall into a much deeper sleep at night, resulting in more energy throughout the day.

The third negative habit I have is when I'm bored, I tend to open up Instagram and just start scrolling. Over the past year, I've done a lot of research for various school assignments about how excessive social media use can negatively impact mental health. Studies have shown that there is a strong correlation between time spent on social media and feelings of depression, anxiety, and much more. Although I know all of this information about social media, I still have trouble restricting the amount of time I spend on social media. I think it's important that I break this negative habit because I feel that social media is a waste of time. There's plenty of other things I could be doing to help with my boredom, but instead I choose to scroll through social media. I also think that breaking this habit will help me think more positively around myself and the world around me, because I won't be unconsciously comparing my life to other people's lives through social media.

### ***Day 1: December 12th 2021***

I woke up at 7 o'clock this morning. I woke up feeling surprisingly energized and excited to start this project.

The habit I'm most excited about is reading right before bed. I'm most excited about this habit because there's so many books I want to read but I've always been too lazy to read them and I thought I didn't have time. I also think this will be the habit that will cause the most change in my overall mental state. I think that by reading I will be able to fall asleep faster and I think the quality of my sleep will significantly improve.

The habit that I think will be the most challenging is staying off of social media. I think this will be the hardest habit to stick with because I'm used to going on social media the second I feel bored. I'm

hoping that by the end of this project I won't even think about going on social media and I'm also hoping that this project will help me realize how much better my life could be without social media.

I successfully stuck with all of my habits today. However, I noticed I would click on Instagram a lot, but the second I realized what I was doing I immediately exited the app. I don't think I clicked on the app because I wanted to use social media, I think I clicked on the app because it's a strong habit I've formed.

### ***Day 2: December 13th 2021***

Unfortunately, today was not as good as it was yesterday. I had planned on waking up at 5:30am and going to the gym before school. However, I woke up at 3:00am with a headache, a bad cough, and feeling very dizzy and hot. I ended up not falling back asleep until 5:00am, which meant I had about 30 minutes left to sleep until my alarm went off. I decided to sleep in until 7:00am, because I definitely was not feeling well enough to go to the gym or go to school today. However, I still consider waking up at 7 to be early, so I'll consider it successful. Towards the end of the day I was feeling a lot better, except for the fact that I was still feeling very dizzy.

I've already noticed a really big difference from not using social media. I feel a lot more relaxed, which is not something I was expecting to feel after only two days. It kind of feels like I have one less thing that I have to do, which is interesting considering checking my social media apps is not something that I'm required to do, it's something that I choose to do. I've also noticed myself being on my phone less. I feel like there's nothing for me to do on my phone since I'm not able to use social media. This has also made me realize just how often I check social media. Before starting this project, I had always said that restricting my social media use was not something I'd ever be able to do. I have done numerous projects about how social media negatively impacts mental health, but I still continued to use social media even though I knew how bad it is, because I thought that I had to constantly check it. This project has made me realize that social media is not something I need. However, I predict that as this project goes on, I will feel more and more inclined to look through my social media apps again.

I finished the day by reading for about 30 minutes and then went right to sleep. Although I wasn't feeling the best today, I still consider today to be a success.

### ***Day 3: December 14th 2021***

Today was a lot better than yesterday. I woke up feeling awake, energized, and excited. I feel like reading before bed instead of looking at my phone has made a huge difference in my sleep. I could definitely see myself continuing this habit even after the project is over.

I woke up at 5:30am today and went to the gym. Waking up early and working out before school put me in a really good mood for the rest of the day. I've noticed that waking up earlier makes me feel more energized and more productive throughout the day.

Unfortunately, this afternoon I found out that I tested positive for covid. Even though I tested positive, I'm still going to continue with the habits I have been practicing. I figured it would be okay because none of the habits involve going out in public.

I'm hoping that continuing these habits will help me remain productive throughout the day. I have to quarantine and do school from home for the next 10 days, and I'm worried about not being able to focus on my school work.

### ***Day 4: December 15th 2021***

Since I don't have to go to school for the rest of this project, I think the habit I'm going to struggle with the most is waking up at an early time. My goal is to wake up at 7:00am everyday. I feel like this is a good time to wake up because I'll get a healthy amount of sleep every night.

I've noticed that I don't even think about going on my social media apps anymore. It's almost like I've completely forgotten that social media even exists. I've also noticed that since I can't go on social media, I've been spending a lot less time on my phone. This project has made me realize just how much I use social media and how addictive it really is.

Something interesting that I've noticed is even though I haven't been going on social media, I get a lot more notifications from my social media apps. I think the app realizes that I haven't been using it, so it's trying to pull me in by notifying me about things that I may find "interesting." For example, this morning I got a notification saying that one of my close friends posted something on Instagram. I thought this was interesting because I've never seen a notification like that before. I used to get maybe one notification from Instagram a day, but now I've been getting at least three.

The biggest mindset change I've noticed from not using social media is it's a lot easier for me to focus. I think that's because I know I can't go on Instagram, so I don't really feel as much of a need to. Before, if I ever got bored doing school work, I would just pick up my phone and start scrolling through Instagram. However, now whenever I get bored doing my school work, I just keep going because I feel like there's nothing else to do since I can't go on Instagram.

Even though I'm really enjoying my break from social media right now, I have a feeling that by the end of this project I'm going to be eager to use social media again. However, if I'm still enjoying my break from social media by the time this project is over, I might just continue. I'm honestly really surprised by how easy it has been for me to stay off of my social media apps.

#### ***Day 5: December 16th 2021***

It was a lot harder to focus on my school work today. This is only the second day of my quarantine and I'm already bored out of my mind. It'd be a lot easier if I could go to the gym or even just go to the grocery store, but I can't.

It was a lot harder for me to avoid going on my social media apps today. I think it was harder today because I was super bored.

I think it's important that I do get out of the house tomorrow. I think it would be really refreshing, healthy, and I think it would help me focus on my school work a little more.

#### ***Day 6: December 17th 2021***

Since I've been so bored and eager to get out of the house, I decided to go on a walk outside this morning. I walked for about a mile and a half, and it felt really nice to get outside and move my body a bit. However, I spent the rest of the day sitting around doing homework, watching TV, and playing on my phone. I think I only did homework for about an hour today, which isn't very good considering I wanted to get most of my essay written for English before Christmas break.

On the bright side, I feel pretty much back to normal. Even my cough isn't nearly as bad as it used to be. However, that makes it even harder to stay inside and quarantine.

I've noticed that I've been falling into a much deeper sleep at night. I've actually been able to remember my dream at night, and I can't even remember the last time I was able to remember my dream. I think this is because I haven't been using my phone before bed. This habit has made a huge difference so far. I feel a lot more energized and healthier.

### ***Day 7: December 18th 2021***

Today was a really great day. I did sleep in until 8:00am today, but it was refreshing and it was really nice. I think it felt healthier because I wasn't sleeping in because I was lazy and didn't feel like getting up, instead, I slept in because I was actually tired. Usually, I would have naturally woken up and gone right back to sleep because I didn't feel like getting up yet. However, today I naturally woke up and jumped right out of bed. It was a much healthier way to sleep in. I've also noticed that I care a lot more about my sleep since starting this project.

Even though I have covid, I was able to get out of the house a bit today. My family and I went to see the Christmas lights in Hershey. I thought this was a good and safe way to get some time out of this house without risking the safety of others. It's been driving me insane not being able to leave the house, so I'm really glad I was able to do that with my family.

### ***Day 8: December 19th 2021***

Today was a bit of a lazier day for me. I woke up around 8:00am and then worked on some school work for a bit. It felt good to catch up on some school work, because I haven't really been focused since I've been quarantined for the past few days.

Although I didn't do much today, I was still able to continue most of my habits. I still haven't gone on social media and I was able to read before I went to bed. The habit I've definitely been struggling with the most is waking up early. Although 8:00 isn't a horrible time to wake up, it still isn't exactly early.

Although I'm still technically supposed to be quarantined, I think I'm going to start going to the gym again. I figured it'll be okay because I haven't been experiencing any symptoms for a few days now, plus I don't go within 6 feet of anyone at the gym and I wipe down all the equipment I use. I think it's really important that I get out of the house and start exercising again. I think it'll also help me wake up earlier because it'll give me a reason to wake up early. I'm also really eager to go to the gym again.

### ***Day 9: December 20th 2021***

Today was a really great day! I woke up at 5:30am and got ready to go to the gym. Going to the gym really motivated me to get up and out of bed. I really missed going to the gym because I feel like it sets up the rest of my day in a positive way.

I felt very productive today. I was able to get a good bit of school work done and I was able to get some chores done around the house. It felt good to be productive and get stuff done. It's amazing how much of a difference waking up early and working out makes.

I noticed that my mindset has been a lot healthier. I feel more positive and more motivated. It's amazing how much of a difference just three healthy habits can make

### ***Day 10: December 21st 2021***

Today was another really great day! I woke up at 5:30am and went to the gym again. It feels really good to be back at the gym even though I'm technically still supposed to be quarantining.

It feels really healthy to be on a set sleep schedule. It's nice to be able to go to sleep actually feeling tired. I wake up a lot more energized in the mornings and the duration of my energy has significantly increased.

After the gym, I was able to do some homework. My goal is to get most of my work done before Christmas break, that way I'm able to just enjoy the long break, but I really doubt that's going to happen.

The habit that I've enjoyed practicing the most is reading for 30 minutes before I go to sleep. I've noticed significant improvement in my sleep. I fall asleep a lot faster and I feel like I fall into a much deeper sleep. However, the reason I've been able to fall asleep right away could also be because I've been waking up earlier.

I can't believe tomorrow is the last day. I've really enjoyed this project and watching myself improve through these habits. I really hope I'll be able to push myself to continue these habits even after this project is over.

### ***Day 11: December 22nd 2021 / Final Reflection***

I can't believe today is the last day. Although these past 11 days have gone by super fast, I feel that I've significantly changed in the past 11 days.

The thing I'm most surprised about was how easy it was for me to stay off of Instagram. In the beginning of this project, I thought that was going to be the hardest to keep up with. However, I was pleasantly surprised by how uninterested I was in going on the app. In fact, most days I rarely think about going on social media. I noticed that knowing I can't go on social media took a lot of stress away. It made me realize that social media kind of feels like a chore to me. It almost feels like something I have to use in order to stay connected to my friends and keep up with the outside world. However, I was still able to keep up with my friends and connected with the outside world without Instagram. It made me realize that social media is pointless. I feel proud of myself for going 11 days without Instagram because it's something I never thought I'd be able to do. This is definitely a habit I would like to continue with.

The habit I enjoyed practicing most was reading for 30 minutes before I went to sleep. I enjoyed this habit the most because I noticed a significant improvement in my quality of sleep. I felt that when I was able to fall asleep fast, fall into a deeper sleep, and wake up with a lot more energy. I also really enjoyed reading again. When I was younger, I loved reading. However, as I got older I came up with the excuse that I didn't have any time to read. This project has helped me fall in love with reading again and this is definitely another habit I would like to continue.

The hardest habit for me to stick with was waking up earlier. I think it would have been easier if I didn't have to quarantine because I actually would have had a reason to wake up early. My goal at the beginning of this project was to wake up at 5:30am everyday. However, after I found out I had to quarantine I changed my goal to 7:00am. For the most part, I did stick to this habit, but there were a few days where I woke up at 8:00am. I kind of wish I would have just stuck to waking up at 5:30am because I think I would have seen more results if I had woken up at that time. One thing I noticed from waking up earlier was I felt more motivated throughout the day. Although I'm glad this project helped me break the habit of sleeping in late, I don't think this is a habit I'm going to continue in the future. As much as I would like to say I'll continue waking up early, I really struggled staying committed to this habit, so I don't think it's something I'll be able to continue in the future.

Overall, this was one of my favorite projects I have done for apollo. I was able to learn a lot about habits and I think being able to practice habits really helped me understand the process of forming habits. I also enjoyed that I was able to improve myself throughout the process. I have a much more positive and calm mindset, and I've formed better sleep habits.