

What is a Habit and How to Change It

Introduction

A **habit** is something you do so often that it becomes automatic.

- Some habits are helpful (brushing teeth, exercising, greeting others).
- Some habits are unhelpful (procrastinating, overeating, avoiding tasks).

Habits usually follow a loop:

Cue (Trigger) → Routine (Behavior) → Reward (Result/Feeling)

👉 Over time, your brain connects the *cue* with the *routine* because it's expecting the *reward*.

How to Change a Habit:

You don't have to fight the whole loop. Often, the most effective way is:

- Keep the **same cue**
- Keep the **same reward**
- But swap in a **new routine** (healthier or more helpful behavior).

For example:

- **Cue:** Feeling stressed after work
- **Old Routine:** Eat junk food
- **Reward:** Comfort, relaxation
- **New Routine:** Take a walk, drink tea, or call a friend → still feel comforted without overeating.

Step 1: Describe the Habit

- The habit I want to look at is:

- What usually triggers it (time, place, feeling, or situation)?

- What do I usually do (the routine)?

- What do I get out of it (the reward)?

Step 2: Explore Alternatives

- What small change in the routine could I try instead?

- How could this new routine still give me the reward I want?

Step 3: Reflection

- What makes this habit hard to change?

- What might make it easier?

- What is one small step I could try this week?
