

### **Mind Set: let your old habits die**

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Most of us are slaves to habit and familiarity. Our present environment is a symbol of our present thoughts. My family is me, my job is me, my friends are me. It has been observed a wounded animal will return to what is familiar. Because man is also an animal he likes familiarity and in time of trouble will also return to what is familiar. This bit of knowledge is how criminals are tracked down. For instance a white collar criminal who has expensive tastes in cars and fancy restaurants will not be difficult for the authorities to locate. He will be driving his favourite type of car to his favourite restaurant.

A wounded pet will make its way back home. There is a compelling force driving us to old surroundings because these surroundings remind us of how we were or are supposed to be they are comforting and reassuring. It is no wonder old habits die hard. How do we break away from habit? What is the secret to changing a lifetime of habit? How does one go about changing years of habit? Many people who have had near death experiences or have had severe trauma in their lives come away with instant change. Their lives are never the same and it is most noticeable by those most familiar with them.

Meaningful change does not have to come by hitting yourself over the head with a hammer nor do you have to sign up for courses or college. Change can come fairly easily, in simple steps, which are subtle and for the most part unnoticeable. Before change can come there needs to be a desire for change. A complete lifestyle makeover can be accomplished over a period of time without the trauma from hitting yourself over the head with a hammer.

Habits are physical demonstrations of a mind that is boxed. Habit simply means you are doing the same thing over and over again - there is no growth in repeating steps. The very meaning of life is movement! Lasting change does not come with making a change, but with commitment to keep changing until it becomes a habit - a habit of change. One of the best times to start your change is first thing in the morning. Commit yourself to making at least one tiny change everyday and it doesn't have to be the same change.

Try turning your alarm ahead or back 10 minutes. In other words get up at a different time tomorrow morning. Probably, no one will even notice. Try leaving your house 15 minutes early for work one morning or take a different route you will see new people and different things.

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Make small subtle changes which will not upset your life or those around you. Make this your priority every day to do something different. What you are going to start noticing is how things start changing around you and how people will start to treat you differently.

They will evolve at the same rate as you do. They will notice a change in you and want to know what it is. They will start paying more attention to you and may want to get closer.

When I get up each morning I make my way to the bathroom without turning on lights. In fact, I keep the lighting in my place subdued most of the time. I like candles and indirect lighting and nothing too bright. This morning I got up a little earlier, went to the washroom with my eyes closed came back to my computer and started writing this article.

I decided to turn on all the lights in the living room. Two things stood out for me-there were a few dirty dishes in the sink and my living room was very colourful. The colour was coming from things that were in the room. I decided to wash the dishes and afterwards I made breakfast for myself instead of meeting my co-workers at the restaurant. I also went to work an hour later than I normally do and managed to complete this article and there are no dishes in the sink.

I normally do not recommend making these many changes in such a short period. However, I have been practising for some time so when I make a change it usually leads to several changes and it last the rest of the day. From time to time I find myself goofing off and returning to old habits, but I do not chastise myself. I simply notice the change and make corrections, after all, it is the trip that counts, not getting there. Also, if I am noticing old habits, it simply means I am aware and that is exactly what I want awareness. With the awareness of change comes opportunity for change.

As you cultivate your habit of change, you will begin to make bigger changes and you will start ranging out. Your growth will start to accelerate and you may find yourself in conflict with those around you and who know you the best. Remember this - people will not want you to change, they will try to hold you back.

It is very important during this process for you to find new friends and people who will support you. There are others who cherish growth and nurture it in others. For the most part, your family and friends will not support you.