

## Create or Change a Habit

To change a habit, you have to break the old habit cycle. To create a habit, you have to embed it into your life – make it routine. Here are the STEPS for doing this (WARNING: You must WANT to make a change and be willing to be PERSISTENT. Are you ready?:

Steps to eliminate, replace or launch a habit	Your Specific Actions...
1. What kind of habit is involved? a. A mental habit, thought pattern (e.g., self-talk that you are not able to succeed) b. An emotional or interpersonal reaction (e.g., angry response to people who question your authority) c. A physical or physiological action (e.g., fear when in a crowd; a nervous twitch when you feel stressed) d. A characteristic (e.g., you procrastinate completing timesheets)	Describe the habit you want to eliminate, replace or launch:
2. Identify what triggers the habit you want to eliminate or replace – or will trigger your new habit. Consider... a. A person, place or thing? b. A specific behavior or event? c. A time of day d. A feeling or desire?	Describe, very specifically, what is/will be happening immediately before you launch the behavior you want to change or launch? What “triggers” it?
3. (if you are replacing an old habit) List and prioritize the benefits you get from implementing the habit. Consider... a. Safety b. Instant gratification/ good feelings, satisfies cravings c. Recognition or belonging d. Feeling of power e. Avoid physical or emotional pain	Probe for the real reasons why this habit persists for you – what the rewards and “good feelings” are (go beyond the obvious or first thing that comes to mind)
4. (If you are replacing an old habit) List and prioritize the negative effects of continuing this habit. Consider... a. On your health	Name the negative effects of the old habit? How are you or others being hurt or disadvantaged in some way by this habit?

b. On achieving important goals or dreams c. On relationships d. On your sense of self-worth, esteem, self-confidence, self-control			
5. (To replace a habit) Identify a new behavior, routine, habit that will either replace the old habit with... a. A more constructive behavior that will help you get the benefits you want b. Another behavior that will help you better, more valued benefits (To launch a new habit) Describe the behavior you want to implement when the triggering events occur)	Describe the new behavior you want to put in place whenever the trigger(s) in #2 occurs?		
6. Summarize your intentions: “When xxxx (the trigger) occurs, I will yyyy (the behavior). The valued benefit or reward I will receive is zzzzz	When this occurs...	I will do/think this...	And my benefit/reward will be...
7. Keep a scorecard of wins for the old habit and the new one you want to adopt. For an easy habit change, do this for 2-4 weeks. For a more difficult one, do this for 2-3 months.	Old Habit vs. New Habit Each day list how many times the habit trigger occurred, and how many times you responded with the old or new habit.		
	# of trigger events	# times I responded with the old habit or didn't launch my new behavior	# times I responded with the new habit