

# GROWTH POINTS

With Gary L. McIntosh, D.Min., Ph.D.

## Embrace Successful Habits

Research conducted by the University of Scranton found that 92% of people who set New Year's resolutions or goals never completed them. The remaining 8% of people make up an elite group of goal achievers.

What do these elite achievers do that the other 92% of people fail to do? Christina DesMarais of *Inc. Magazine* says, "The people who achieve the most in life don't conduct themselves like everyone else. They're disciplined, figure out which routines help them succeed and religiously stick to those daily habits."

The following are some specific habits that high achievers do daily. Which ones can you start using this new year?

**High achievers write down their goals.** Having an idea for a goal is just a beginning, but when you actually write it down it takes on a new form of reality. Not only do high achievers write out their goals, but they describe a brief plan on how to accomplish each of them.

**High achievers set specific goals.** Studies have discovered that specific

goals are more effective than general goals 90% of the time. For example, a goal like "I will pray more," is ineffective. It's more productive to set a goal like, "I will pray fifteen minutes each morning from 9:00am to 9:15am."

**High achievers work on their goals in the order of importance.** A hidden fact about high achievers is that about 50% of their goals never get done. As you move through the new year, fresh goals will pop up, which you need to add to your list. High achievers move the most important goals to the top of their lists. This means a lot of goals don't get accomplished, which is okay. If some goals lose their priority along the way, they most likely weren't that important anyway.

**High achievers engage a coach or mentor.** Highly productive people don't normally work alone. They realize they need help to reach their highest performance, and seek out an advisor, mentor, or coach to help them along.

Looking for a coach? Our team is available. Email Dr. Gary L. McIntosh at [cgnet@earthlink.net](mailto:cgnet@earthlink.net) or call 951-506-3086 for full details.

**High achievers process information quickly.** We all face the constant flow of information through social media, Internet articles, reports, books, blogs, etc. High achievers find a way to read, listen, or process such information, and then dispense with it as quickly as possible.

**High achievers work in intervals.** Brad Stulberg and Steven Magness, co-authors of “Peak Performance,” found that high achievers used a routine that spent, on average, 52 minutes on a project followed by a 17-minute break. Maintaining a high level of focus does not mean working longer, but working smarter by focusing and resting in intervals.

**High achievers digitally detox each day.** Tuning out distractions for at least an hour a day, by turning off all electronics, allows high achievers to focus on what really matters. These hourly breaks give time to check personal and ministry priorities with less distractions.

**High achievers don't multi-task.** It's a myth to think that people can successfully multi-task. In fact research is showing that trying to do many things at once ends up splitting one's focus and lowering the quality of results. High achievers work on one thing at a time.

**High achievers focus on work at the best time.** The most important work is scheduled for when high achievers are mentally fresh. For some, this is early in the morning, while for others it is later at night. For all it is when they are undistracted and uninterrupted.

**High achievers listen to music for focus.** Background noise often sharpens one's focus. Think, for example, how many people work in coffee houses, which seems to help them focus on various tasks. The trick is to experiment until you find what type of music helps you focus. If working in a coffee house is for you, look at [coffitivity.com](http://coffitivity.com), an app and website that mimics coffee house sounds.

**High achievers just get started.** Everyone procrastinates some of the time. However, high achievers realize if they just get started, everything else falls into line. One strategy is simply to start work for five minutes on one task. Once you're into it, the five minutes growing into a longer time period.

**High achievers take care of themselves.** Embrace each day by taking care of yourself with exercise, or personal development. Spend at least one hour a day doing something for yourself.

So, what can you starting doing this year to become a high achiever? Why not begin doing one of the habits noted above?

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## Church Consulting

Picture your church in the not-too-distant future. Imagine a gradually changing attitude reflecting a new sense of expectancy. Imagine new people with a contagious enthusiasm for Christ and your church. Imagine ministries pulsating with new life. Imagine a new heart for mission in your church.

Is it possible? The answer . . . a resounding YES! It is possible. Indeed, God very much wants to see it happen. Just think about it. God wants your church to grow! And, the McIntosh Church Growth Network stands ready to assist you through personal coaching and/or your church through consulting to see growth take place.

Gary L. McIntosh is considered one of the premier church consultants in the United States today. Here is what others are saying about his church consultations and guidance.

*“I cannot tell you how much I appreciated your consultation with our elders. You are a wealth of help and guidance. And you do it with such grace! As I sat there listening to you describe the challenges of growing from 400-800, I noticed the elders faces. They were lighting up with understanding about things that I would have found difficult to say. You did a masterful job.”* —**Jerry Reub, Cornerstone Church**

*“It was wonderful to return from my time in England and Indonesia and to receive the McIntosh Report. Thank you for its clarity, brevity, wisdom and insight. Everybody so far has received it with enthusiasm, which is no mean feat in the Midwest! May God richly bless you in your ministry of strengthening and supporting the Church.”* —**C. John Steer, Autumn Ridge Church**

*“I have had the opportunity to meet and speak with Gary individually on several occasions, and he has been a tremendous blessing to my life and ministry. Gary is a very wise, stable, insightful and capable Christian man. The counsel, guidance and direction Gary has offered to me over the past two years have been extremely helpful.”* —**John W. Tastad, East Hills Christian Church**

*“The impact has been incredible. Through his insight and recommendations I have grown as a pastor in ways I never thought possible. We appreciated not only Gary’s expertise but also the spirit by which he worked with us. He was compassionate, sensitive and personable as he interviewed our people, brought recommendations and continues to lead us through the growing process. Each conversation has been an encouragement to me as a pastor to continue in the work to which God has called me.”* —**Robert L. Bletcher, Faith Evangelical Church**

If you could replenish the spiritual dynamic of your church, would you be interested?

If you could enhance the guest welcome of your church, would you be interested?

If you could improve the growth environment of your church, would you be interested?

If you could increase the outreach potential of your church, would you be interested?

If you could align your staff in a more productive way, would you be interested?

Dr. Gary L. McIntosh can help you with these and other aspects of fruitful ministry. For full information email Gary at [cgnet@earthlink.net](mailto:cgnet@earthlink.net) or call 951-506-3086 for details.