

Melissa Tangalin
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“Ua ho‘omakua ka lā‘au.”

Old habits die hard, and the time required for new ones to take root can feel eternal. But just as a tree begins as a tiny seed, personal triumph is sown from habits practiced daily. As the seed of a tree sends out roots to provide stability and draw nutrients from the soil, habits practiced over time become the foundation on which our lives are built. The habits we choose will nourish us and allow us to thrive or they will stunt our development. It is difficult to control our environment or predict the future, but each one of us can control the choices we make today, and those choices can change our environment and shape our tomorrows. The question to be answered is, “Where do we begin, what habits should we strive to develop?”

Begin with the habitual practice of morning and bedtime routines. The habit of a good morning routine will set the tone for the rest of the day. It can be complex or simple. Just make it a habit to begin each morning with a routine that focuses on health, happiness, and the goals of the day. Rest is an essential ingredient for good health. Just as trees experience periods of dormancy, we too, need periods of deep restorative sleep. The habit of a bedtime routine that calms our minds and bodies preparing them for rest and regeneration will lead to happier and more productive mornings.

Finally, the most important daily habit one can practice is the pursuit of wisdom. The book of Proverbs tells us, “The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.” Wisdom is knowledge gained from experience and it helps us to make wise choices. Sound sources of wisdom are formal education, experts, practitioners, nature, and our kupuna. Wisdom is foundational for sustained growth and a daily habit of pursuing wisdom is the cornerstone of a life rooted in peace, contentment, joy, and triumph.