

HOW TO CHANGE A HABIT



No

Quit reading this flowchart.

Yes

THE HABIT YOU WANT TO CHANGE

DIAGNOSE THE THREE PARTS OF THE HABIT

STEP 1 THE CUE

When you feel the urge for your habit, ask yourself . . .

What time is it?

Where are you?

Who else is around?

What did you just do?

What emotion are you feeling?

ONE OF THESE 5 THINGS IS THE CUE.

Look for which one stays the same every time you feel the urge.

STEP 2 THE REWARD

What craving do you think your habit is satisfying?

TEST THAT THEORY:

Substitute another reward
(i.e., instead of eating a cookie, have a cup of coffee.)
Is the craving gone?

THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE REALLY CRAVING.

Substitute the opposite reward
(i.e., instead of eating a cookie, take a walk.)
Is the craving gone?

Keep experimenting until you find something new that satisfies the urge.

STEP 3 THE ROUTINE

Now that you have identified the cue and reward,
INSERT A NEW ROUTINE.

Routine

Cue

Reward

Choose an activity that is triggered by the old cue, and delivers the old reward.

Studies show that the easiest way to implement a new habit is to write a plan:

When _____, I will _____ because

CUE
From Step 1

ROUTINE

it provides me with _____.

REWARD
From Step 2

Post this plan where you will see it. Try it for a week.

Eventually, studies say, the new behavior will become automatic.