

One Healthy Habit at a Time



Become someone who
starts small and goes far

Welcome to Your Healthy Habits Journey

Hi, I'm Lindie.

I am so glad you are here.

Over the years, one of the biggest lessons I have learned as a Health Coach is that lasting health is not built through perfection or quick fixes. It is built one healthy habit at a time.

Perhaps you have found yourself knowing what you should be doing to improve your health, but struggling to stay consistent when life gets busy.

You are not alone.

Many of us start with the best intentions. We decide to eat healthier, move more, sleep better, or reduce stress, but trying to change everything at once can quickly become overwhelming.

The good news is that lasting change does not require a complete lifestyle overhaul.

It begins with one small healthy habit, repeated consistently over time.

This guide is designed to help you take that first step. Rather than focusing on perfection, you will learn how to choose one habit that fits your life, create a simple plan to make it stick, and build confidence as you go.


Whether your goal is to have more energy, feel calmer, improve your nutrition, move more, or simply create healthier routines, I hope this guide helps you take that first step.

Remember...

Small steps become healthy habits.

Healthy habits become lasting change.

I hope this guide encourages you to begin with confidence, one healthy habit at a time.

Helping you build healthy habits for body and mind 

Warmly,

Lindie Nortje
Health Coach | Beyond Health Coaching

Why one habit works (when everything at once never does)

There's a reason many people start with the best intentions but struggle to stay consistent. Willpower is not the problem. Motivation helps, but it comes and goes. The challenge is relying on motivation alone.. You probably know exactly what you want to do. The problem is biology.

Your brain is wired for efficiency. Every time you repeat a behaviour, the neural pathway associated with that behaviour gets a little stronger : like a path through a field that gets clearer the more people walk it. Over time, the brain automates that behaviour. It stops requiring conscious effort. It just becomes what you do.

That's a habit.

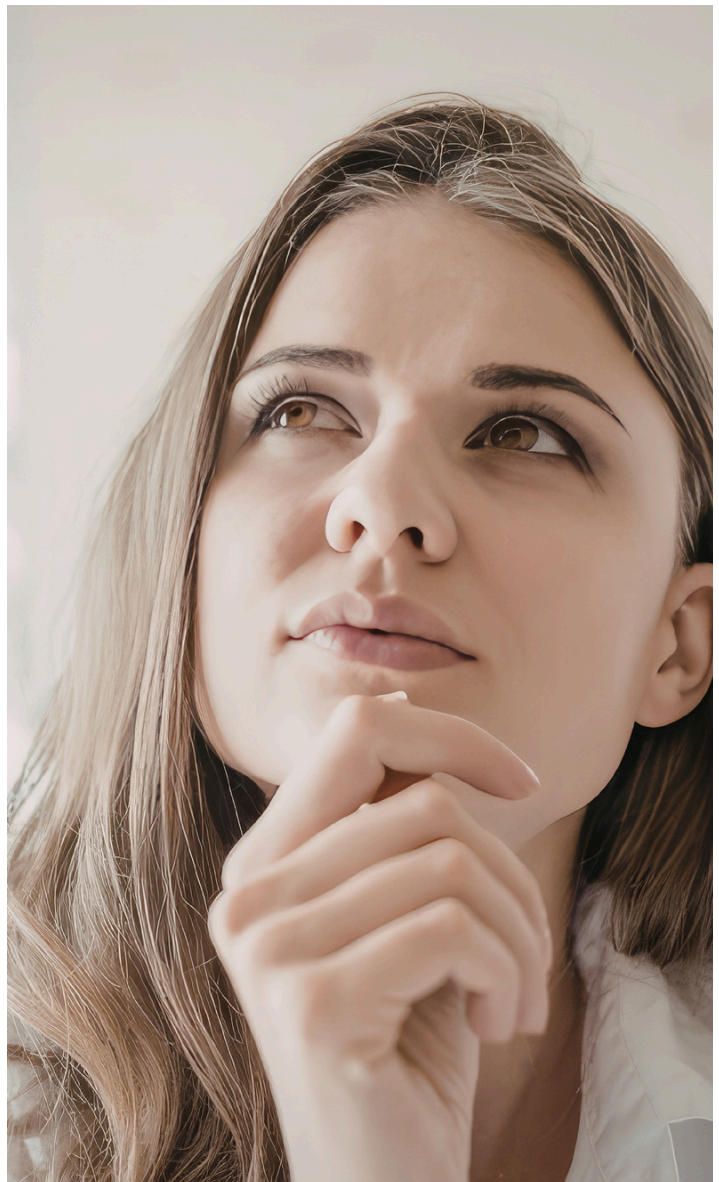
But here's the catch: the brain can only reinforce so many new pathways at once. Ask it to build five new habits simultaneously and it spreads its resources too thin. Ask it to build one, and you give it a fighting chance.

That's not motivational speak. That's how the brain actually works.

James Clear, in his book *Atomic Habits*, puts it this way: ***you don't rise to the level of your goals, you fall to the level of your systems.*** The goal isn't the point. The system (the small, repeatable behaviour you build into your day) is the point.

BJ Fogg, behavioural scientist and author of *Tiny Habits*, adds another layer. ***Motivation***, he argues, ***is an unreliable starting point.*** It peaks, it dips, it disappears entirely on a grey Tuesday in week three. What works instead is design. You build the environment that makes the habit easier to do than not do.

Which brings us to friction.



Remove the friction

Friction is anything that stands between you and the habit. The trainers that live in the cupboard under the stairs. The water bottle that's never filled. The book that's buried under a pile of things on the bedside table.

Reducing friction doesn't require a life reorganisation. It requires a small, deliberate act of preparation. Running shoes by the door. Water bottle filled the night before. Book on the pillow.

A small act of preparation does more work than a big surge of motivation.



Habit stacking

One of the most effective ways to make a new habit stick is to attach it to one that already exists. Clear describes it simply: after I [existing habit], I will [new habit].

After I make my morning coffee, I will drink a full glass of water.

After I sit down at my desk, I will write three things I want to accomplish today.

After I get into bed, I will read for ten minutes instead of reaching for my phone.

The existing habit acts as the trigger. You're not creating something from nothing. You're attaching something new to something your brain already does automatically. That's a much easier ask.



The compound effect

Here's the part that's easy to underestimate. One habit, repeated consistently over eight weeks, doesn't just build that habit. It builds evidence. Evidence that you are someone who follows through. Someone who shows up for themselves. Someone who starts small and goes far.

That evidence compounds. As the weeks go by... you won't just have a habit. You'll have something more useful than that.

You'll have momentum.

Pick your one thing

This is the part where most guides hand you a plan. This one hands you a menu.

Because the best habit isn't the one someone else chose for you. It's the one that fits your life, your season, and where you are right now. Scan the list. Notice which healthy habit feels most achievable right now. Notice what you've been meaning to start for a while. Notice what feels manageable rather than heroic.

Then pick one. Just one.

Start Your Day Well

- Take a 20-minute walk before checking your phone.
- Start your day with a nourishing breakfast and a glass of water.
- Spend five minutes outside, taking a few deep breaths and enjoying the fresh air.
- Wake up at the same time each morning to support your body's natural rhythm.
- Begin your day with five minutes of gratitude, prayer, or quiet reflection.

Move Your Body

- Set yourself a daily step goal that feels realistic and achievable.
- Try a new form of movement that you enjoy, such as swimming, dancing, Pilates, or yoga.
- Take a 10–15 minute walk during your lunch break, or whenever it fits naturally into your day.
- Spend five minutes stretching before bed to help your body unwind.
- Choose the stairs instead of the lift whenever you have the opportunity.

Nourish Your Body

- Start your day with a nourishing breakfast that includes protein, fibre, and colour.
- Prepare one simple meal or snack ahead of time so you have a healthy option ready when life gets busy.
- Sit down for one meal each day without screens, and give yourself time to enjoy your food.
- Drink enough water throughout the day to support your energy, digestion, and wellbeing.
- Add one extra serving of colourful vegetables or fruit to one meal each day.

Rest and Sleep

- Aim for a consistent bedtime that allows you to get enough sleep most nights.
- Create a screen-free bedtime routine by putting your phone away 30–60 minutes before bed.
- Spend five minutes in prayer, gratitude, or quiet reflection before going to sleep.
- Read a few pages of a book instead of scrolling on your phone before bed.
- Create a simple wind-down routine that helps signal to your body that it is time to rest.

Calm Your Mind

- Begin your day with five minutes of prayer, quiet reflection, or simply sitting in stillness before the busyness begins.
- Spend a few minutes outside each day, taking in the fresh air and noticing the world around you.
- End your day by writing down three things: something you are grateful for, something that went well, and one intention for tomorrow.
- Take a mindful walk without your phone, paying attention to your surroundings and your breathing.
- Reach out to a friend or loved one for a meaningful conversation or connection this week.

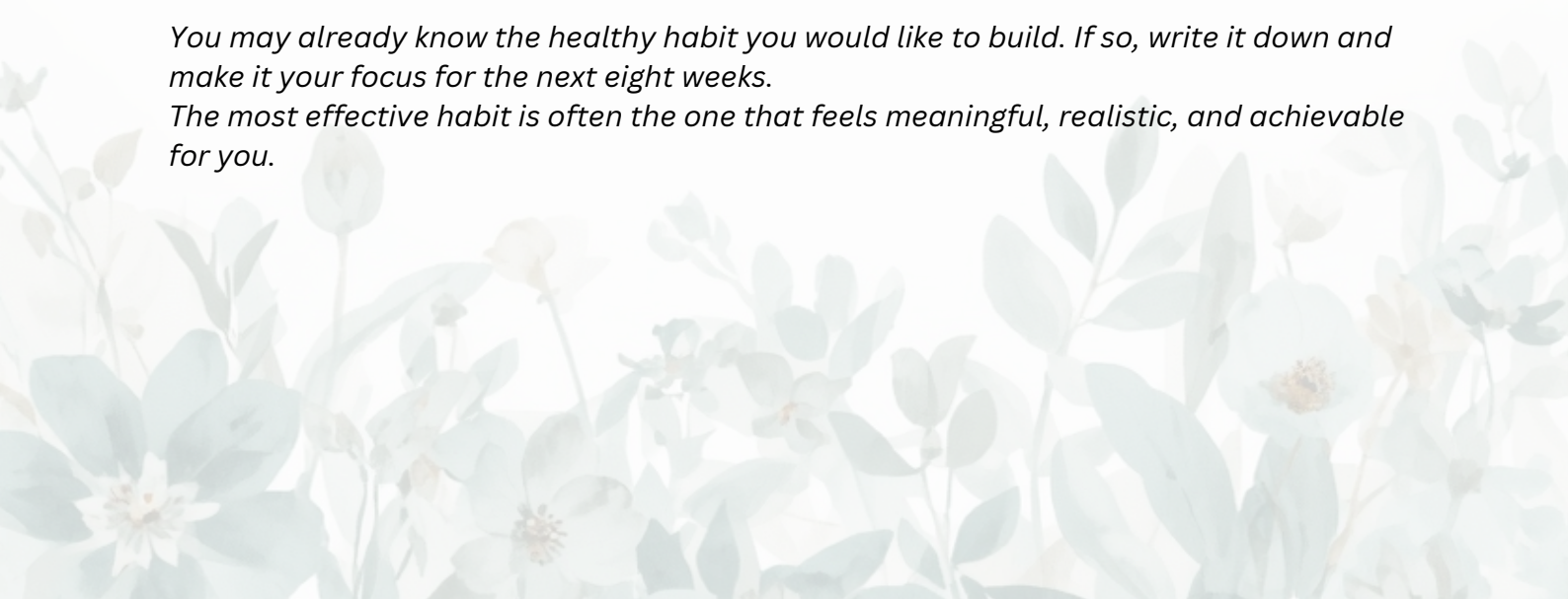
Connection and Joy

- Schedule one activity each week that brings you joy, simply because you enjoy it—not because it is productive or for someone else.
- Reach out to a friend or family member for a meaningful conversation or a cup of coffee.
- Share a meal with someone you care about and enjoy being fully present together.
- Make time for a hobby or creative activity that helps you relax and recharge.
- Spend quality time with a loved one without phones or other distractions.

Or choose your own.

You may already know the healthy habit you would like to build. If so, write it down and make it your focus for the next eight weeks.

The most effective habit is often the one that feels meaningful, realistic, and achievable for you.



This is where it gets real

Reading about habits is easy. Deciding to build one is easy. The part that actually changes things is this: writing it down, telling someone, and setting yourself up to follow through.

Research consistently shows that people who commit to a specific plan (when they'll do it, where they'll do it, what they need to make it happen) are significantly more likely to follow through than people who rely on good intentions alone. Good intentions are a starting point. A written commitment is a system.

So take five minutes here. This page is yours.

My healthy habit is...

Be specific. Instead of "exercise more", try something like "Take a 20-minute walk before I check my phone."

I'm going to tell:

*Who in your life will know you're doing this? A friend, a partner, a colleague.
Someone who will ask how it's going.*

To make it happen I need to:

Think friction. What needs to be in place? Running shoes by the door. Phone on charge downstairs. Lunch prepped the night before.

I'll stack it onto:

Is there an existing habit you can attach this to? After my morning coffee, after I sit down at my desk, after the kids leave for school.

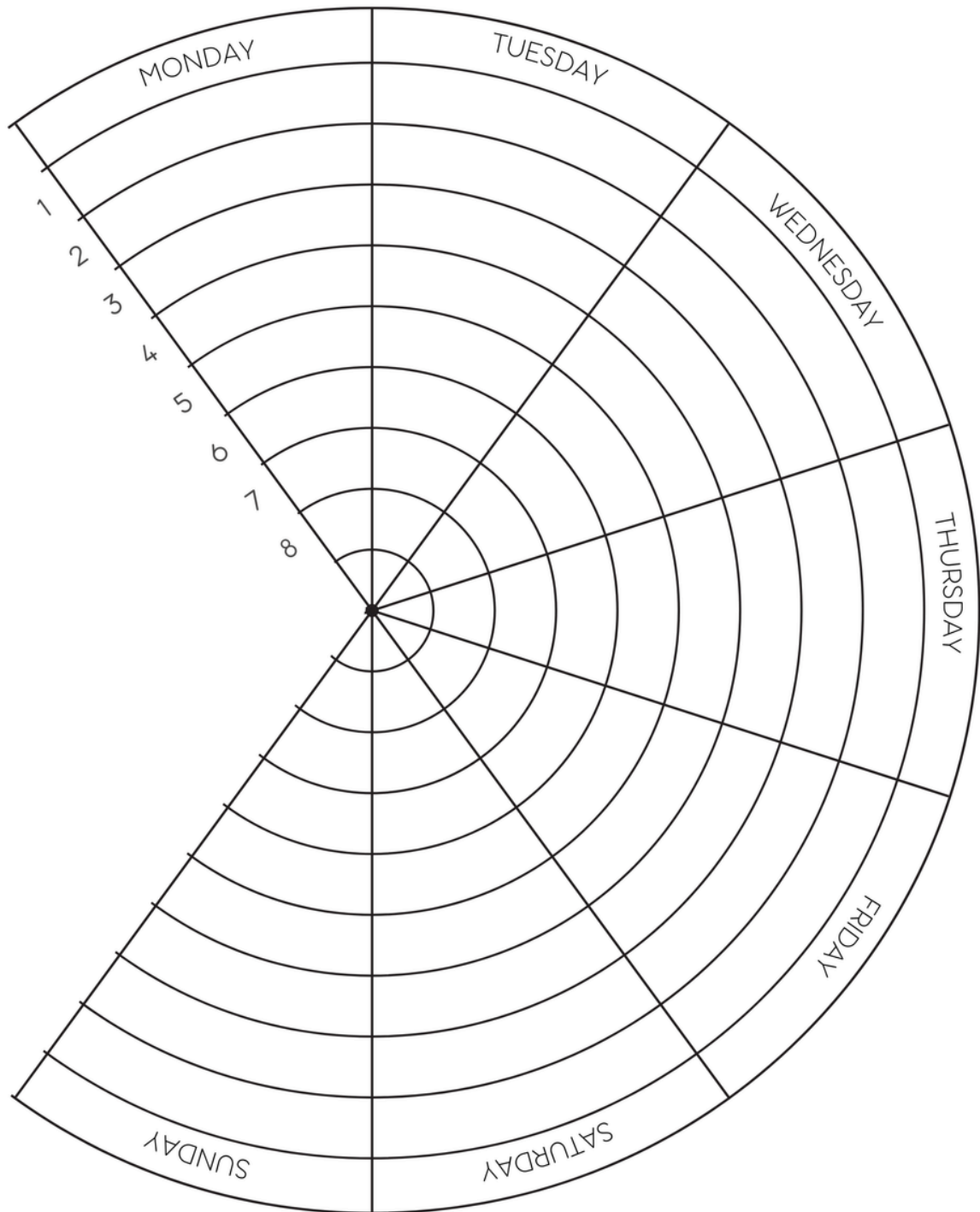
After eight weeks, I'll celebrate by:

Not a huge reward. Something that feels like a nod to the version of you who showed up. A meal out, a new book, a morning to yourself.

You don't need to feel ready. You don't need the perfect week to start. You need a date, a plan, and someone who knows you're doing it. That's enough to begin.

Colour in each day you complete your habit.

Watch eight weeks fill up.



Pick your start date - it doesn't have to be a Monday

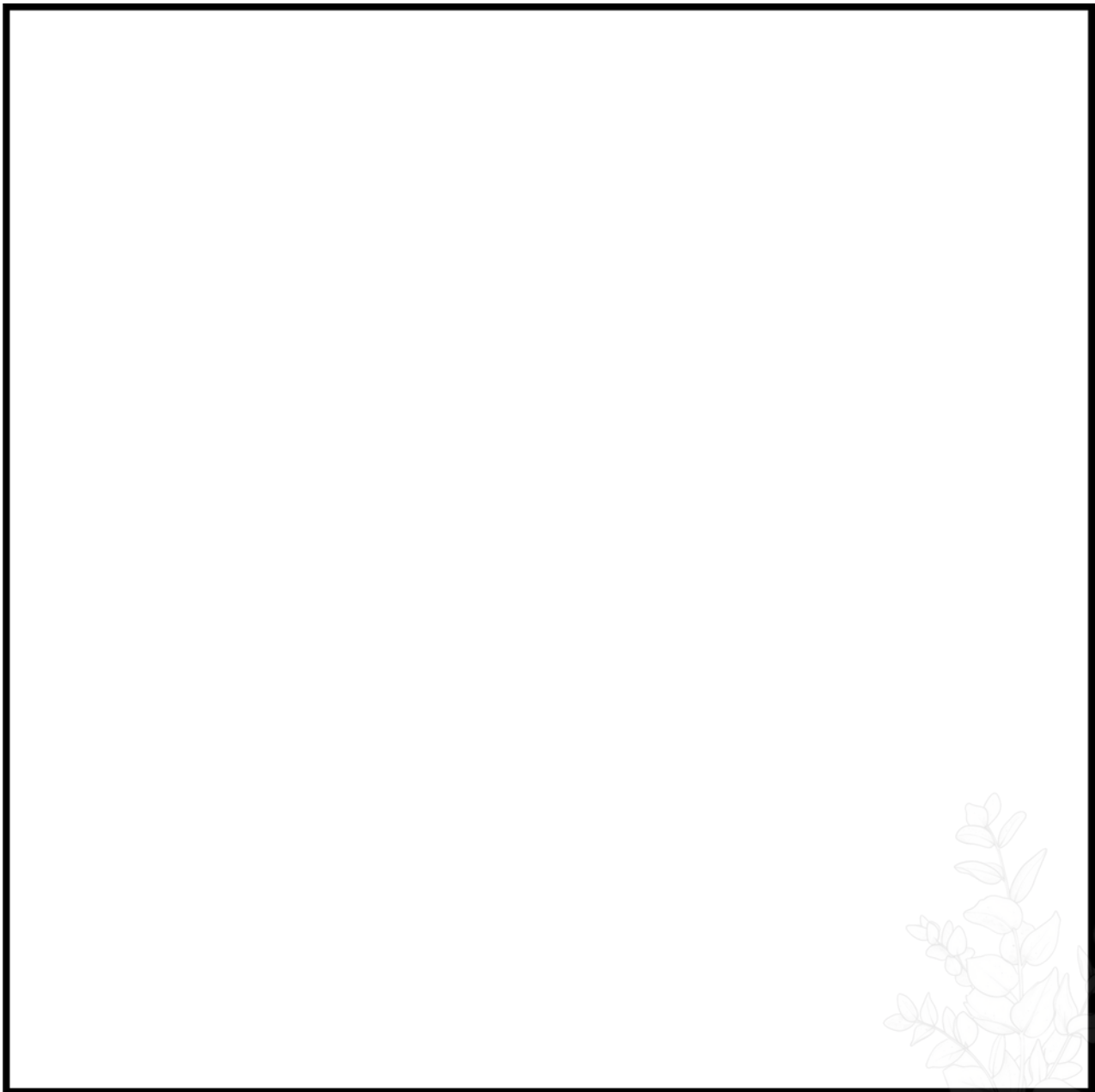
Week one

Every habit starts here. Don't overthink it. Just show up.

This week is about starting, not perfecting. You don't need to feel motivated every day. You need a plan for the days you don't.

This week's reflection:

What did showing up feel like this week? Was there a day that surprised you (either because it was easier than expected, or harder)?

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Every expert was once a beginner.

Week 1 of 8

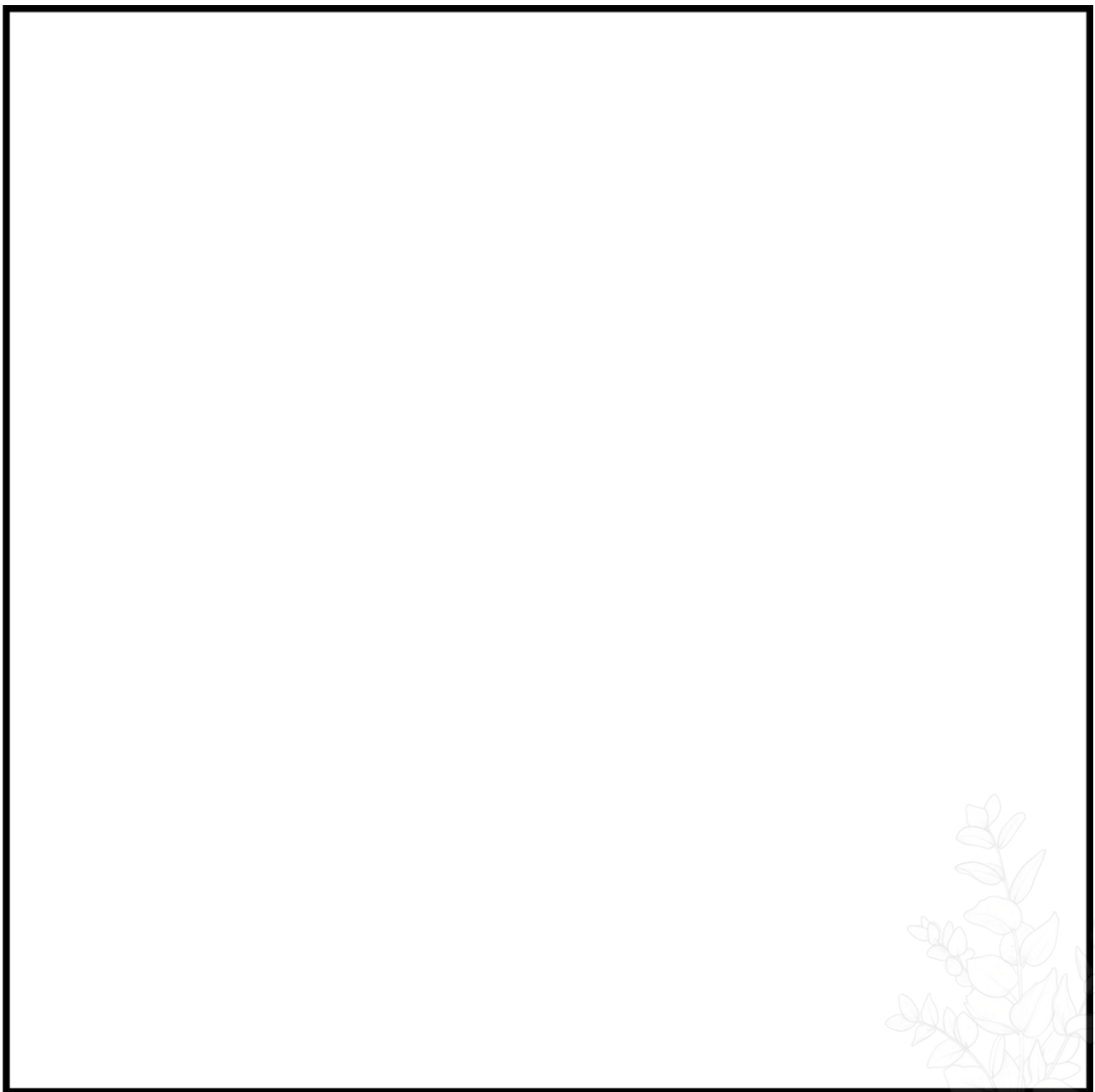
Week two

The novelty has worn off. This is where it gets interesting.

Most habits don't fail because people stop caring. They fail because life gets in the way once and the person decides that means they've failed. Missing one day isn't failure. It's just Tuesday.

This week's reflection:

Did anything get in the way this week? If you missed a day, what would make it easier to get back on track tomorrow rather than next Monday?

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Progress is more important than perfection.

Week 2 of 8

Week three

You're further along than you think.

Three weeks in, something is starting to shift. The habit is becoming less of a decision and more of a default. That's not an accident. That's your brain doing exactly what you asked it to do.

This week's reflection:

Has anything changed about how the habit feels compared to week one? Is it taking less effort, or does it still feel like a conscious choice?



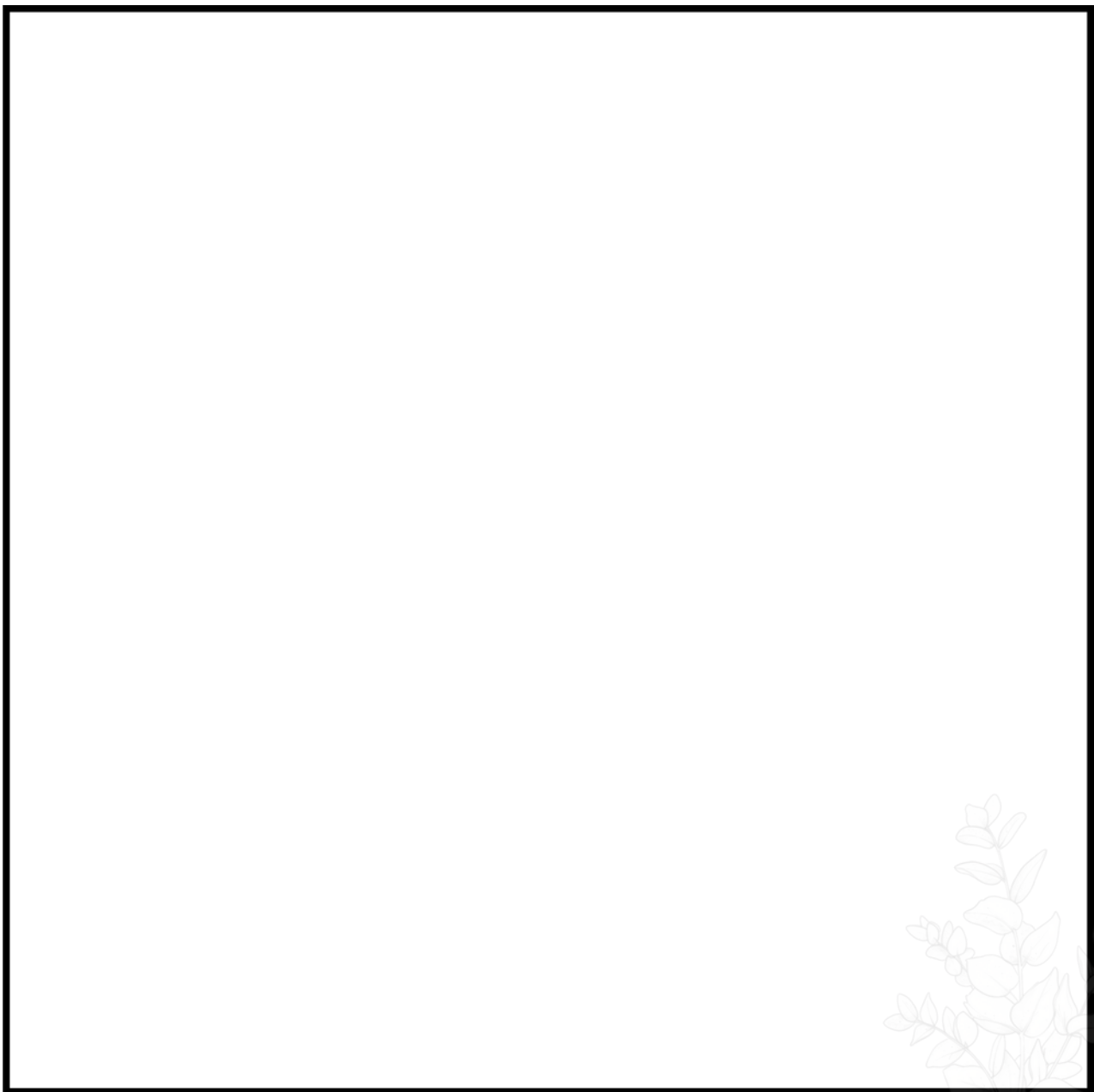
Week four

The midpoint. A good moment to look back before looking forward.

You're halfway. Whatever the last four weeks have looked like (consistent, patchy, surprisingly good, harder than expected), you're still here, still tracking. That matters more than a perfect record.

This week's reflection:

If you could go back and tell week-one you one thing, what would it be? And what do you want the next four weeks to look like?

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Small steps become healthy habits.

Week 4 of 8

Week five

This is where habits start to stick.

Research suggests it takes anywhere from 18 to 254 days to form a habit. The average sits around 66. You're at week five. You're in the zone where repetition starts to become identity. Keep going.

This week's reflection:

Has the habit started to feel like part of your day rather than an addition to it? What would it feel like to stop now?



Keep showing up.

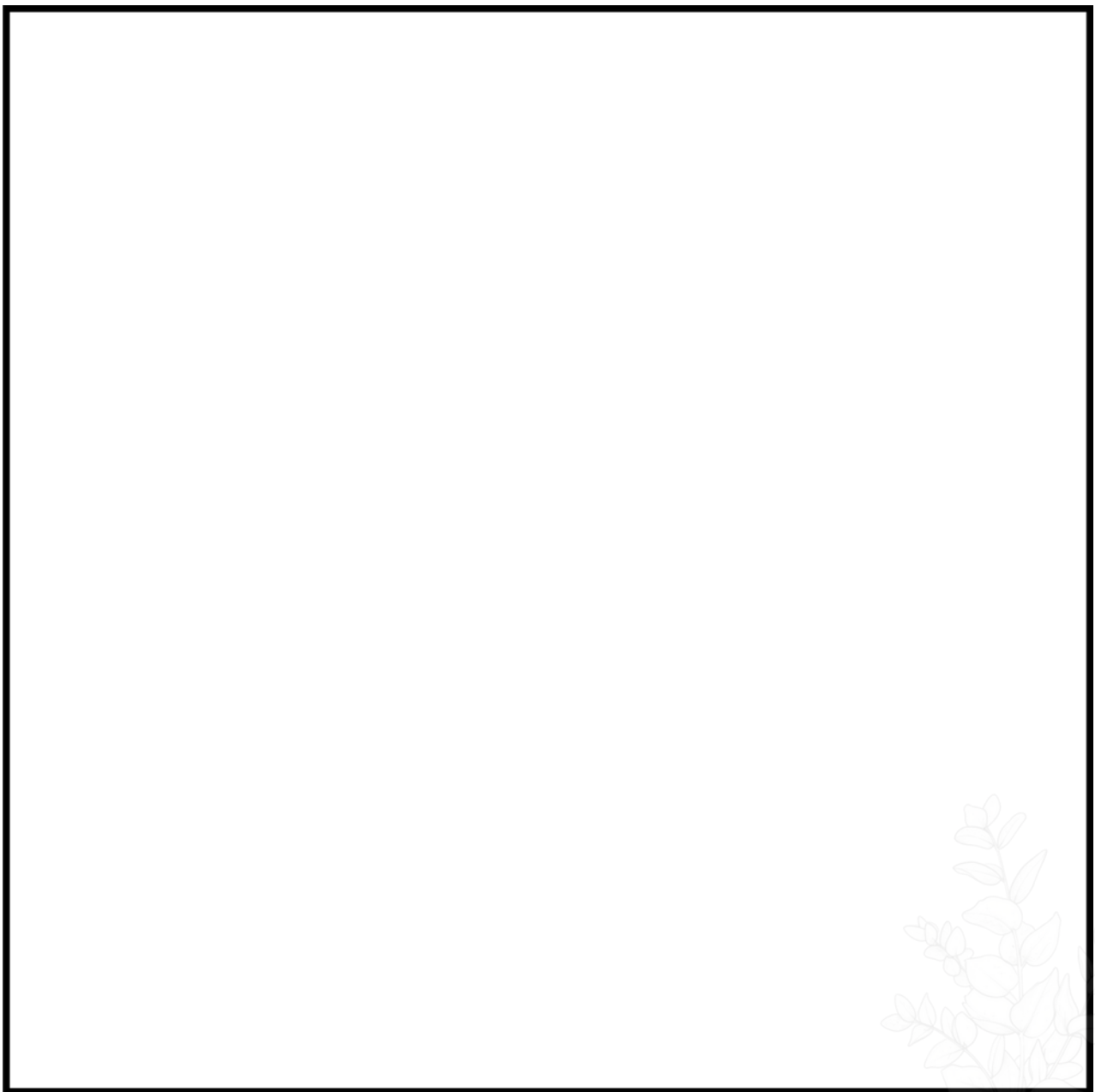
Week 5 of 8

Week six

Life rarely goes exactly as planned. Busy weeks, unexpected events, family commitments, or simply feeling tired can all make healthy habits more difficult to maintain. The goal is not perfection. The goal is learning how to begin again.

This week's reflection:

What's threatened to derail you this week? How did you handle it, or how could you handle it better next time?

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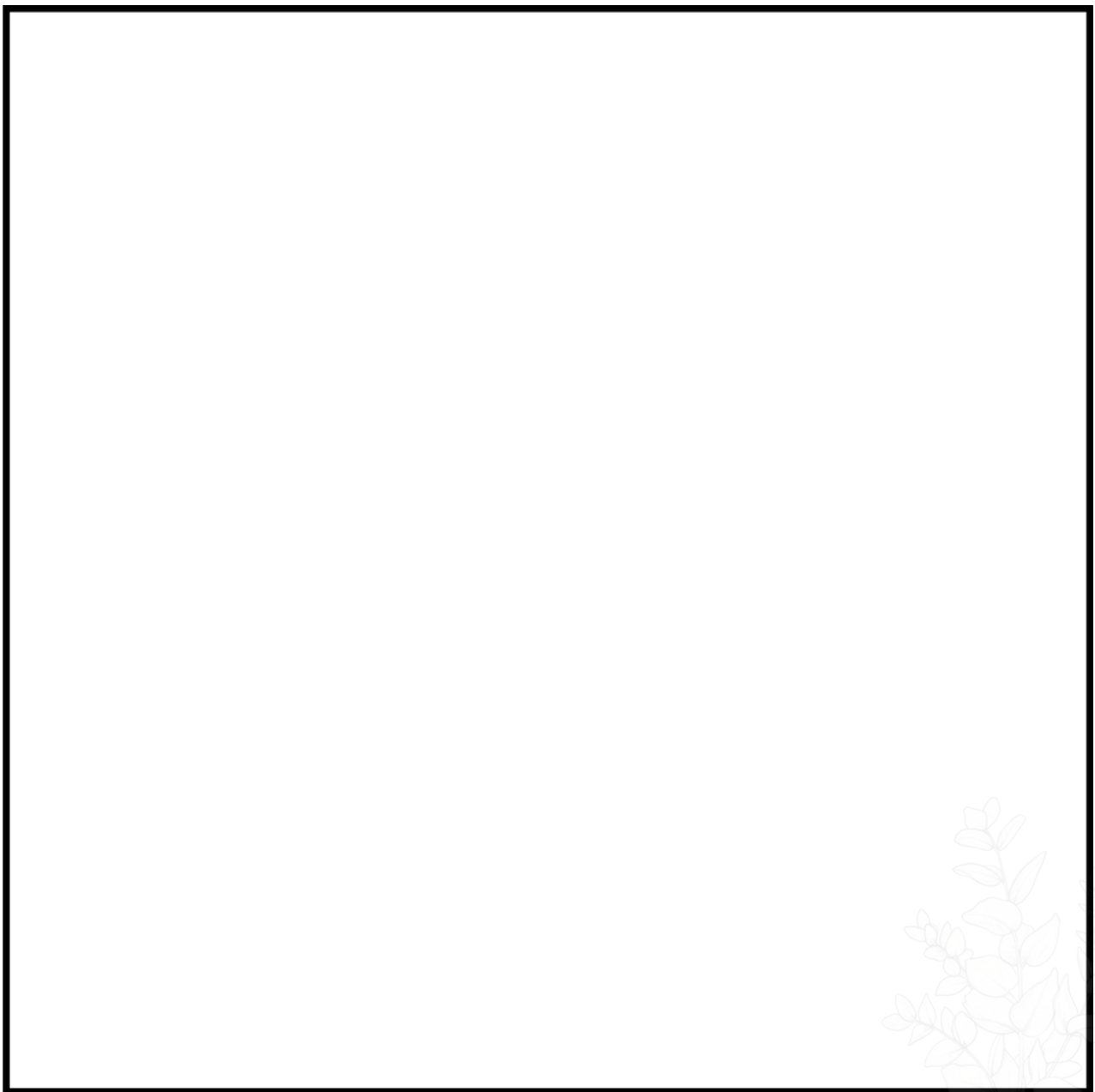
Week seven

Nearly there. Don't negotiate with yourself now.

Seven weeks of evidence. Seven weeks of a version of you that decided to do one small thing and kept doing it. You are entering the final stretch. Keep showing up.

This week's reflection:

What's the biggest thing you've noticed about yourself over the last seven weeks? Not about the habit. About you.



You are becoming the person you want to be.

Week 7 of 8

Week eight

You did the thing.

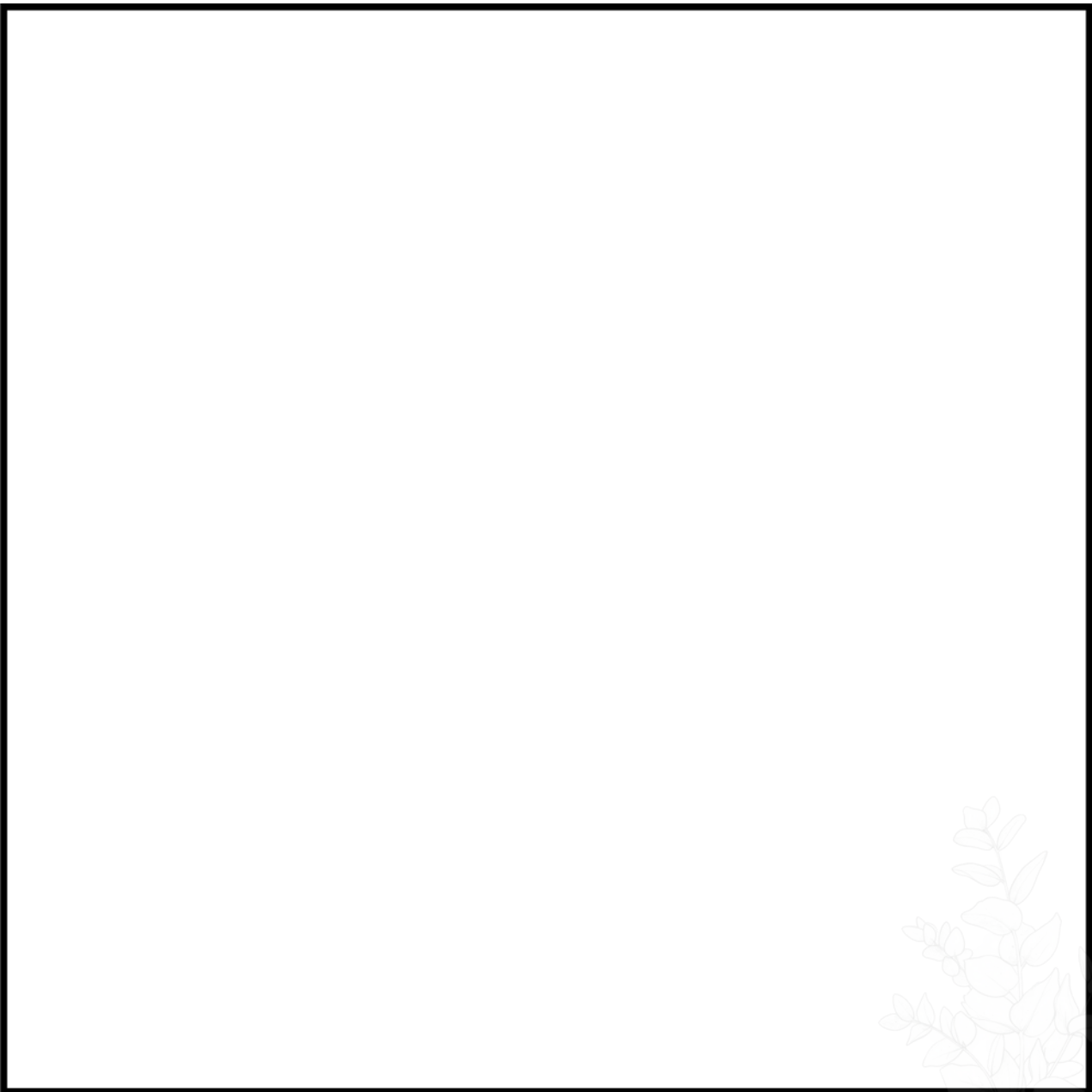
Eight weeks. One habit. Repeated until it stopped feeling like effort and started feeling like just... what you do.

This isn't the end of something. It's the beginning of knowing you can.

This week's reflection:

Look back at your commitment page. Did you do what you said you'd do? What has this eight weeks shown you about what's possible when you keep it simple and stay consistent?

And - don't forget that reward you promised yourself.

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Celebrate how far you have come.

Week 8 of 8

Before You Go...

Congratulations on taking the first step towards building healthier habits.

Remember, lasting change does not come from doing everything at once. It comes from choosing one healthy habit, practising it consistently, and allowing those small steps to grow into lasting change.

A Personal Note:

Thank you for spending this time with me.

I created this guide because I believe healthy living should feel achievable, enjoyable, and sustainable, not overwhelming. I hope it encourages you to take that first step with confidence.

Need a Little Extra Support? You do not have to do it alone. If you would like personalised support to build healthy habits that fit your lifestyle, I would love to help.

Book your complimentary 20-minute discovery call:

 www.beyondhealthcoaching.co.za

Or simply come and explore more free resources on my website.

I'd Love to Hear From You

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 Facebook: [Beyond Health Coaching](https://www.facebook.com/BeyondHealthCoaching)

 Instagram: [@beyondhealthcoaching](https://www.instagram.com/beyondhealthcoaching)



Lindie Nortje

Health Coach | Beyond Health Coaching

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P.S. I'd love to see your journey!

If this guide has inspired you to build one healthy habit at a time, tag [@beyondhealthcoaching](https://www.instagram.com/beyondhealthcoaching) on Instagram or Facebook.

I'd love to celebrate your progress with you.