

## DETAILS



### ***The Common Rule Youth Edition*** *Growing Your Faith in a Distracted World* *Young Readers Edition*

June 3, 2025 | \$18.99, 200 pages, paperback | 978-1-5140-1043-3

## Tools for Youth to Break Free

In a world buzzing with screens and endless notifications, youth are navigating more noise than ever. *The Common Rule Youth Edition* provides clarity and purpose, tailored specifically for teens and tweens (grades 6-12). Adapted from Justin Whitmel Earley's bestselling book, *The Common Rule Youth Edition* empowers young readers to break free from the stress and anxiety that modern life can impose.

*The Common Rule Youth Edition* equips young people with the tools to help them find peace and fulfillment through simple, intentional habits designed to foster freedom and rest.

Earley draws on his own experiences to illustrate how small actions can lead to significant transformation.

- **Prayers:** Initiate a practice of humility and gratitude by setting aside time for intentional prayer each day.
- **Daily Scripture Reading:** Cultivate a habit of reading and reflecting on scriptures to nourish your spiritual journey.
- **Digital Detoxes:** Schedule regular breaks from screens and social media to encourage mindfulness and presence in real-world interactions.
- **Weekly Community Time:** Prioritize spending quality time with family or friends to build strong, supportive relationships.
- **Sabbath Rest:** Dedicate one day a week to rest and rejuvenation, free from work and electronic distractions.
- **Physical Activity:** Run, walk, or play at least four hours each week to experience a healthier body and a healthier mind.
- **Shared Meals:** Engage in communal meals that emphasize connection and conversation, strengthening bonds over food.

*The Common Rule Youth Edition* goes beyond mere advice. With expanded content and study guide questions, it sparks individual reflection and group discussions, making it perfect for personal growth and community learning. *The Common Rule Youth Edition* offers a roadmap to a balanced and meaningful life.



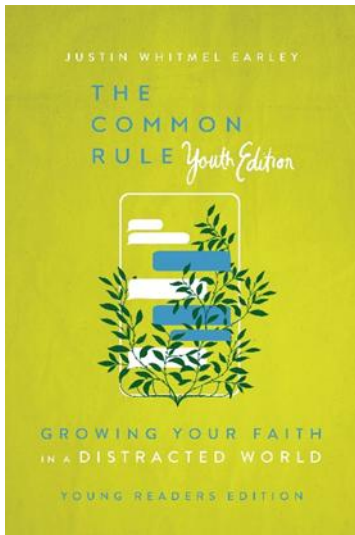
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## EXCERPT



### ***The Common Rule Youth Edition*** *Growing Your Faith in a Distracted World* *Young Readers Edition*

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## The Power of Habit

Without a thoughtful framework to guide our growth, we're likely to form habits that are destructive. Building a trellis of healthy habits is a way to acknowledge the good ways God designed us, and the good limits he offers us.

A habit is a behavior that occurs automatically, over and over, and often unconsciously. The fact is, we all live according to habits that shape our lives. But we don't often think much about them. A study from Duke University suggests that as much as 40 percent of the actions we take every day are not the product of choices but of habits.

Take your daily schedule or your posting on social media. Think about your internet history or how you spent your mornings last weekend. Look at the time you spend with family versus the time you spend looking at a screen during a normal day.

These things define vast portions of our lives. While we would like to think we've carefully chosen these actions, most often we haven't even given them a second thought.

This wouldn't be so bad if it weren't for the fact that habits form much more than our schedules—they form our hearts.

In the months after my anxiety crash-landed me in the ER, my wife and I had sketched out a program of habits to get my heart to believe the peace that my head knew but my body refused. I didn't think any of the habits we'd scribbled down were life-changing. There were daily habits of prayer and taking time away from my phone. Weekly habits included a day of rest and talking more with friends. Nothing mind-blowing.

So my heart was still a twisted mess when I met up with Matt and Steve, my two best friends, at a restaurant to talk to them about these habits. It was a night of good conversation about living with better daily and weekly rhythms. And my friends were going to keep me accountable.

At the time, I hadn't heard of a keystone habit—a micro shift that brings about macro effects. I didn't think a few good habit shifts would change my life. But to my surprise, they did.

... whether we are aware of it or not, we all have habits that shape how we live our lives. And that can be a good thing, because when we act on our habits, it frees up brain space for other thoughts. That's why we can walk between classes and suddenly arrive in our next class without thinking about a single step we've taken.

Scientifically, habits help our brains to be multifunctional. This is really useful in general, but it has downsides.

And if we're acting out a bad habit—one that reinforces an addiction, perpetuates a harmful pattern of thought, or encourages mindless submission to technology—we don't have much power to fight back.



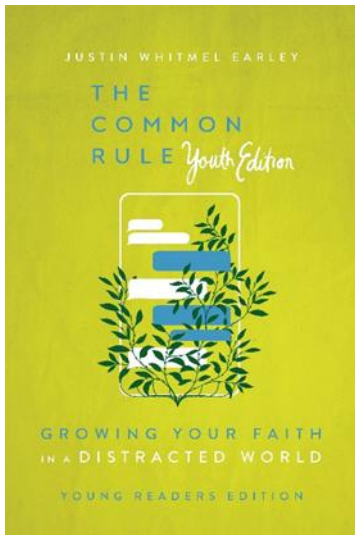
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Think about your phone. How often do you check it? Research shows the average teen looks at it more than one hundred times a day, for over five hours on average. Some check it nearly five hundred times a day! (Even adults average over three hours a day.) Students use their phone at school and at home. All day. Every day.

There's something unhealthy and maybe even wrong about that. We can tell ourselves over and over that we want to break free from that tiny screen and experience more of real life. But the part of our brain that changes a habit is exactly the part that gets shut out when the autopilot of habit turns on.

When we're on autopilot, our choices—even the unconscious ones—shape us and form us, and we develop patterns that we would never consciously choose.

This is why to fully understand habits we must think of habits as liturgies. A liturgy is a pattern of words or actions repeated regularly as a way of worship. I'm not only talking about what we sing or say at church; we worship anything by honoring and being devoted. Worship through liturgy involves our thoughts and our time and our lives. For example, I say the Lord's Prayer every night because I want the words of Jesus' prayer to sink down into my bones.

So do you see how similar liturgy is to habit? They're both something repeated over and over that influences who we are. The only difference is that a liturgy admits that it's an act of worship. Our habits often obscure what we're really worshiping, but that doesn't mean we're not worshiping something. Because worship is often a reflection of our time and attention. And our habits reveal what we each believe is most worthy of our time and attention.

So the question for us is: What are we worshiping?

When we combine the idea that our habits are liturgies of worship, along with the scientific insight that our brains aren't totally engaged when our habits are playing out, it explains how our unconscious habits form much more than our schedules—they form our hearts.

—adapted from part one: “Discovering the Power of Habit”



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