

**BREAK**

HOW TO DEVELOP

**THE**

GOOD HABITS FOR SUCCESS

**HABIT**

WRITTEN BY

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## About the Author

Charles Brown is a writer living in The United Kingdom who loves sharing ideas and helping others on the topic of Personal Development.

Charles is a passionate person who will go the extra mile and over-deliver.

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## Introduction

When you really think about it, most of life is something we do out of habit. From the moment we wake up in the morning to the actions we take throughout the day – our “morning routine”, or “regular breakfast”, our “typical commute”, the “daily grind” at work – the habits we develop literally control about 95% our actions. These types of unconscious thoughts determine what we think, how we feel and how we behave in nearly every situation we find ourselves in.

Because our habits dictate all the small details that make up our everyday lives, they also are directly related to the bigger issues in our lives, such as how much money we earn, the kind of person we marry or live with, our physical condition and health, and every other area of our lives.

Our habits determine our character, the type of person we project to the rest of the world and, ultimately, our destiny. So if we embrace bad habits – those habits which have a negative impact on who we are – then those same habits will prevent us from achieving excellence in our lives, holding us back from reaching our fullest potential.

It's only by breaking bad habits and replacing them with good habits that we can ultimately succeed in life and be the people we were truly meant to be. The purpose of this guide is to show you how to break bad habits – any sort of bad habit, from those that are damaging to your health, like smoking

or not wearing a seatbelt, to those that affect your self-esteem, such as negative thinking or overeating – and replace them with positive behaviors that can become part of your daily life and finally cause you to see the results you truly want.

Albert Einstein once said that the definition of insanity was performing the same task over and over again and expecting a different result. When you keep repeating the same bad habits, you would have to be crazy to think that anything will ever change for you. “Breaking the Habit” will show you how to end the madness and start living your life to its fullest by abandoning bad habits and replacing them with positive ones.

### **Wanting to Break the Habit**

I want to begin with a personal story. When I was a younger person, I was a heavy smoker. I began smoking in college – it was during the 1980s and smoking didn’t have the cultural stigma it does now – and continued well into my 30s. I knew that smoking was bad for my health. Indeed, I would wake up in the morning with a hacking cough, would feel breathless throughout the day, and by the time I got home at night I was exhausted, even if I hadn’t particularly exerted myself during the day.

Then there was the chemical dependency I developed to the nicotine contained in cigarettes. If I went without a cigarette for longer than an hour or so, I would become jittery, irritable and would even begin to get

panicked. It was only when I gave my body the drug it needed (yes, nicotine is a drug and actually is more addictive than heroin) that I was able to return to my “normal” self.

During the 15 years that I smoked, I quit smoking literally hundreds of times. I became something of an expert at quitting smoking, even if I always backslid into the same dirty and unhealthy habit sooner or later. Cold turkey, hypnotism, acupuncture, the patch, nicotine-laced chewing gum, you name it, I tried it.

Every time I tried to quit smoking, I truly believed that this was it, I was going to stop and put this terrible habit behind me once and for all. But it never stuck. Ultimately my desire to smoke became stronger than my desire to stop.

Until one day I came to a stunning discovery. I realized that I truly didn't *want to* smoke anymore. It was simply something that didn't fit into my life, either then or in the future that I saw for myself. Right then and there, I made a commitment to stop smoking (It was easier than ever before because I truly had no desire to smoke anymore) and, after a few days of uncomfortable withdrawal symptoms, I was finished with it.

That was more than 10 years ago and I haven't had a single cigarette since. Even the smell of somebody else smoking is enough to send me scurrying away. When I see others smoking – while I try not to judge -- I

often can't help but wonder why they can't see themselves the way others perceive them. If they could, perhaps they, too, could reach the point where ending their bad, destructive habit was not only possible, but easy.

## **“Bad” Habits vs. “Good” Habits**

So how does one define a “bad” habit, and what qualities separate those from “good” habits? In most cases, the distinction is obvious. A habit is a “bad” habit if:

- It is destructive, harmful or poses a short or long-term danger to you or somebody else.
- It negatively impacts your self-esteem, the way others view you, and your overall reputation as a good or bad person.
- Is a pattern of undesirable behavior acquired through frequent repetition.

Usually, bad habits begin innocently. I smoked my first cigarette because my college roommate smoked and I was curious about what it tasted and felt like. But bad habits have a tendency to quickly snowball.

A single bad habit can act as a magnet to others. People who smoke often tend to drink. People who drink sometimes use profanity or are rude to other people. People who are rude and profanity might hang out at casinos or horseracing tracks. People who gamble may be more likely to frequent prostitutes or take drugs. Soon, something that started out as a quirk or a one-off has escalated into a lifestyle that is self-destructive, damages your

reputation and ultimately can ruin your career, your family life, your health and even end your life.

## **Examples of Bad Habits**

Practically any habit that can be considered “good” can have a “bad” counterpart:

- Destructive personal habits like smoking, drinking and abusing drugs
- Overeating or not living a healthy lifestyle
- Making poor financial decisions
- Gambling
- Procrastinating
- Being addicted to sex or pornography
- Failing to live in a positive manner/Taking a negative view of your world

In short, anything that interferes with your ability to live a happy and healthy life can be considered a bad habit.

## **When Is a Habit Really An Addiction?**

People who are addicted to drugs, alcohol, sex, gambling or other self-destructive behavior frequently point to the physical and psychological addiction that prevents them from overcoming their bad habits.

But you don't need to have a chemical or psychological dependency to have an addiction. Addiction is defined as "The state of being enslaved to a habit or practice ...to such an extent that its cessation causes severe trauma."

So, in fact, any bad habit is an addiction because it enslaves us, preventing us from achieving our highest potential. Make no mistake: There will be consequences for reversing any bad habit. Yet these are nothing to fear. Pain is temporary; quitting lasts forever.

### **Our Need for Habitual Behavior, Habits and Beliefs**

Habits are not only useful, but we actually rely on our routines to function in our daily lives. Physiologists tell us that of the 11,000 signals we receive from our senses, our brain only consciously processes about 40. So our brains use the rote familiarity of habits so that we can focus on other "higher value" activities.

Things like walking, chewing our food, and talking don't require the kind of mental focus that solving math problems or playing video games do. These activities we take for granted are actually habits we have developed that are performed without conscious intent.

Social habits work the same way. Most people will take a shower at the same time every day or always drive the same route to work. These habits are performed essentially without conscious thought. Negative habits – like overeating, smoking or driving too fast – work the same way. We rarely think about these things, even when they are putting us in danger or damaging our health or well-being.

## **Using Habits to Achieve Success**

Oftentimes, we are not able to even perceive that we have bad habits. Have you ever known or worked with somebody who has poor personal hygiene or had a friend who drank or partied too much? Usually, those people don't consciously decide to perform their bad habit. They just do it out of ... well, habit!

When we take the time to recognize our own bad habits, take corrective action and replace them with good, positive and healthy habits, the result is permanent change that pays dividends to our health, prosperity and happiness for the rest of our lives.

Imagine being a fit and active person who works out daily without even thinking about it. Or someone who always makes the right food choices, doesn't get into financial trouble, studies thoroughly for every exam, performs their work duties without flaw automatically, and so on. Isn't that something that is desirable? If you could make healthy, positive choices all the time without even thinking about it, your life would be much, much easier, wouldn't it?

Once you can replace your bad habits with good habits, you can also eliminate the stress and anxiety that those bad habits cause in your life so that you can finally achieve the feelings of happiness and well-being that you have always desired.

You deserve to be happy. In your heart, you know that to be true. Breaking your bad habits and replacing them with good ones can help you achieve that happiness.

Are you ready to get started?

## **“It Takes 21 Days to Change a Habit”**

You are about to take a journey that is literally going to transform the way you live. Once you embrace the process of converting your bad habit or habits into good ones, the rewards you reap will be enormous and lifelong.

It doesn't matter how long you have had your bad habits. They could be something you have done since childhood, such as lying or biting your fingernails. As long as you can recognize that the habit is destructive and genuinely want to convert it into something positive, you can change any bad habit into a good habit.

### **Changing Habits**

Everybody has bad habits. It doesn't matter if it's the Pope or George Clooney, the Dalai Lama or the Archbishop of Canterbury, people are human, they occasionally make mistakes, and these mistakes can often develop into bad habits.

The problem isn't that you have bad habits. That's normal. What's causing you unhappiness and psychic pain is that up to this point you have been unwilling to make a genuine commitment to change.

You truly can do anything you put your mind to. The human will is indomitable and the changes that lie ahead are going to surprise and amaze you. All it takes is the will to do it.

### **What's So Special about 21 Days?**

You may have heard that it takes 21 days to change a habit. That's one reason residential rehab centers for drug and alcohol abuse usually last 21 days. It takes that long for the body to flush out the toxic substances that it is addicted to. But it's also how long it takes for the mind to expel the toxic negative thoughts that cause it to cling to bad habits so that they can replace them with positive ones.

Three weeks or a month also is a good timeframe to work with when changing habits because it corresponds with our calendar system. If you target the first day of the month for the beginning of a habit change, then it's a simple matter to use that month as a framework to work on your objective ("I'm going to get this done by Week 2, that done by Week 2 ..." and so on).

Not every bad habit requires 21 days or a month to change. Some can take longer and some can take less time. For example, if your goal is to get out of bed a half hour earlier each day so you can make your mornings more productive, you probably can make this a habit within a week to 10 days.

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