Ideas for How to Enact the 7 Habits at Home

Habit 1: Be Proactive (I'm in charge of me)

I am a responsible person. I take initiative. I choose my actions, attitudes, and moods. I do not blame others for my wrong actions. I do the right thing without being asked, even when no one is looking. 1) If you have a child that is constantly complaining of being bored, have them brainstorm ways that they could do something nice for someone else, either a neighbor, friend, or family member. 2) Circle of Control: Take some sidewalk chalk and go outside and draw two circles within eac h other big enough to stand in. The middle one is the circle of control. Give your kids examples of different things they can control (homework) and other things they can't (weather). Have them move in and out of the circle depending on the scenario. 3) Roleplay: Proactive vs. Reactive. Demonstrate for your kids how to deal with a situation proactively vs. reactively.

- **Own your mood:** Teach family members to pause when frustrated instead of reacting out of anger (like a shaken soda bottle).
- **No-prompt chores:** Have kids pick a daily task (like making their bed or feeding a pet) to complete without being asked.
- **Problem-solving jar:** When someone complains, ask them to write down one proactive step they can take to fix or change the situation.

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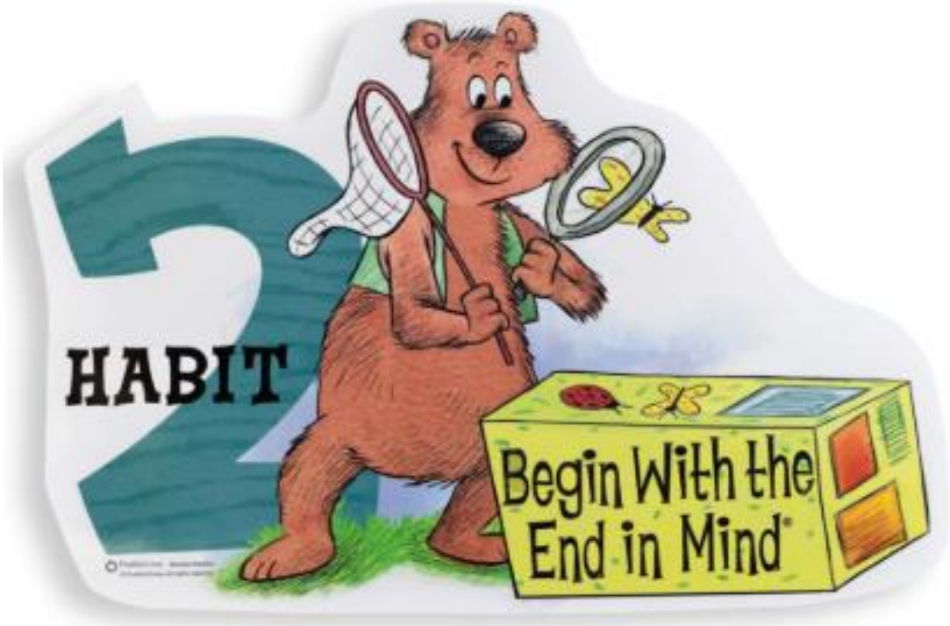
Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind (Have a plan)

I plan ahead and set goals. I do things that have meaning and make a difference. I am an important part of my classroom and contribute to my school's mission and vision, and look for ways to be a good citizen. 1) Have a family discussion about goals and what each child wants to be when they grow up. Discuss things you could do right now to be working towards those goals. Make an action plan and get started! 2) Make a family mission statement. 3) Create a family budget. Have kids determine how to spend and save their allowance.

- **Family mission statement:** Sit down together to write a short statement about what your family values most (e.g., kindness, honesty, teamwork) and hang it on the fridge.
- **Sunday night preview:** Spend 10 minutes looking at the family calendar for the week ahead so everyone knows what to expect.
- **Visual goal boards:** Let each family member draw or pin a personal goal for the month (such as finishing a book or saving allowance).



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Habit 3: Put First Things First (Work first, then play)

I spend my time on things that are most important. This means I say no to things I know I should not do. I set priorities, make a schedule, and follow my plan. I am disciplined and organized. 1) Make a family calendar or schedule for the week 2) Chore chart for the kids. Work before play!

- **The "Frog" rule:** Tackle the least favorite or most important chore (homework, cleaning a room) before turning on screens or playing.
- **Time matrix check:** Help older kids separate urgent-but-unimportant distractions from truly important goals using a simple to-do list.
- **Clear workspaces:** Gather all necessary supplies for school or projects the night before to make mornings smooth.

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Habit 4: Think Win-Win (Everyone can win)

I balance courage for getting what I want with consideration for what others want. I make deposits in others' Emotional Bank Accounts. When conflicts arise, I look for third alternatives. 1) Gather old toys that your child may no longer want. Have them donate these to a local charity. Discuss how this is a win-win for them and another child. 2) Community Service: Have your family participate in a community service event (Habitat for Humanity, soup kitchen service, clothes closet, etc.). Discuss afterwards how it was a win-win for the family and for others.

- **Collaborative chore charts:** Instead of arguing over who does the dishes, create a rotation where everyone wins free time by finishing early.
- **Fair compromise meetings:** When siblings fight over a toy or TV show, guide them to brainstorm a solution where both feel happy.
- **Praise board:** Keep a small notebook on the counter where family members write win-win notes or shout-outs to one another.

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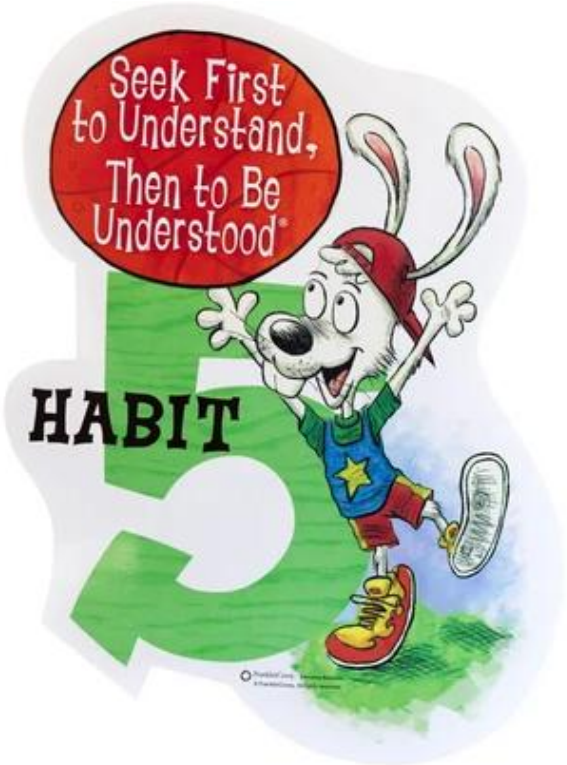
Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood (Listen before you talk)

I listen to other people's ideas and feelings. I try to see things from their viewpoints. I listen to others without interrupting. I am confident in voicing my ideas. I look people in the eyes when talking. 1) Practice reflective listening. Say something to your kids and then have them repeat back what you said. Do this until you feel like everyone in the family listens without thinking of a response simultaneously. 2) Conflict Resolution: The next time there is a problem within the family have the involved parties sit down and listen to the other person's point of view. They have to be able to restate the other person's feelings before they can state theirs or respond to what was said. ("So what I heard you say was…") 3) Take family time to learn about other cultures.

- **Repeat-back rule:** During a family disagreement, require each person to restate the other person's feelings in their own words before they can reply.
- **Eye contact time:** Practice putting phones away completely when someone is sharing a story or a problem.
- **Empathy check-ins:** Ask open-ended questions like "How did that make you feel?" instead of jumping straight to advice or punishment.



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Habit 6: Synergize (Together is better)

I value other people's strengths and learn from them. I get along well with others, even people who are different than me. I work well in groups. I seek out other people's ideas to solve problems because I know that by teaming with others, we can create better solutions than any one of us alone. I am humble. 1) Cook a meal together. Assign everyone a job to do. 2) Decide on a TV watching schedule, so that everyone wins. Pick a show to watch together. 3) Involve everyone with the planning of the next family vacation.

- **Team cooking nights:** Assign everyone a specific job (chopping, mixing, setting the table) to make dinner faster and more fun than working alone.
- **Value differences:** Celebrate how different family members bring unique strengths to a project—like pairing the neat-freak with the creative planner for a room cleanup.
- **Group brainstorms:** Solve household dilemmas (like planning a budget-friendly vacation) by letting every single person pitch an idea.

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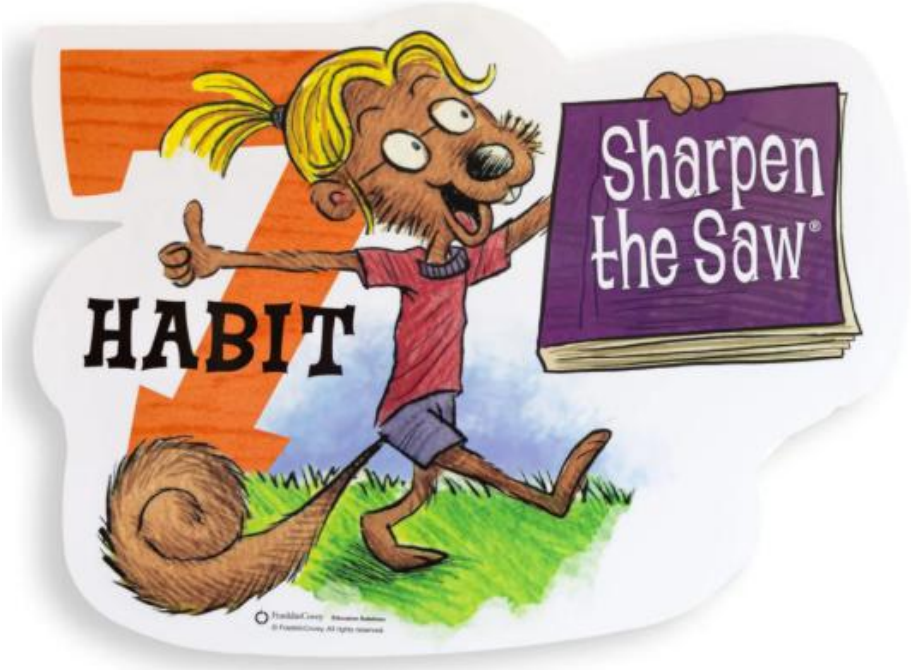
Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw (Balance feels best)

I take care of my body by eating right, exercising, and getting sleep. I spend time with family and friends. I learn in lots of ways and lots of places, not just at school. I take time to find meaningful ways to help others. 1) Have a family game night. 2) Exercise together. Keep a health journal-Everyone sets a goal for the week. 3) Read together! Make your own family book club or set aside a time every day when everyone in the family reads.

- **Physical renewal:** Plan family walks, bike rides, or backyard games to stay active together.
- **Mental/Spiritual renewal:** Read books, visit a library, practice quiet meditation, or spend time in nature.
- **Social/Emotional renewal:** Have a weekly game night, movie night, or intentional one-on-one time with each child.