



Using Mindfulness to Help Change Habits

Take a look at the following mindfulness techniques to support your quest in changing unproductive behaviors.

Craving and aversion - Buddhists believe that all suffering is caused by craving or aversion. Either we are made uncomfortable by a craving for food, a substance, a new sweater, or we have an aversion - a strong dislike for a person, place or thing. **Try this mindfulness meditation:** The next time you feel a craving coming try “urge-surfing.” Cravings tend to cause a wave-like emotion in the body. Take a few deep breaths and watch as your craving begins to swell, comes to a crest, then dies down. Most cravings pass within 10 or 15 minutes.

Will-power vs. routine - Human beings are creatures of habit, not will-power. That is why it’s a good idea to institute one change at a time. Once the change is established, you can then conquer the next habit. Fortunately, mindfulness meditation can help you be less impulsive and reactive. **Try this meditation:** Take a look at an already established good habit that contributes to your well-being. Did you struggle with this habit at first? How long did it take you to establish your habit? Take a few deep breaths and congratulate yourself for adopting this routine. This meditation will help you build the confidence and will-power to create other healthy routines.

Intention - It can help to make a change statement and share it with a trusted ally who will support you as you establish your new routine. Make this change statement specific and precise. Here’s an example:

I, Jane, commit to eating 7 servings of fruits and vegetables every day over the next 60 days. I will ask my co-workers to join in and contribute to a “fruit and veggie bowl.” I will make a chart of my progress and attach it to my refrigerator. I will look for healthy recipes every Saturday, and I will shop for supplies every Sunday.

Now create your own change statement.

I, _____, Commit to _____

over the time period of _____

I will ask _____ for help.

I will take these actions to prepare for this change _____

Every day I will _____

Don’t forget to share your plan. Be compassionate with yourself if it takes more than one try to establish your new habit. Check out mindfulhub.com for more support for your practice.

We wish you twenty minutes of mindfulness every day!