

Four Proven Techniques On How To Capture Positive Habits:

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By Catherine Franz

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Bad habits, we all have them. They keep us from accomplishing our dreams, make us say and do things that really aren't in our integrity.

Good habits allow us to transition through our day on autopilot. So much so, we forget that our good habits have a bigger strong hold.

Dr. Phil McGraw, TV-psychologist and Oprah offspring, says that we need to, "Behave our way to success." I cringe when I hear this, don't you? It sounds so easy. Yet, we both know it isn't.

Positive psychology, the scientific study of happy, confident people, presents many proven techniques that assist in transitioning bad habits into good habits. Here are four proven techniques:

1. In order to eliminate a bad habit, it must be overridden with a good habit. Not eliminated but replaced. When the good habit becomes stronger, it naturally takes over and folds into our life. Usually becoming transparent because it melts into our life and we have already uncovered the next one to work on.

It doesn't matter whether you want to replace the habit of lateness, cursing, or overeating. The habit's intensity determines the effort and time required to replace. Don't confuse effort with will power—they aren't the same.

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Effort is making a variety of alternatives until the old habit melts into a new one. The right amount of effort will always be different for you than anyone else. There isn't an exact measurement because each of our unique qualities.

2. Discipline is an exercise of repetition. Not once or twice but until. Until completed.

For instance, writing isn't a natural talent. Yes, research shows that it helps to start the process young. Yet, there are female Pulitzer Prize winners who began writing in their

fifties — after family obligations. They replaced their family responsibilities with the discipline needed to be a successful writer. They disciplined their way to success.

Most people think positive thinkers naturally flow with confidence. Yet, positive psychology statistics dispel this myth. What's different is the amount of time and space they allow when negative habits or messages appear. They appear incandescent to them.

3. Rewards. As managing partner of a CPA firm for 15 years, I thought rewards meant bonuses and paid massages. After attending Coach University and intensifying my study in the Laws of Attraction, my perspective shifted. Positive people don't need an outside push; they seemingly have a natural internal push that continually pulls them forward. Sometimes labeled as determination or drive.

When Donald Trump appeared on the Oprah show in April, Oprah asked him, "I heard very successful people don't even see negative." Donald chewed on this for a few long television minutes and then responded, "Yes, that is why I hire others who can see what I can't.... Negative isn't on my radar screen."

4. Be assertive on what's fueling you, as diligent about all things in your realm, as the quality of food you digest, and the purity of the water you drink.

To create a garden of positive habits, surround yourself with flowers not figurative speaking either. Complete a regular inventory. See each item for its truth, intention, and influence. Don't wave it off as "not that big of a

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deal."

Remove negative people, negative television shows, movies, books, even conversations. If Mama, spouse, sister, or brother fits this description, explain its impact on your life. Don't blame, explain. Explain how it affects your success, your dreams. I'm sure they do what they do out of habit and not purposeful. If presented honestly and lovingly the people involved will see the gift.

An ideal choice is to use a positive clean-burning fuel. This begins with new words (language) to self and others. Each of us make choices every second. Get up, sit down, speak, listen, and so on. Make new choices, ones that fuel positive habits.

Take inventory on your environment and what you tolerate. What is broken, dented, stained? Fix, toss, give away, replace. Eliminate each ball and chain, one at a time, in baby steps. You will walk taller, talk and think clearer. You will attract more results that are positive into your life. Positive attracts positive—the Law of Attraction.

Fuel your surroundings with meaningful and beautiful things. That doesn't mean expensive. It can simply be a fresh rose on your desk every week and the stopping by the florist or your own garden.

Many habits tend to hide under the bed until dusted. Expect as you replace one, another can appear. Yes, they eventually become fewer. Stay focused and remember, "A rose isn't a rose without all its beautiful petals."

Be aggressive. When they appear, and they will, knock them down, toss them out with the trash. And quickly. Don't give them room to smell or grow. You'll soon discover each day will be lighter, brighter, and even more successful than the one before. I promise!

These four techniques, continually proven by hundreds of my workshop graduates, will work for you too. They will multiply your dreams and successes over night. Begin small, begin big, just begin, and keep the momentum going...until.

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How to Replace Bad Habits with Good Ones: The Science of "Habit Management"

By Stephen Kraus

Few things are more difficult than kicking bad habits or developing more positive ones. But it is definitely worth the effort. Bad habits like smoking, overeating or self-criticism shorten lives and lead to underachievement, and unsuccessful attempts to change them lower self-esteem.

In contrast, good habits create a kind of "success auto-pilot," leading to greater accomplishment with less thought and less effort.

So how do you best eliminate bad habits and create good ones? Research from the new field of "positive psychology" - the scientific study of happy, successful people - points to at least four proven techniques for successful habit management.

1. Replace a bad habit with a good one. Completely eliminating a habit is much harder than replacing it with a more productive habit. Studies of people who compulsively bite their fingernails have shown that it is very difficult for them to completely give up their habit, and much easier for them to substitute biting with the more productive habit of grooming their nails.

Similarly, people who talk too much during meetings struggle to become silent, but find it much easier to replace their compulsive talking with highly attentive listening.

2. Exercise. A habit of regular exercise is obviously important for lasting weight loss. But you may not realize that exercise helps in accomplishing a variety of goals, and in eliminating a number of bad habits.

Frequent exercise helps break habits of overeating, and in kicking all kinds of addictions, particularly if exercise is substituted for an end-of-the-day cocktail or cigarette. Among smokers who become competitive runners, for example, over 80% give up smoking.

3. Reward success. The most fundamental law in all of psychology is the "law of effect." It simply states that actions followed by rewards are strengthened and likely to recur. Unfortunately, studies show that

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people rarely use this technique when trying to change personal habits. Dieters, for example, routinely overlook weeks of exercise and restrained eating, only to let a single lapse "snowball" into a total relapse and complete collapse.

Setting up formal or informal rewards for success greatly increases your chances of transforming bad habits into good ones, and is far more effective than punishing yourself for bad habits or setbacks.

4. Schedule your bad habits. If you are really struggling to kick a bad habit, try limiting the habit to a specific time and place. If you are struggling to quit cigarettes, allow yourself to smoke from 9–9:30pm, and only in an uncomfortable "smoking stool." When the urge to smoke strikes, tell yourself that you'll have plenty of time to smoke during your pre-scheduled smoking period. Research and case studies confirm that this rather unconventional approach can be a useful first step in changing bad habits.

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REFERENCES

The findings and recommendations in this article are based on scientific research published in peer-reviewed journals. For complete references, see Psychological Foundations of Success: A Harvard-Trained Scientist Separates the Science of Success from Self-Help Snake Oil by Stephen Kraus, Ph.D.

Success Scientist Dr. Stephen Kraus is author of Psychological Foundations of Success: A Harvard-Trained Scientist Separates the Science of Success from Self-Help Snake Oil. He was recently featured in Conversations on Success, along with Brian Tracy and Wally "Famous" Amos. Steve has a Ph.D. in psychology from Harvard University. To contact him or subscribe to his REAL Science of Success ezine, please visit

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