



Creating Lasting Change: The Beauty in the Journey of Making a New Habit Stick.

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"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act, but a habit." – Aristotle.

Research suggests that we spend 43% of our day doing things without thinking. That means that almost half of what we do on any given day are driven by habit. Habits then are routines or rituals that are automatic or second nature. The journey to a small new habit in your day has the potential to create a world of difference to you, your loved ones, and your community. This is an empowering proven fact: We have the ability within ourselves to change our lives for the better. It can feel hopeful to focus on what we can change in our world.

The most common habits people want to cultivate are exercising regularly, getting more sleep, reading more books, and eating more fruits and vegetables. However, most people don't always embrace the idea of making a new positive habit. Life these days can feel turbulent, stressful, and uncertain at best. Many feel as though they are already running on empty.

Just notice what comes up for you when you read the word "habit", "resolution", and "change". And with that, I invite you to take a breath and be with whatever is showing up! This is a good first step and honor where you are. It is common for anger, anxiety, or sadness to surface.

If you can keep an open mind, a new habit can be a deeply transformative and meaningful experience. Think of creating bigger change: a personal goal or dream. Identify something that you can do every day that is consistent with your bigger picture. Remind yourself, it is best to start small. For example, if your new habit is a meditation practice, start with 5 minutes a day instead of 30. Small changes naturally turn into greater ones.



Science shows that dedicated commitment is the number one factor for success. The following is a guide that may help motivate and inspire a new habit to stick:

AUTHENTIC SELF

- "What change in yourself and your life would you wholeheartedly celebrate?"

A habit is something that you do that does not take a lot of thought. It is part of how you engage with life and a part of who you are. Sometimes people attempt a new habit based on what they believe they "should" want rather than what they actually want. Forming a new habit is much easier when it is connected to your purpose and core values. We can ask ourselves what matters to us most and what is our priority?

When we link our habit with what we care about most, it becomes deeply authentic and inspiring. For example, "A new habit of walking for 20 minutes each morning will support me being present with my kids". Other positive habits begin to follow naturally when we become clear with ourselves.

POSITIVE EMOTIONS

- “What change would bring me the most joy”?

So often we start a new habit with a self-critical voice. Shifting to positive emotions such as gratitude, self-compassion, pride, and joy at the very beginning of your journey can fuel our aspiration for change. These emotions not only feel good, but shift our beliefs in ourselves and make it possible for courage. A gratitude journal can be helpful or writing a letter of your vision of your future self to your present self. What will it feel like at the end of your new habit journey? What would your future self say to thank you for your dedication?



ENVIRONMENT

- “What could I add or remove in my environment to make it easier to keep my commitment?” “If you knew you had support, what habit would you take on?”

Making simple changes to our home and work environment is key. For some it might mean decluttering to bring more space for change. For others, it could mean tangible reminders of our values or purpose such as pictures or art to keep us on track. Or leaving clean gym clothes by the front door. Having a peaceful place to reflect and connect is essential. Opening up to others also can help bring support and understanding. Often times, when one is making important changes in their life has a contagious affect and inspires others to do the same.

SETBACKS

- “What is one thing that could help continue positive change”?

Humans are meant to make mistakes and have set backs. It helps us connect with our courage, intention, and our why. If you fall off course, see if you can connect back with self-compassion. How would you encourage a friend to keep going? Find the self in you that reminds you not to give up. Give yourself permission to take a breath and start again. We are allowed fresh starts and they help provide a sense of freedom in the present.

A Breathing Practice to Harness States that Foster Change.

Behaviour Change expert Dr. Kelly McGonigal created a simple practice called Heart Breathing. She states that studies prove this is the most effective practice to cultivate motivation and readiness to act and engage in the world. When practiced regularly, it has a grounding and centring effect. It is simple and can be practiced anytime.

It is simply visualizing breathing in and out of your heart. Taking a few minutes to close your eyes and imagine your breathing in and out of your heart with slow, deep breaths. To learn more, please see the link below for a guided demonstration.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Iqsq1rjIGQ>



We're here to help!

If you have questions, need information or wish to book an appointment, Please call us at one of our numbers listed below.



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