

Have you ever attempted to make a difference in your life just to revert to your old habits after a few weeks? Perhaps you wanted to stop drinking but couldn't say no to a happy hour with your pals. Perhaps you were ready for a professional shift but ended yourself in the same position years later. Many of us now have access to the most effective self-help books, health gurus, and weight-loss programs available. So, why is it so difficult to make long-term changes?

These chapters show how concentrating on self-compassion and understanding may help you make any behavioral adjustment. You'll discover how to break old habits and establish new ones with the help of easy exercises.

You'll learn a lot in these chapters

- Why you should refrain from categorizing your undesirable habits as "bad",
- What do people who are effective at changing their behavior have in common; and,
- What you can learn about altering any habit from addiction therapy.

## Chapter 1 - Self-compassion is essential for long-term transformation.

Shahroo Izadi, the author, was an expert when it came to reducing weight, having tried diet fads, health camps, and weight reduction instructors. She just couldn't seem to keep it off.

She would alternate between self-imposed deprivation and unhealthy binge-eating whenever the number on the scale crept back up. She tried to punish herself for her perceived weakness by isolating herself at home until she felt "deserving" of social interaction. And even when she did reach her ideal weight, she was never satisfied for more than a few days.

She had an awakening after a lifetime of dealing with poor self-esteem: perhaps her weight struggles were more about her entire self-image than the weight itself.

Shahroo gained more than 90 pounds after a terrible breakup. As a result, her self-esteem took a knock, and she went through another period of feeling that she had no social worth because of her appearance. She thought she needed to visit a counselor in addition to her regular severe diets and fitness program this time.

She was astonished when her counselor asked a simple question: What would happen if you never lost weight? She had assumed that weight was her main concern.

Shahroo was furious at first when he heard the idea. How could she be content if she wasn't thin? However, after a few days, she began to notice more overweight persons in her immediate vicinity. Surely she didn't believe they should be shunned because of their

additional weight? She became intensely aware of the disparity between her own expectations and those of others.

In light of this, she decided to do an experiment. She would treat herself with the same compassion as if she had already reached her ideal weight, rather than waiting until she looked the way she wanted to.

She was surprised to find that by being kind to herself even on days when she didn't meet her weight loss objectives, she began to lose weight faster than she had ever lost before. Beyond that, her newfound self-compassion influenced every area of her life.

## Chapter 2 - Long-term transformation necessitates a judgment-free approach.

Shahroo received a call from a friend seeking guidance as an addiction treatment therapist. The buddy was dating a man who had been sober for several years. She wondered if the fact that he continued to attend daily support group sessions was a cause for worry.

The answer came as no surprise to Shahroo. People who maintain their well-being after recovering from an addiction are doing far better than average. They're likely to have significantly more self-awareness and coping abilities than the usual individuals seeking to break or develop a habit.

Shahroo got a substantial insight into how these strategies may be used to any desired behavioral change through her work in addiction treatment. A presentation about the dark web gave her one of her most profound insights.

She realized that the dark web, in addition to providing online markets for illicit narcotics, also provided an anonymous environment for those suffering from addiction to communicate their coping techniques. To put it another way, these internet forums provided a judgment-free environment.

Filling out documents consenting to information sharing with social services or the police, if judged required, is one of the first stages in the process for persons seeking help at a substance-abuse treatment center in the UK. People are also required to include information about their children, criminal records, and mental health diagnoses in their responses.

As a result, if a woman suffering from alcoholism is honest about the amount of her drinking, she may face having her children taken away. However, if she is unable to face her issues honestly, she will be less likely to receive the help she requires.

It isn't simply substance misuse that needs a judgment-free change approach. Shahroo would never tell to her doctor that her true motive for reducing weight was to look nice in a bikini rather than to lower her diabetes risk. With that in mind, it's critical that you feel free to be absolutely honest when completing the activities in these chapters. As you proceed

through the process, you might want to have a separate notepad that you can keep out of sight of others.

## Chapter 3 - Make a list of your good attributes and achievements.

If you've ever set out to alter something about yourself, you're aware that motivation may be fickle. It doesn't take long for us to abandon our ambitions if we don't have measures in place to hold us responsible. Worse, failure to modify our behaviors might lead us to believe that we lack the ability to change at all.

In truth, we all possess excellent attributes and accomplishments that demonstrate our ability to fulfill goals. However, at our worst moments, we tend to forget this. That's why the Kindness Method's initial step has nothing to do with the habit you're trying to break. Instead, it's about learning to appreciate what you've already done and growing self-compassion.

When it comes to making long-term changes, investing time and effort inside a defined framework dramatically increases your chances of success. Making maps to understand where you are and where you want to go is a big part of the work covered in these chapters.

Let's begin by creating a map of your positive characteristics. Write "Ways I'm Happy to Be" in the center of a sheet of paper and draw a circle around it.

Now consider the excellent attributes or strengths you admire in yourself. You might add significant praises, reasons why you're a wonderful partner, kid, or parent, or how you handled a challenging scenario. Draw a circle around each of these attributes on your sheet of paper, then draw a line from the new bubble back to the "Ways I'm Happy to Be" bubble in the middle. The maps referenced in these chapters all employ the spoke-and-wheel approach.

Now, using a "What I'm Proud of" map, pinpoint your prior successes. These might include something like completing a 10K run or doing something unexpected. Perhaps you're proud of your house or the family you've built.

Keep adding to these maps as you advance through the Kindness Method, anytime you achieve a new goal or see a new beneficial characteristic in yourself. By generating an ever-expanding reminder of what you're capable of, you'll change your mentality.

## Chapter 4 - Determine what has and has not worked in the past for you.

What works for one individual may not work for another when it comes to transformation. One thing her most successful customers have in common, according to Shahroo, was devoting time to learning their unique patterns. They were able to construct a plan that worked for them, assisting them in achieving and maintaining their long-term objectives.

Shahroo observed that successful transformation was less about "finding yourself" and more about meeting yourself where you now are.

Consider something you've overcome that required a lot of effort, sacrifice, or tenacity. It may have been a period when you were pursuing a major goal or just felt inspired to strive for excellence, achievement, or creation. Let's now make a map called "When I'm in the Zone." Consider the circumstances that enabled you to achieve in your attempt. You can ponder where you were, who was in your immediate vicinity, how you felt, or what about the process worked well for you. Perhaps drinking enough water, sticking to a schedule, or seeking advice or mentoring from others has aided your success.

Take some time to think about what you've written once you've finished your map, putting comments on the reverse of the map or elsewhere in your notebook. Do you notice any trends? If that's the case, what would be the optimal conditions for continuing a routine?

It's also crucial to make a map of "What Hasn't Worked." This map is used to monitor any flaws that arose during previous attempts to effect change. Are there any aspects of your prior strategy that didn't fit your personality, based on your map? What happened that threw you off? Was it your poor self-image that stifled your conviction in your potential to change, or was it something else entirely? Perhaps you realized that a juice cleanse wasn't as efficient as you had hoped in terms of weight loss, or that you were dependent on others to keep you going.

Don't be discouraged if this activity reminds you of all your failures. Recognizing these flaws can assist you in better preparing to achieve your objectives in the future.

## Chapter 5 - Identifying and tracking your triggers might assist you in overcoming them.

In a previous section, you learned how to figure out what worked and what didn't in your prior attempts to modify your behavior. External influences, on the other hand, might easily lead you wrong if you aren't aware of them early in the process.

Certain triggers, such as hunger or stress, affect the majority of people. But, whether you're worried about your money, a looming deadline, or the stress of a relationship, remember that there will never be a perfect moment to change. Furthermore, by identifying your stressors, you may try to develop coping skills that will enhance your everyday life and guarantee that the stress does not interfere with the long-term improvements you want to achieve.

Create a "What Will Test Me?" map and include all of the fears, anxieties, or situations that lead you to lapse or relapse. "Beginning a new relationship" or "traveling" are examples of this.

For some people, the prospect of having to read a book about behaviors that others appear to have naturally might be enough to put them off course. For others, success might breed complacency, leading them to believe they've solved their difficulties too early in the process.

What can you do now, based on your trigger map, to alleviate or resolve these problems before they occur? If you're attempting to quit smoking, for example, it's a good idea to stay away from friends or coworkers who smoke until you're farther along in your plan.

You might also want to start a notebook to document your improvement throughout the day and night. Take five minutes in the morning to write down any triggering circumstances you could face throughout the day and how you'd like to respond to them. You'll be psychologically prepared to cope with circumstances as they happen by practicing this morning routine, and you'll be able to respond in a way that you'll be proud of. Take a few minutes at night to reflect on how you responded during the day, adding any unexpected triggers to your "What Will Test Me?" map.

## Chapter 6 - Create a realistic strategy with progressive targets.

It's now time to make a strategy now that you've generated through maps detailing where you are, where you want to go, and the potential barriers, flaws, or solutions along the way.

The first step is to schedule a time to evaluate your progress. You'll hold yourself accountable for your success and have devoted time to revise your plan with more demanding targets if you designate a date in your calendar. To begin, schedule a review reminder every three weeks.

When we start out to attain a goal, most of us have a propensity to put severe measures on ourselves. Paul, a former customer of Shahroo's, wished for more stimulating work. He had developed a habit of visiting several of his coworkers at the pub every day after work after working for the same firm for eight years after graduating from college. They'd drink and whine about the firm and their coworkers there. As a result, he frequently arrived at work the next day hungover, prompting him to eat unhealthy meals that made him feel even more tired.

When it came to devising a strategy, Paul recommended that he stop drinking completely, go to the gym, job seek for three hours every night, and eat just fruit, fish, and salad. Shahroo advised that Paul pick two nights when he would most likely be able to resist going to the pub with his coworkers. On these nights, he would spend two hours job-hunting while eating a nutritious, tasty supper he had planned ahead of time. Then, after his job-hunting evenings, he'd get off the bus a few stops before work and walk the final mile.

You'll be more likely to meet the goals you set for yourself at each stage of the process if you make sure your strategy is realistic. You'll be happy with what you've accomplished and inspired to keep going now that you know what you're capable of. Remember to add your accomplishments to your "What I'm Proud of" map on your review date. Then, decide on the following few steps that will help you get closer to the lifestyle you desire.

## The Kindness Method: Changing Habits for Good by Shahroo Izadi Book Review

Self-compassion may help us develop beneficial habits that will benefit us long beyond the short-term goals that many of us have set for ourselves. You may boost your chances of getting back on track to success even if your progress lapses by putting in the effort to map out where you are and where you want to be before establishing a realistic strategy.

Make a letter to yourself as a reminder of why you want to improve.

Your motivation will certainly decrease at some point. When confronted with hurdles or triggers, you may persuade yourself that things aren't as awful as you first imagined and that change isn't essential. Write a letter to yourself explaining why you've chosen this new strategy to change to remind yourself of how crucial it is for you to change. Explain why you want to change and what it will mean to you when you achieve your objective. Then save the letter somewhere you'll remember to read it the next time you're feeling uninspired.

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