



Ending Bad Habits

by

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Habits, it has been said, are the chains of the free.

After all, just how much freedom do we really have, when our life is out of control to habits such as nail-biting, thumb sucking, procrastination etc?

When we really stop and think about it, we can realize that so much of our life is run on automatic pilot.

Our actions - and even the way we think - are often driven by the subconscious patterns we have learned when younger. We simply get into the habit of doing things that way.

There's no getting away from it, our habits influence and affect our life and our outlook on life.

As author Charles C. Noble has pointed out: 'First we make our habits, and then our habits make us'.

But what exactly is a habit?

Well, it's simply a behavior - or a way of thinking - that we repeat, over and over again, very often unconsciously. And this is true for both good and bad habits.

At some time in our past we have learned a way of responding, a certain behavior, and then we repeat it until it just seems to become an automatic part of us.

Not all habits are bad habits, of course. The habit of brushing our teeth, washing our face, tying our shoes or even saying our prayers are examples of habits used in a positive, life-enhancing manner. They are good habits.

Yet good or bad, no-one was ever born with habits.

The simple fact is that they have to be learned - and then repeated until they stick. Repetition, after all, is just another word for reinforcement.

And this is basically the way that they are removed - by identifying the cues that trigger the habit and then withdrawing the reinforcers and the subconscious patterns that sustain it.

A good hypnotherapist can help you accomplish both these things.

Once you've begun your program of change, it's a good idea to have something to replace the old habit with, at least in the beginning. Simply ending a habit without leaving some alternative mechanism in its place leaves the subconscious feeling frustrated and unsatisfied.

Replace the habits of thumb sucking or nail biting by snapping your fingers or with the reward of a sugarless mint, for example.

Reward the action that replaces procrastination with a little treat and pretty soon, the satisfaction of your accomplishment will become ample reward in itself.

Replace the habit of negative thinking or a negative outlook on life with affirmations such as: 'I can and I will', 'I am becoming more confident with each passing day', or 'Each day brings me closer to the person I want to become'.

Yes, it will take some effort and some persistence. But this is exactly the way in which you acquired your habits in the first place. If you'd given up after the first few times then it wouldn't be a habit.

Don't lose heart if things don't happen fast enough for your liking. It's been estimated that it takes around 30 days for a habit to be broken. That's 30 days of consistently giving it your all. 30 days of persistence.

For really powerful help in changing deeply entrenched habits, though, few things can be compared to hypnosis and good hypnotherapy. Because habits are largely driven at the subconscious level of the mind, hypnosis is ideal for dealing with them.

Hypnosis itself is a means of directly contacting the subconscious and a good hypnotherapist knows how to help the subconscious change its cues and triggers.

Good hypnotherapy can help modify and realign behavior, amending the patterns and beliefs on which that behavior is based.

When you've absolutely had enough of being the victim to bad habits, there is something you can do about it. Take your life back and move forward by conquering those habits that have been keeping you in bondage.

You'll be happy you did!

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