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The Beginner's Guide to Continuous Self-Improvement

What is Self-Improvement?

Let's define self-improvement. The definition of self-improvement is pretty self-explanatory: Self-improvement is the improvement of one's knowledge, status, or character by one's own efforts. It's the quest to make ourselves better in any and every facet of life.

Best Self-Improvement Articles to Start With

Self-improvement almost always starts with self-awareness and the ability to transform your habits. If you're serious about transforming your life and improving yourself, you should start with these two articles:

- **How to Stop Lying to Ourselves: A Call for Self-Awareness** (<https://jamesclear.com/stethoscope-self-awareness>): If you're serious about getting better at something, then one of the first steps is to know

—in black-and-white terms—where you stand. You need self-awareness before you can achieve self-improvement.

- **Forget About Setting Goals. Focus on This Instead**

(<https://jamesclear.com/goals-systems>): For most of us, the path to self-improvement starts by setting a specific and actionable goal. What I'm starting to realize, however, is that when it comes to actually getting things done and making progress in the areas that are important to you, there is a much better way to do things. It all comes down to the difference between goals and systems.

Common Self-Improvement Topics

I discuss almost every aspect of smart, science-backed self-improvement on this website. You can explore some of the sub-topics of self-improvement with the links below:

- The Beginner's Guide to Productivity and Time Management (<https://jamesclear.com/productivity>)
- The Ultimate Guide on How to Improve Focus and Concentration (<https://jamesclear.com/focus>)
- The Beginner's Guide on How to Eat Healthy and Stick to It (<https://jamesclear.com/eat-healthy>)

Best Self-Improvement Books

- Manual for Living (<https://jamesclear.com/book/manual-for-living>) by Epictetus
- Meditations (<https://jamesclear.com/book/meditations>) by Marcus Aurelius

Want more books on self-improvement? Browse my full list of the best self-help books (<https://jamesclear.com/best-books/self-help>).

More Examples of Smart Self-Improvement

- The Scientific Argument for Mastering One Thing at a Time (<https://jamesclear.com/master-one-thing>)
- How to Use Military Strategy to Build Better Habits (<https://jamesclear.com/sun-tzu-habits>)
- How to Read More: The Simple System I'm Using to Read 30+ Books Per Year (<https://jamesclear.com/read-more>)

All Self-Improvement Articles

This is a complete list of articles I have written on self-improvement. Enjoy!

- 7 Ways to Retain More of Every Book You Read (<https://jamesclear.com/reading-comprehension-strategies>)
- The Beginner's Guide to Deliberate Practice (<https://jamesclear.com/beginners-guide-deliberate-practice>)
- The Scientific Argument for Mastering One Thing at a Time (<https://jamesclear.com/master-one-thing>)
- Make Your Life Better by Saying Thank You in These 7 Situations (<https://jamesclear.com/say-thank-you>)
- How to Use Military Strategy to Build Better Habits

(<https://jamesclear.com/sun-tzu-habits>)

- How to Master the Invisible Hand That Shapes Our Lives
(<https://jamesclear.com/feedback-loops>)
- This Zen Concept Will Help You Stop Being a Slave to Old Beliefs
(<https://jamesclear.com/shoshin>)
- The Chemistry of Building Better Habits (<https://jamesclear.com/chemistry-habits>)
- How to Stop Lying to Ourselves: A Call for Self-Awareness
(<https://jamesclear.com/stethoscope-self-awareness>)
- If Nothing Changes, Nothing Is Going to Change
(<https://jamesclear.com/repeated-bout-effect>)
- Olympic Medalist Dick Fosbury and the Power of Being Unconventional
(<https://jamesclear.com/dick-fosbury>)
- What Happens When You Believe You're Taking Steroids
(<https://jamesclear.com/power-of-placebo>)
- Two Harvard Professors Reveal One Reason Our Brains Love to Procrastinate
(<https://jamesclear.com/time-inconsistency>)
- How to Fall in Love With Boredom and Unlock Your Mental Toughness
(<https://jamesclear.com/in-love-with-boredom>)
- Inside the Mind of a Mad Scientist (<https://jamesclear.com/barry-marshall>)
- You're Not Ready for Marriage (<https://jamesclear.com/marriage-ready>)

- The 2 Types of Growth: Which One of These Growth Curves Are You Following? (<https://jamesclear.com/growth-curves>)
- The Goal is Not the Point (<https://jamesclear.com/treasure-hunt>)

- 5 Lessons on Being Wrong (<https://jamesclear.com/first-choice>)
- Stop Thinking and Start Doing: The Power of Practicing More (<https://jamesclear.com/learning-vs-practicing>)
- Bob Mathias on How to Master the Art of Self-Confidence (<https://jamesclear.com/self-confidence>)
- 5 Common Mistakes That Cause New Habits to Fail (<https://jamesclear.com/habits-fail>)
- Constraints Make You Better: Why the Right Limitations Boost Performance (<https://jamesclear.com/futsal>)
- To Make Big Gains, Avoid Tiny Losses (<https://jamesclear.com/subtraction>)
- 10 Lessons Learned from Squatting 400 Pounds (<https://jamesclear.com/squat-400>)
- 4 Reasonable Ways to Achieve Overnight Success (<https://jamesclear.com/multipliers>)
- Measure Backward, Not Forward (<https://jamesclear.com/measure-backward>)
- How to Build New Habits by Taking Advantage of Old Ones (<https://jamesclear.com/habit-stacking>)
- What Are You Measuring In Your Life? (<https://jamesclear.com/measuring>)
- How to Get Your Brain to Focus on What Matters (<https://jamesclear.com/selective-attention>)
- How to Read More: The Simple System I'm Using to Read 30+ Books Per Year (<https://jamesclear.com/read-more>)
- Plan For Failure: Being Consistent Is Not the Same as Being Perfect

(<https://jamesclear.com/plan-failure>)

- How to Change Your Beliefs and Stick to Your Goals for Good
(<https://jamesclear.com/identity-votes>)
- Stop Wasting Time on the Details and Commit to the Fundamentals
(<https://jamesclear.com/fundamentals>)
- I'm Using These 3 Simple Steps to Actually Stick with Good Habits
(<https://jamesclear.com/small-habits>)
- I Watched an Artist Create Stained Glass And Learned An Important Lesson About Life (<https://jamesclear.com/inside-cuts>)
- Treat Failure Like a Scientist (<https://jamesclear.com/failure-scientist>)
- This Research Study Changed the Way We Think About Success (Here's How You Can Use It) (<https://jamesclear.com/growth-mindset>)
- This Coach Improved Every Tiny Thing by 1 Percent and Here's What Happened (<https://jamesclear.com/marginal-gains>)
- Why Trying to Be Perfect Won't Help You Achieve Your Goals (And What Will) (<https://jamesclear.com/repetitions>)
- Do You Have to be Unhappy Now if You Want to be Successful Later?
(<https://jamesclear.com/happy-driven>)
- Follow the Recipe: Are You Being Patient Enough to See Results?
(<https://jamesclear.com/follow-recipe>)
- You're Not Good Enough to Be Disappointed (<https://jamesclear.com/good-disappointed>)
- 3 Simple Things You Can Do Right Now to Build Better Habits
(<https://jamesclear.com/good-habits>)
- The Crime Your Brain Commits Against You

(<https://jamesclear.com/schemas>)

- Lessons on Success and Deliberate Practice from Mozart, Picasso, and Kobe Bryant (<https://jamesclear.com/deliberate-practice>)
- What is Actually Required for Success? (<https://jamesclear.com/required-for-success>)
- How to Stop Procrastinating on Your Goals by Using the “Seinfeld Strategy” (<https://jamesclear.com/stop-procrastinating-seinfeld-strategy>)
- How to Improve Your Health and Productivity Without Thinking (<https://jamesclear.com/environment-design-organ-donation>)
- The Mistake Smart People Make: Being In Motion vs. Taking Action (<https://jamesclear.com/taking-action>)
- How Your Beliefs Can Sabotage Your Behavior (<https://jamesclear.com/fixed-mindset-vs-growth-mindset>)
- What is Your “Average Speed” in Your Life, Your Health, and Your Work? (<https://jamesclear.com/average-speed>)
- The Difference Between Being “Not Wrong” and Being Right (<https://jamesclear.com/not-wrong>)
- Achieve Your Goals: Research Reveals a Simple Trick That Doubles Your Chances for Success (<https://jamesclear.com/implementation-intentions>)
- How to Break a Bad Habit and Replace It With a Good One (<https://jamesclear.com/how-to-break-a-bad-habit>)
- Get Back on Track: 7 Strategies to Help You Bounce Back After Slipping Up (<https://jamesclear.com/get-back-on-track>)
- How to Say No, Resist Temptation, and Stick to Your Health Goals (<https://jamesclear.com/how-to-say-no>)
- 3 Time Management Tips That Actually Work (<https://jamesclear.com/time->

management-tips)

- How to Achieve Your Goals Easily (<https://jamesclear.com/schedule-goals>)
- 3 Surprising Reasons Why You Need to Rediscover Slow Growth (<https://jamesclear.com/slow-growth>)
- Why Getting Started is More Important Than Succeeding (<https://jamesclear.com/start-succeed>)
- When to be Unreasonable With Yourself (<https://jamesclear.com/unreasonable-expectations>)
- Why is it So Hard to Stick to Good Habits? (<https://jamesclear.com/why-is-it-so-hard-to-form-good-habits>)
- The Difference Between Professionals and Amateurs (<https://jamesclear.com/professionals-and-amateurs>)
- Identity-Based Habits: How to Actually Stick to Your Goals This Year (<https://jamesclear.com/identity-based-habits>)
- Keystone Habits: The Simple Way to Improve All Aspects of Your Life (<https://jamesclear.com/keystone-habits>)

Best Articles on Related Topics

- Best habits articles (<https://jamesclear.com/habits>)
- Best minimalism articles (<https://jamesclear.com/minimalism>)
- Best life lessons articles (<https://jamesclear.com/life-lessons>)

Or, browse my best articles (<https://jamesclear.com/articles>).



Thanks for reading. You helped save a life.

Whenever you buy one of [my books \(https://jamesclear.com/books\)](https://jamesclear.com/books), join the [Habits Academy \(https://habitsacademy.com\)](https://habitsacademy.com), or otherwise contribute to my work, 5 percent of the profits are donated to the Against Malaria Foundation (AMF).

With each donation, AMF distributes nets to protect children, pregnant mothers, and families from mosquitos carrying malaria. It is one of the most cost-effective ways to extend life and fulfills my bigger mission to spread healthy habits and help others realize their full potential.

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YEARS OF ADDITIONAL LIFE

9

LIVES SAVED

BETTER HABITS

[Behavioral Psychology \(https://jamesclear.com/behavioral-psychology\)](https://jamesclear.com/behavioral-psychology)

[Habits \(https://jamesclear.com/habits\)](https://jamesclear.com/habits)

[Motivation \(https://jamesclear.com/motivation\)](https://jamesclear.com/motivation)

[Procrastination \(https://jamesclear.com/procrastination\)](https://jamesclear.com/procrastination)

BETTER PERFORMANCE

[Constant Improvement \(https://jamesclear.com/continuous-improvement\)](https://jamesclear.com/continuous-improvement)

[Deliberate Practice \(https://jamesclear.com/deliberate-practice-theory\)](https://jamesclear.com/deliberate-practice-theory)

[Goal Setting \(https://jamesclear.com/goal-setting\)](https://jamesclear.com/goal-setting)

[Productivity \(https://jamesclear.com/productivity\)](https://jamesclear.com/productivity)

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BETTER THINKING

[Creativity](https://jamesclear.com/creativity) (<https://jamesclear.com/creativity>).

[Decision Making](https://jamesclear.com/decision-making) (<https://jamesclear.com/decision-making>).

[Focus](https://jamesclear.com/focus) (<https://jamesclear.com/focus>).

[Mental Toughness](https://jamesclear.com/grit) (<https://jamesclear.com/grit>).

OPTIMAL HEALTH

[Better Sleep](https://jamesclear.com/sleep) (<https://jamesclear.com/sleep>).

[Eating Healthy](https://jamesclear.com/eat-healthy) (<https://jamesclear.com/eat-healthy>).

[Strength Training](https://jamesclear.com/strength-training) (<https://jamesclear.com/strength-training>).

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