The 1/4 Rule: A Simple Idea for Building New Habits

The biggest challenge for most to achieve something is the "all or nothing" approach. Wanted to use treadmill for 40 minutes, but now it's the end of the day? Do it for 10 minutes. That's better than 0 and you'll keep your momentum for the next day.

I created this rule for myself after spending months not achieving my targets. Every time I opened the Streaks app, I saw a list of missed goals.

Although the 1/4 Rule is not a solution for every situation, it can be useful in certain scenarios. It can serve as a means of establishing a new baseline for daily goals. You have the liberty to adjust its difficulty level as per your convenience.

Even if the goal seems too small, it's better to complete it rather than ignoring it.

As Tim Ferris says: *"The consistent program that you follow is better than the perfect program that you quit."*

The 1/4 Rule

To use The 1/4 Rule, you need a few things: a tangible, daily goal that can be quantified that you haven't been consistently hitting, your logic, your brutal honesty.

Examples include the following:

- Working out for 60 minutes per day
- Reading 10 pages of a book per day
- Write 1,000 words per day
- Drinking 1 gallon of water per day
- Journaling for 15 minutes per day
- Watch 20 minutes of a course per day

Now you take that big goal that you haven't been hitting and try to achieve 1/4 of it.

Let's use a gallon of water for example.

There are 128 US fluid ounces in 1 gallon. If we shoot to achieve 1/4 of that goal, we're left with 32 US fluid ounces per day.

Now look at that number and ask yourself, "Can I realistically hit this goal every day?"

If the answer is no, break it down again.

We're now left with 8 US fluid ounces, a cup of water.

At this point, you've broken your goal down to its smallest, logical component.

The keyword is *logical* as you can keep breaking your goal down further, but at that point the exercise no longer makes sense.

Building momentum

What we're really trying to do is build momentum. If you can get in the habit of achieving one small goal per day, you will eventually increase its difficulty over time.

It's the same concept Navy SEALS use regarding making your bed every day.

Accomplishing one task encourages you to do more tasks.

Even if they're small, you'll eventually get a snowball effect.