

## Forming new habits

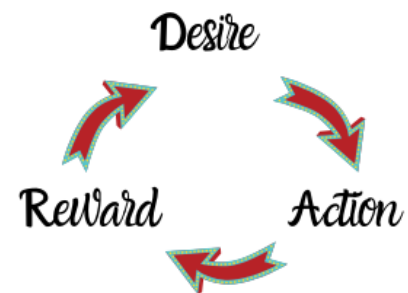
Research has shown that if you consistently do something for 40 days you are more likely to continue doing it. In other words you are beginning the nucleus of a new habit. Similar research shows that if you stop doing it for approx. 7 days then you are less likely to continue it.

We are entering into a new normal in culture and society. The old way of doing things is shifting because of the coronavirus pandemic. Old habits are dying, and we are forming new ones.

Now is the time to make sure that we are forming good ones. Here in Derryvolgie we want to get to know Christ better and make Him better known. So the forming of good habits is essential.

Like most things in life there is cyclical pattern to our habits that goes something like this: we desire something, so we act on it hoping it leads to a reward.

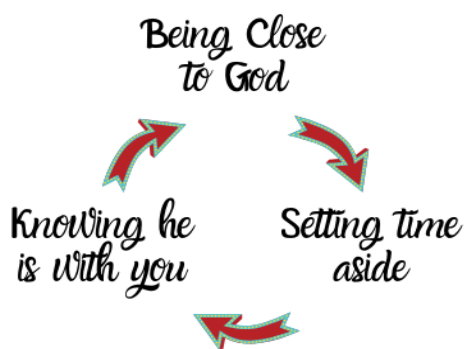
The difficulty is changing habits is that we often start in the wrong place. For instance if you are trying to lose weight you immediately try to stop the reward – in my case eating chocolate. Yet what if I started to change things when the desires first start. So when I am craving the chocolate rather than concentrating on the reward what if I started to change the desire because often I eat chocolate out of boredom. So what if I got up and went for a walk or had a conversation with my wife. The factor of boredom is shifted, and the desire now changes so consequently does my action, yet I still get a reward at the end. I have overcome my boredom.



Now you may say this is too simplistic, it needs to be more elaborate. However just think about it for a moment, if each of your habits are undertaken to induce a reward then maybe we just need a different way of doing things.

The bible says in James chapter 1: 'Then after desire has been conceived it gives birth to sin, and sin when it is full-grown gives birth to death.' What does this mean? Simply put I think it means that when you sow a thought you reap and action, when you sow and action you reap a habit, when you sow a habit you reap a lifestyle. In other words the outcome of our lives (life or death) starts with our thought process which is where we begin our habits.

That chapter in the bible goes on to say: 'Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.'



So if we want to form good habits we need to start by focussing our mind on the good things of God. Creating good habits in our new normal. So the new cyclical pattern is a desire (being close to God), an action (setting time aside) and a reward (knowing he is with you).

Set aside some time each day to focus on God. Reading his word, listening to the recordings of our services or singing along with our Spotify worship list. (all these resources can be found on <https://www.derryvolgie.com>)

There is a wealth of materials online to help you grow in your relationship with God – please make sure that you are sourcing them from websites that are consistent with what it is that we believe as a parish. I have listed some of these resources below. Of course there are others you can buy in hardcopy as well. **Let's start forming good habits.**

<https://www.derryvolgie.com>

<https://www.downanddromore.org/news/2020/04/join-us-for-daily-easter-devotions>

<https://biblesocietyni.co.uk/resources/story-watch-read-reflect/>

<https://www.ucb.co.uk/word-for-today/48793>

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCE2oL27oo\\_59vYlr0uk\\_i7Q](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCE2oL27oo_59vYlr0uk_i7Q)