



CREATING GOOD HABITS & QUITTING BAD HABITS

By creating healthy living **habits** you will set yourself up for long-term success as opposed to doing an extreme diet that creates a quick, yet only temporary, fix. But, how do you create habits?

- **START SMALL** – start really, really small, because you are more likely to stick with something if it's easy to do and you can build on it from there. If you start with a big goal it's much more likely you will burn out and fall off the wagon. Make the small change a habit and then increase it. Some examples of how to start small:
 - Reducing consumption of sweets/chips/alcohol/caffeine/etc. – instead of going cold turkey start **REPLACING** one drink/treat per day with something healthier for a week and continue to do that each week until you've reached a desirable outcome
 - Being more active – start working out (walking, running, strength training, etc) 15 minutes three days per week and increasing that until you are doing 30-45 minutes five days per week
 - Start even smaller by doing 5 pushups every day or taking the stairs instead of the elevator
 - Healthy Diet – start by adding a vegetable to every lunch or dinner
- **MAKE A VISUAL** – get a calendar and every time you complete your goal put an X through the day. There is something about seeing all we've accomplished that gets us more invested in that task and helps us stick with it.
- **SMART GOALS** – create a SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound) The more exact you are with a plan the better. Instead of saying "I will lose 20 lbs" a better goal would be, "I will walk 30 minutes three days per week, do 'xyz' strength training two days per week, and will eat two more servings of vegetables per day."
- **CELEBRATE SMALL WINS** – no matter how small, we need to celebrate our victories instead of just focusing on our failures (which is what most people do). Be proud of your accomplishments and treat yourself; it will help you stay on track and open your eyes to the good things you are doing.
- **HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT** – arrange your environment to help you stay on track. Get rid of the candy bowl on your desk at work, remove temptations from the house (if you don't have chips in the house you can't eat them!), put a note on the TV saying "do 20 squats before turning me on, keep workout clothes in your car for easy access, go for walks with friends instead of happy hours, prep healthy snacks/meals to make them easier to grab for.



- **FIND ACCOUNTABILITY FRIENDS** – If you have plans to meet a friend for a workout it is a lot harder to cancel. Find someone to keep you accountable, even if it's just publicly declaring on social media what you plan to do and keeping people updated
- **DISCOVER YOUR TRIGGERS & OBSTACLES** – What is happening when you bail on a workout or reach for that piece of cake. Figure out what makes you weak and vulnerable so you can build a plan to combat it and avoid those triggers. For stress-eaters seek out healthier ways to decrease your stress such as: meditation, yoga, deep breathing, working out, going for a walk, drinking a glass of water before reaching for food.
- **REPLACING BAD HABITS:** we need to replace the bad habit with a good one in order to rid ourselves of it. If we just try to stop it, without replacing it, it's much more likely you will fall back to the old bad habit again.
 - **Ex.** Replace that glass of wine with a bubbly water with fresh lime squeezed in. Replace a cookie with a piece of fruit...

WHAT ARE SOME GOOD, HEALTHY HABITS?

Great question; glad I asked it 😊 Sometimes we don't even know what types of habits we should be shooting for, so here are some ideal habits to work towards. Remember though, start small and build up once you've created a habit out of the initial goal.

- **WORK OUT** – try to workout at least 30 minutes per day, five times a week
- **EAT HEALTHY**
 - Eat more vegetables and fruits and less fried & processed foods
 - Reduce or cut out soda and limit sugar intake
 - Limit alcohol consumption; drink in moderation
 - Cook majority of meals at home and opt for lean meats, legumes, vegetables, fruits, low-fat dairy, & whole grains
- **POSTURE** – show me your power stance! While sitting and standing be sure to pull those shoulders back and sit/stand tall. Look up and away from those devices more
- **SLEEP** – try to get 7-8 hours of sleep every night.
- **WATER** – drink lots of water
- **ME TIME** – you deserve it, so do something just for you at least once a week
- **MEDITATION / STRESS RELIEF** – Find what works for you to combat the stress of life and practice those stress relievers daily
- **DAILY MOVEMENT** – how can you add more movement to your day? Walk breaks at work, walk/bike to work or in the morning or evening; lunch workouts, walk to the store, dance party, take the stairs, park further away...
- **SIT LESS / STAND MORE** – if possible look into a standing desk, or at least take stand breaks (stand while making a phone call)



- LAUGH – it’s the best medicine! Do things that make you happy and with people who can make you do that deep belly laugh
- GET OUTSIDE – YES! Being outdoors can greatly improve mood
- WEAR SUNSCREEN – when going outside be sure to slather it on, keep that skin healthy too
- SURROUND YOURSELF WITH POSITIVE PEOPLE – people’s negative energy can be contagious, just like someone’s positive energy.

Start creating your plan to live a healthier and happier life and feel free to reach out with any questions! I’d love to help you accomplish your goals.

Cheers,

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