

SUBSTITUTE POSITIVE HABITS FOR YOUR NEGATIVE HABITS

You learned about the negative effect that poor habits can have on your success. Imagine being able to replace those negative habits with new, empowering habits. In this lesson, we'll find out how to accomplish that. ***You take the express lane to success when you can simultaneously eliminate poor habits and build effective habits.***

To interrupt a negative habit, you could substitute a positive habit. Those positive actions will aid you in achieving the results you want in life. Considering Tom's scenario in the last lesson, let's apply this information.

Tom's best hope is to realize the effects these habits are having on his entire life and health. Once he consciously connects with the damage he's doing to

himself by practicing these habits and that he truly wants to change his physical self, he can then begin work to build the health and life he truly seeks.

He can replace his negative habits with positive ones.

TO DO THIS, TOM CAN:

1. **Set his alarm on Saturdays for 8:30 a.m.** He'll still get an extra hour and a half of sleep.
2. **Choose to eat a smaller breakfast** of one piece of sausage, one biscuit, and one egg to experience the flavors he truly enjoys.
3. **Show up to play basketball** with the guys on Saturday mornings at 10:00 a.m.
4. **Allow himself a couple of hours to rest** after he shoots some hoops.
5. **Repeat this behavior every Saturday consistently for 66 times.** At the least, Tom should avoid skipping Saturdays during the first months of his new behavior.
6. **Ensure he's home on Friday nights** so he's in his own home (the same location) on Saturday mornings.
7. **Establish situational cues to trigger him to**

perform the positive behaviors that will lead to habit formation. For example, Tom can lay out his basketball clothes and shoes so they're the first things he sees when his alarm sounds.

Apply this type of thinking in your own case. Read the next hypothetical vignette and review the steps to changing behavior from a negative habit to a positive one.

CASE VIGNETTE #2

Maybe you want to be healthier and lose a few pounds. But for the last several years, you've taken the no-fuss, easy way out at breakfast time. You started your day with a cinnamon roll or doughnut. Let's face it, it's an easy breakfast and you can just reach for it and go.

How can you change this continuous loop of starting your day off all wrong just because of a negative habit to doing something that leads to your good health—a positive habit?

1. **Acknowledge to yourself** that your cinnamon roll/doughnut habit is a negative habit. It's something you do over and over again, even though you feel you shouldn't.

- Somehow, you've got to consciously connect what you're doing to its negative effects, which in this case could be high cholesterol, excess pounds, and late morning headaches due to a lack of protein and overload of fats and carbs in your morning "meal."
2. **Consider ways you can replace your negative habit** with a more positive habit. Ask yourself, what could I do instead?
 3. **You could stop buying cinnamon rolls and doughnuts.** If they're not in the house, you won't engage in this unhealthy eating habit.
 4. **Try purchasing fresh fruits of your choice** that are quick and easy: bananas, pears, and apples, for example. When you substitute "positive" foods that could help reduce your cholesterol and help you manage your weight better, you'll eventually develop a positive habit that takes the place of your negative one.
 5. **Place fruits in the area where you used to keep your cinnamon rolls** and doughnuts to set up your situational cue, which is the sight of the fruit. Also, you can't perform your negative habit (grabbing a doughnut or roll) if the source of it is

gone.

6. **Choose a fruit to eat every morning.** Good for you—you're getting starting on a healthy habit.
7. **Keep eating fruit for breakfast day after day,** week after week, and month after month.
8. **Continue this behavior every day without deviating from your new plan for at least 66 days** in a row. If you do, you'll form a positive habit that replaces your old, negative one. At the very least, skip no days of eating fruit for at least the first half of the 66 day period.

You can successfully replace a negative habit with a new, positive and empowering one. Applying steps such as those listed above to your own situation will help you wipe out old habits that inhibit you from living your best life.

Perhaps you're fortunate enough to not have any negative habits in the way of your intentions. But you might be stuck and not doing anything at all. The next lesson will deal with the subject of forming new, desirable habits.

GET STARTED ON THE TIPS IN THIS LESSON:

- List five negative habits you now engage in.
- List five positive habits you can substitute.
- Attempt to install one of those positive habits and discover how successful you are.