

CONFBOOSTER

The 30-Day Playbook

One small action a day, in real situations.



WORKBOOK · FOUR WEEKS

What is in here

Thirty days in four weeks, with a setup day before any of it. Every day is one page: why it works, what to do, how long it takes, and what to write down.

START

Before you start, and Day Zero

What thirty days does, how to survive day nine, and fifteen minutes of setup.

DAYS 1-7

Find the situations, and start the record

Nothing to fix yet. Every later week measures against this.

DAYS 8-14

Decide in advance, not in the moment

If-then plans, the first days out loud, and reading both weeks back.

DAYS 15-21

Predict, do it, check what happened

Your ladder, and the evidence that stops being someone else's.

DAYS 22-28

The harder ones, and the day it goes badly

What you say to yourself afterwards, and what you do in the hour after.

DAYS 29-30

Where it still gets you, and the third reading

Three numbers side by side, and a note to the person who started.

KEEP

Your kit, and after day thirty

Everything worth keeping, on one page.

Before you start

This is not a book to read. It is thirty days of small actions, one a day, done in real situations rather than in your head. Most take fifteen minutes or less; a few take longer, and every day says how long. Most days are written work. Eight of them happen out loud, with other people in the room, and they are marked.

Nothing here asks you to feel differently first. That is deliberate. Confidence follows evidence — small, repeated proof that you handled something — rather than the other way round. So the work is doing things and writing down what happened, and the feeling is a consequence rather than a starting condition.

What thirty days does, and does not do

It starts the change, and you will feel some of it. It does not finish it. The research on habit formation puts the median nearer **sixty-six days**, with a range wide enough that averages are close to useless for any one person. We would rather tell you that on day one than have you feel misled on day thirty-one.

What this is not

Not therapy, not a diagnosis, not a psychometric test. This is structured practice you do on your own: fixed material, no clinician, and no assessment of your particular situation. It can sit alongside therapy. It is not a substitute for it, and if something serious is going on, the professional is the part that matters.

One more limit worth saying out loud. The methods in here come from trials that were mostly run with a person checking in on the participant. Programmes delivered that way beat ones without, and people finish them far more often. That is the honest limitation of anything delivered as a PDF, including this one.

How to survive day nine

You will probably want to stop around day nine.

That is not a comment on you. It is the well-documented pattern for self-guided programmes, and the single best-supported fix — someone checking in on you — is exactly the thing a PDF cannot do. So you get two defences instead, and both are small enough to actually use.

Keep the record somewhere you will see it. A notebook left open, a note pinned to the top of your phone. Not a file you have to go looking for.

When you miss a day, do the next one. Do not restart. A missed day costs you one day. A restart costs you nine, and the urge to restart is usually the pattern in a new coat — a fresh beginning feels better than an imperfect continuation, and feeling better is not what we are optimising for.

How each day works

Read why it works. Do the thing. Write the line. The writing is not optional: two of the three methods here — if-then plans and behavioural experiments — depend on comparing what you expected with what happened, and kept in your head they are just more thinking about it.

THE GUARANTEE

Do the first fourteen days. If nothing has shifted, send us your Day 14 reflection — it closes week two — any time within sixty days of buying, and we refund the full amount. Fourteen rather than seven, because one week is often too soon to notice anything. You do not have to finish the thirty days first.

DAY ZERO

Fifteen minutes, before any of it

A place to write, and a time

A notebook or a notes app — it only has to exist before tomorrow. A page you have to go looking for is a page you stop opening. Then pick ten to fifteen minutes in the same slot each day. Most people take the evening, because most entries are about something that already happened.

The next-opportunity rule

Some days need a real moment: a meeting to speak in, something to be refused, a compliment to accept. **If today did not contain that moment, do not manufacture one.** A staged situation only teaches you how you handle staged situations. Carry the day to the next real opportunity.

TODAY'S ACTION

15 MINUTES

Set up the place and the time. Write one sentence about why you are doing this, and date it. Then turn to the tracker on the next page.

You will want that sentence on day nine. If you also have the Codex, read the chapter for your pattern before tomorrow — it makes the first week easier to recognise.

The tracker

Tick a box when the line is written — not when it went well. A missed day stays empty, and the next day still gets its tick.

WEEK ONE · FIND THE SITUATIONS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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WEEK TWO · DECIDE IN ADVANCE

8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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WEEK THREE · PREDICT, DO IT, CHECK

15	16	17	18	19	20	21
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WEEK FOUR · THE HARDER ONES

22	23	24	25	26	27	28
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CLOSE

29	30
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Three readings sit in here too: days one, fifteen and thirty. Same quiz each time, so the numbers are comparable.

WEEK ONE

Find the situations, and start the record

This week fixes nothing, on purpose.

You cannot tell whether something changed without knowing what it was doing before. Every week after this one measures against what you write down now, so the value of the next three weeks is set almost entirely by how honestly this one goes.

So there is no technique this week. There is noticing, and there is a record. One day does put you in a situation on purpose — but even that one is for watching, not for handling well.

The one warning

The temptation is to start fixing things straight away, because noticing a pattern makes it feel solvable. Six days of resisting that is useful practice in its own right, and you will have plenty to work with on day eight.

THIS WEEK, IN ONE LINE

Six days of finding out what actually happens, and one day of reading it back.

How this week tends to go

The plan is the same for everyone. Your pattern changes where it bites. Read yours — and the others, because most people recognise themselves in more than one.

The Overthinker

The record will want to turn into analysis: why it happened, what it says. Keep each entry to what happened and what you did. Producing the explanation is the pattern at work.

The Pleaser

Most of your situations will have someone else's request in them. Write down whose. By day seven it is often two or three people, not everyone.

The Critic

Day six will be the hardest entry, because it asks you to record something that went fine. Write it anyway, in the same plain tone as the others.

The Avoider

Your record may come out short, because you steered round the situations before they could happen. The steering is the entry. “Did not open the email about the flat” counts.

DAY 1

Where it actually shows up

WHY THIS WORKS

A score tells you how much. It cannot tell you where, and “where” is what the next four weeks work on. General answers — “in social situations” — cannot be practised on. Specific ones — “the Monday call with my manager” — can.

TODAY'S ACTION

15 MINUTES

Write today's date, your Confidence Index and your pattern. Then list five situations from the last month where the pattern showed up, with names and places in them.

WRITE DOWN

1. Index and pattern, dated.
2. Five situations, one line each.

Five is deliberate. Three stays general; five pushes you past the obvious ones into the specific ones, and the specific ones are where the rest of this happens.

DAY 2

Catch one live

WHY THIS WORKS

Remembered situations arrive pre-edited: tidier, more reasonable, with the awkward parts smoothed off. One caught while it is happening is the most accurate thing you will write down this week.

TODAY'S ACTION

5 MINUTES

Notice it once today, while it is happening. Write two lines within the hour.

WRITE DOWN

1. What happened. One sentence, facts only.
2. What I did. One sentence.

Within the hour matters more than detail. Reinterpretation is fast, and it is almost always generous to whatever you did.

CONFBOOSTER

The Codex

All four patterns, and what moves them.



The four at a glance



The Overthinker

THE MOVE	Think it through again.
BUYS NOW	The feeling of being prepared.
COSTS	Time, sleep, and the thing itself, done late or not at all.
MOVES IT	Decisions on a clock; "how" instead of "why".



The Pleaser

THE MOVE	Agree, soften, adjust.
BUYS NOW	Nobody is disappointed today.
COSTS	Your own preference, and closeness that has never been tested.
MOVES IT	Small disappointments on purpose; checking what people actually thought.



The Critic

THE MOVE	Get the criticism in first.
BUYS NOW	You are never caught out.
COSTS	A lopsided record, and the things you never try.
MOVES IT	The full record; answering yourself as you would someone you respect.



The Avoider

THE MOVE	Put it off, or steer round it.
BUYS NOW	Relief, immediately.
COSTS	The task grows, and so does the next start.
MOVES IT	Smaller first steps; forgiving the last delay.

The loop all four run

From the outside the four patterns look nothing alike. Underneath, they run the same four steps. It is worth seeing once before the chapters, because every tool in this book and every day in the Playbook is aimed at one of them.



Steering round discomfort is one habit that shows up under many labels (Hayes et al., 1996), and feeling better now tends to win over the cost handed to later (Sirois & Pychyl, 2013). The four patterns are four versions of step two.

Where the Playbook breaks it

Week two puts a decision between steps one and two: an if-then plan made in advance, so the move is not the only option in the moment.

Week three goes straight at step four: a written prediction, the thing done anyway, and the result compared.

Week four works on what happens after a bad outcome, because that is where the loop most often starts again.

Why step four is the one that matters

Of the things that change what you believe you can do, direct experience of managing something ranks first (Bandura, 1977). Not encouragement, not insight: having done it, and seen that it was survivable.

Each pattern removes exactly that experience. The Overthinker never finds out the first draft was fine. The Pleaser never finds out the no was survivable. The Critic never counts what went well. The Avoider never finds out the start was bearable.

So confidence does not grow — not because you are short of it as a trait, but because the loop keeps removing the evidence it would grow from. That is the whole argument of this book in one paragraph.

READING THE CHAPTERS

Each chapter draws this loop again with its own four steps. If you only read one page of a chapter, read that one.