

Relaxing to CHANGEpain: Helpful Tips on Habit Change

We are creatures of habit, and changing our habits can be hard. Identifying changes that we want to make in our lives (e.g. meditate more, eat better, be more active) is only the first step. The real challenge is figuring out how we are going to replace our old habits with new habits.

"Habit is habit, and not to be flung out of the window by any man, but coaxed downstairs a step at a time." – Mark Twain

Here are some habit change tips that might help you make a new habit:

- Do the new habit at the same time each day/week
- Do the new habit in the same place
- Place visual reminders in your living/work space, or even on your body
- Find someone who wants to make the same (or similar) habit change and hold each other accountable
- If you want to do something every day, do it every day - no matter how little you do
- Make your new habit easy enough to accomplish that you don't need motivation to do it (i.e. Meditate 1-minute a day instead of 10-15 minutes)
- Use moments as reminders (e.g. sit down to dinner, brush your teeth, etc.)
- Use any kind of reminder you can think of
- Identify what old habits you want to replace. To make room for a new habit, you have to let go of an old one
- Do one habit at a time
- Do a 30-day challenge
- Write down your plan for success
- Write down your obstacles
- Ask for help
- Practice self-compassion
- Have a mantra
- Share your habit change plans with other people to help hold you accountable
- Find a group environment that supports your new habit
- Reflect on good habits you already have and what makes them work for you
- Track your habits using a habit-tracking app or paper and pen

"Make it so easy you can't say no." - Leo Babauta

Questions for reflection: What changes are you trying to make in your life right now? How will you make these changes happen? What habit change strategies will you use? What is your success plan?