



enrich
Global



Change - Intelligence

How to master a habit change

by Darya Haitoglou



CHANGE - INTELLIGENCE: HOW TO MASTER A HABIT CHANGE

How to start a good habit?

How to change a bad habit?

Why motivating yourself doesn't work to change habits?

WHAT IS A HABIT?

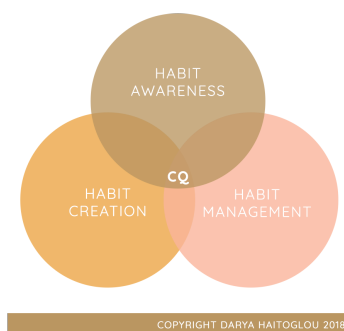
Habit is a settled or regular tendency or practice (positive or negative), especially one that is hard to give up.

CHANGE - INTELLIGENCE (CQ)

Our modern life is fuelled by **Change-Intelligence (CQ)**, that is how quickly we can adapt and change our habits that do not serve us well, and focus on those that do. It's going to be even more important in the future as the information overload and de-structions become a cultural norm.

Change-Intelligence has three components:

- a) **Habit-awareness**, b) **Habit-creation** and
- c) **Habit-management**



First, we become aware of having a habit or wanting to have a new habit.

Then, we take simple and consistent steps to create a new or change an old habit.

Finally, we manage our habits, that means prioritising the right habits in the appropriate environment, to be flexible and adaptive.

Change-management helps us evolve with the right context in mind.

Why is it sometimes difficult to change habits? The short answer is that any change requires breaking up established neuro-pathways and establishing new ones and that requires energy, strategies and support.

HOW HABITS ARE FORMED

Habits are wired in our limbic system that runs past our cognitive control. The whole idea of habit-making is to free-up some brain capacity to focus on other things that matter and maximise efficiency by turning routines into habits. Hence, if we have performed an activity a number of times, our brain has coded it as a routine and hence, it turns it into a habit, so we don't need to focus on it, but rather do it semi-automatically. That means, as soon as there is a cue (trigger) we make an action and get a reward. (Neal et al, 2012; Lally et al, 2010)

For example, **cue:** taking kids to school, **actions:** take car keys, open the car door, sit and drive, **reward:** arrival at a desired destination (job done!).

Evolutionally, we are wired to eliminate pain and are drawn towards rewards (pleasure!). That's how we had survived and how our habits were formed.

Furthermore, biologically, pain and pleasure networks have different effects in our body (Dean, 2013):

Pain Network (Sympathetic System) releases **adrenalin** and **noradrenalin** which leads to contraction of blood vessels, lack of oxygen and glucose for neocortex. Tunnel vision/thinking, rejecting new ideas, blocked creativity are some of the outcomes. It also releases cortisol that leads to weakened immune system and reduced neurogenesis.

Pleasure Network (Parasympathetic System) leads to the release of **dopamine** - pleasure and motivation hormone and the release of **oxytocin** that helps the dilation of blood vessels which means more oxygen and glucose to neocortex.

CHANGE A HABIT LOOP

Here is a simple routine, suggested by psychologists at University College London, to create a new healthy habit (Wood, 2007):

1. Decide on a goal that you would like to achieve.
2. Choose a simple action that will get you towards your goal which you can do on a **daily basis**. Link it to **fun & pleasure**.

A consistent (ideally daily) basis is one of the most important factors, as it creates a repetition for your limbic system to program a new behaviour faster.

3. Plan when and where you will do your chosen action.

Most people have difficulty to follow a plan because **they lack clarity** of what needs to happen when and where. Also, they don't link it to **rewards that matter** to them.

4. Every time you encounter that time and place, do the action.

5. It will get easier with time, and within 10 weeks you should find you are doing it automatically without even having to think about it.

WRITE A HABIT OATH

It's important to 'proclaim' and 'pre-commit' what we are going to change, to make it clear to our pre-frontal cortex. (Wood et al, 2002)

Here is an example how we can write it:

My goal

(e.g. to exercise daily: 'to start with 3 positive thoughts every day: 'to drink 2 litres of water before 4pm: 'to start with a difficult project 9-11 am every day: ' to read 10 pages of a book at 9:30pm: 'write 500 words every day after lunch: etc.)

.....
.....
.....

My plan

(e.g. 'After brushing my teeth, I will exercise for 20 minutes every day.)

(When and where) I will

My reward for this will be

Some of us find it helpful to keep a record while we are forming a new habit. This daily tick-sheet can be used until our new habit becomes automatic. We can rate how automatic it feels at the end of each week, to watch it getting easier.

WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Monday										
Tuesday										
Wednesday										
Thursday										
Friday										
Saturday										
Sunday										
Done on >5 days, yes or no										
How automatic does it feel?										
Rate from 1 (not at all) to 10 (completely)										

Duhigg (2012) brilliantly puts it that neuroscientists have traced your habit-making behaviours to a part of the brain called the **basal ganglia**, which also plays a key role in the development of emotions, memories and pattern recognition. Decisions, meanwhile, are made in a different part of the brain called the **prefrontal cortex**. But as soon as a behaviour becomes automatic, the decision-making part of your brain goes into a kind of a sleep mode.

That's why, changing habits while on holidays or trainings, retreats or workshops away from home and work, is one of the best ways to crack the code of habit-formation.

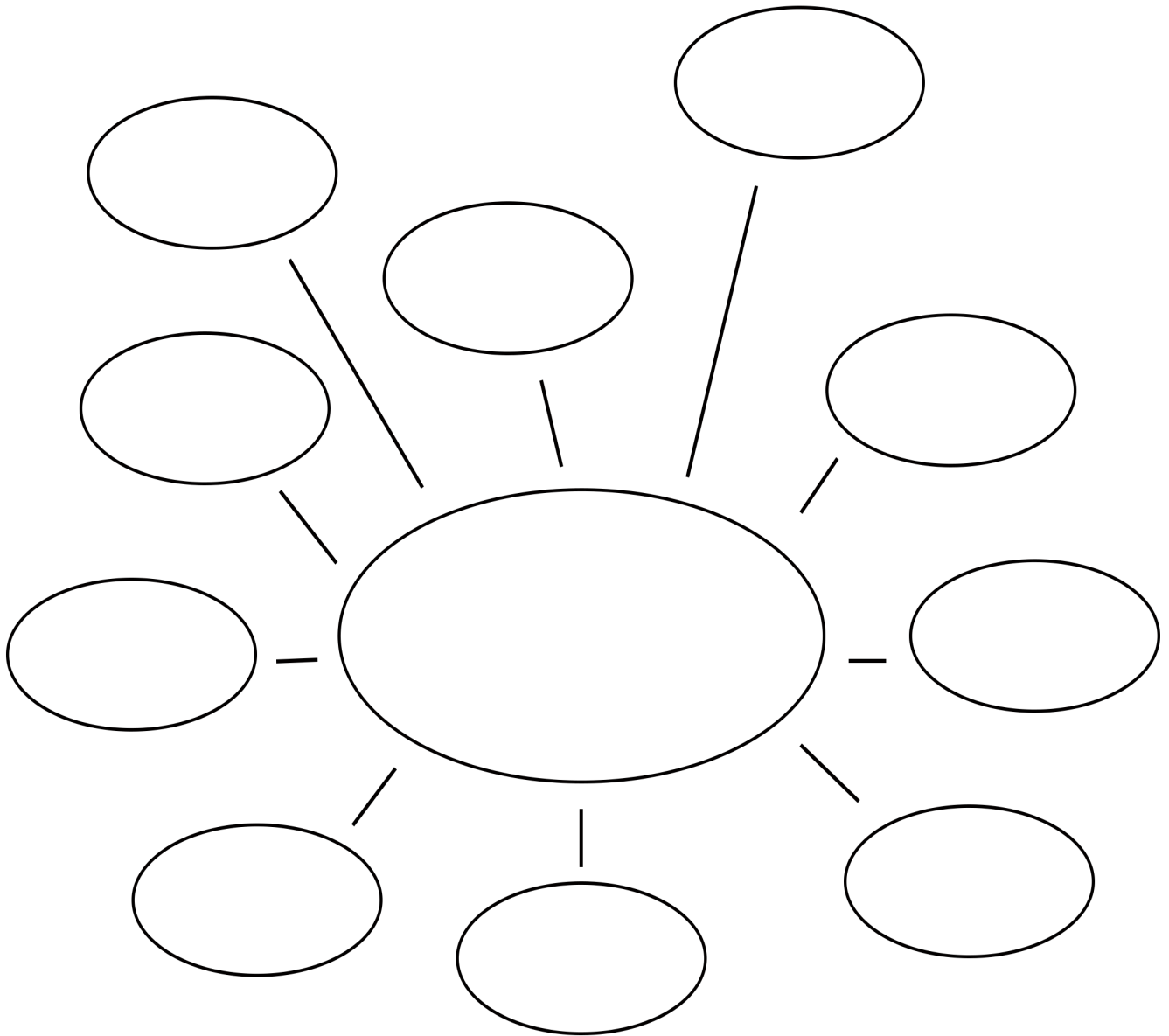
A HABIT CHANGE ENRICH METHOD®

We all want to change some part of our behaviour but our habits rule our life. In fact, 40% of all our actions throughout the day are habitual. (Duhigg, 2012)

Here is a quick exercise to help you change the habits that do not serve you any longer.

ENRICH METHOD®

EXPLORE
NOURISH
RESPOND
IMAGINE
COMMUNICATE
HUGS
EXPLORE



EXPLORE

1. Write what you want to change in a positive language.

(Instead of saying 'I don't want to feel tired' write 'I want to feel more energised', instead 'I don't want to smoke' write 'I want to be smoke-free' etc)

2. Write 10 steps that lead you to this change.

(e.g. meditation, exercise, nature, achievements, reading etc)

NOURISH

Which of these steps make you feel good when you think of them? Write a ✓ next to them!

RESPOND

Circle the ones that are easy to do.

Choose the ones that are easy to do and make you feel good (e.g. meditation).

Specify how often and when you want to do it e.g. 10 min every evening after brushing my teeth (e.g. After I brush my teeth in the evening, I will meditate for 10 minutes)

.....
.....
.....

Make a tracker for this habit.

IMAGINE

Rehearse how you will be doing it.

(e.g. Imagine going to the bathroom, brushing your teeth and choosing a place to meditate)

What music/app/clothes etc will you need.

Imagine what will happen once you establish this new habit.

.....
.....
.....

COMMUNICATE

Social exposure is great!

If you announce a habit change, you will stick to it.

Who can help you to keep you accountable?

.....
.....
.....
.....

How can you announce your habit change?

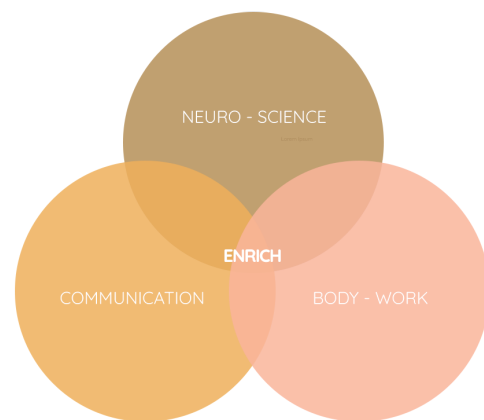
HUGS & HUMOUR

Create a positive reinforcement. Hugs help produce oxytocin and laughter helps release dopamine, both are feel-good hormones.

Create fun ways to reward yourself!

ENRICH PROGRAM®

To facilitate and manage sustainable change, we have tested the ENRICH METHOD® in a variety of applications which have shown that the best results come from a combination of cognitive (neuroscience-driven communication tools) and body-work (Haitoglou, 2016).



COPYRIGHT DARYA HAITOGLU 2018

Communication strategies can involve simple techniques such as **positive framing**. That means stating in the positive our desired outcome.

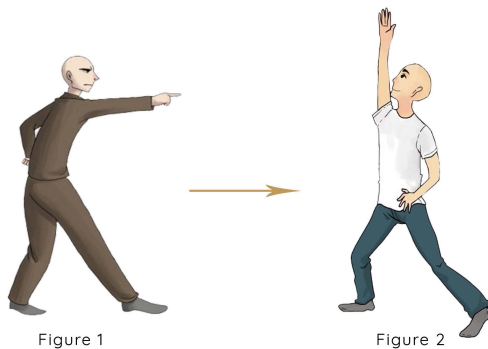
Remembering our goal on a daily basis and visualising how it would feel when we achieve our goal, linking it to rewards that matter. Communication with our peer group and receiving support from others is also part of the cognitive work that the mind does to manage habits. Connecting new habits to established routines is another effective tool.

Body-Work (Stasis-Kinesis) works on a deeper level and shifts our stress-response that we had learnt from our family of origin.

There are **5 stress stances** and **5 flow stances** that can help shift our conditioning and facilitate positive change once we move away from stress stances towards the flow ones.

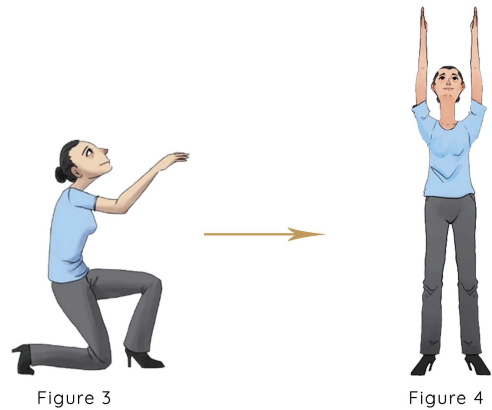
Stress Stance 1: Blamer. In the blaming stance (Satir, 1983), a person takes a position of blaming someone or something else without taking responsibility for self. The underlying need is to be protected, safe, and respected. Physically, this stance would be represented by a person pointing a finger with a stretched arm leaning forward on one front leg. The front leg is in the front and the back leg is slightly bent. One hand is on the waist. The feeling in this position is unbalanced, and the position puts a strain on the shoulders (Figure 1).

Flow Stance 1: Peaceful Warrior. Peaceful Warrior is an antidote to the Blaming Stance. It is a position that is driven by the need for protection and safety, similar to 'Blamer' but more congruent. Physically, the stretched arm goes up above the head, with a palm open, the tip of fingers facing up. Looking up, the position quickly turns to be more resourceful and peaceful albeit strong and energetic (Figure 2).



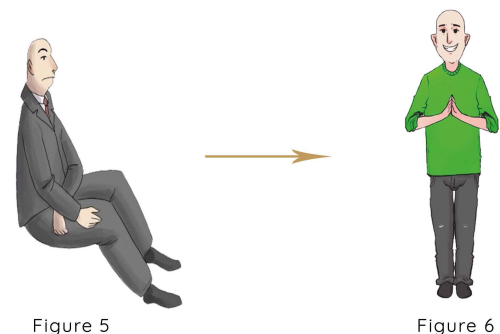
Stress Stance 2: Placater. A Placating stance (Satir, 1983) is a stance in which a person takes a position of a victim and takes full responsibility onto themselves. The underlying need is for love and care as well as strength and stability. Physically, this stance would be represented by a person kneeling on one knee and looking up while making a begging sign with their hands as though asking for forgiveness. Upper body and head are slightly bent on one side, and palms are open facing up. This position is not comfortable and places a strain on one side of the body, which is bent (Figure 3).

Flow Stance 2: Power Tree. Power Tree is a position that helps create balance and brings stability and strength to the body. Physically, it would be represented by standing up from a placating stance and raising both arms straight above the head. Feet are a shoulder's width apart. Head is looking straight with a light smile. For an advanced position, one can bend one leg and put a foot on the inner thigh of the other leg (Figure 4).



Stress Stance 3: Super-Reasonable. Super-reasonable stance or computer (Satir, 1983) stance occurs when a person hides real emotions behind logic and facts. A person in the computer stance generally prefers to use a monolog or a critique when under stress. The underlying need is to be heard, understood, respected for their wisdom. Physically, that is represented by crossed arms and a serious look on the face. (Figure 5).

Flow Stance 3: Humble Monk. Humble Monk is when the body becomes straight, and palms touch on the heart's level in a 'Namaste' sign. Head: facing straight with a smile (Figure 6).



Stress Stance 4: Distractor. Distracting stance or irrelevant (Satir, 1983) is a position people take when they do not want to face a tough reality and prefer to deviate to a different topic. A distractor generally brings humor or skips difficult subjects-even adds chaos--in order to avoid conflict

and create emotional stability and harmony. Physically, that would be represented by a person moving his/her arms in front of other people's faces to distract their attention. The position would consist of a slightly bent leg on one side and looking from down up (Figure 7).

Flow Stance 4: Core Harmonizer. Core Harmonizer is a stable and harmonious position that helps a person feel courage and peace with a tough reality around them. Physically, arms relax, palms open up, body strengthens and finds its core (similar to a Tai Chi neutral position) with slightly bent knees and straight spine (Figure 8).



Figure 7



Figure 8

Stress Stance 5: Withdrawer. Withdrawer is a stance in which a person moves away from discussing a difficult situation and stops talking, 'shuts down' from external reality. The underlying need in this stance is for trust, openness, and touch, the very things a person moves away from, which is counter-intuitive. Physically, this stance is represented by folded arms and turning away from the other person (Figure 9).

Flow Stance 5: World Hugger. World Hugger is an antidote to the withdrawing stance. Instead of moving away, the 'World Hugger' moves in and opens their arms as though they want to hug the whole world. It is a resourceful stance considered to be connected to a "hug hormone"-oxytocin (Haitoglou, 2016) (Figure 10).



Figure 9

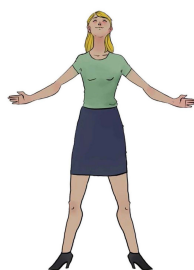


Figure 10

RESOURCES FOR HABIT CHANGE

Dean, J (2013) Making Habits Breaking Habits, Oneworld Publications.

Duhigg, C. (2012) The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do, and How to Change, Random House.
Haitoglou, D. (2016). Stance-Dance: Integrative movement theory. *Satir International Journal*, 4(1), 61-67.

Lally, P, Van-Jaarsveld, C.H.M., Potts, H.W.W., Wardle, J. (2010) How are habits formed: modelling habit formation in the real world. *European Journal of Social Psychology*; 40:998-1009.

Neal, D.T., Wood, W., Labrecque J.S., Lally, P. (2012) How do habits guide behaviour? Perceived and actual triggers of habits in daily life. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 48:492-498.

Satir, V., & Baldwin, M. (1983). *Satir step by step: A guide to creating change in families*. Palo Alto, CA: Science and Behavior Books.

Young, S. (2017) *Stick with it. A scientifically proven process for changing your life - for good*. Harpers Collins

Wood, W., Neal, D.T. (2007) A new look at habits and the habit-goal interface. *Psychological Rev.*; 114(4):843-863. [PubMed]

Wood, W., Quinn, J.M., & Kashy, D. (2002). Habits in everyday life: Thought, emotion, and action. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83, 1281-1297.

CONNECT WITH US

www.daryahaitoglou.com

www.enrich.global

Email: info@enrich.global

FB: Darya Haitoglou International

Instagram: [the.family.psychologist](https://www.instagram.com/the.family.psychologist)

