

## **Stop the Pattern**

By

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This article is for those of you that want to break free from the not-so-positive patterns that have been set in your life or, as some would call it, self-destructive behavior. Psychology states that your predominant habits, and attitudes, are formed by the time you are five years old. This doesn't mean that things cannot be changed; it just means that whether you realize it or not, you could have habits that are either hurting you, or helping you, from your youth and childhood years.

\*Personal Development is not easy.

While working on overcoming self-destructive behavior is not easy by any means, it is definitely worth it. It is quite empowering to discover your positive traits and humbling to learn the negative ones. It is extremely exciting to realize your gifts and let them come out; it is highly effective to find your weaknesses so that you can either learn to delegate those activities or do your best to overcome them.

Spend some time reflecting on the following questions, "What is it in you that is preventing you from getting where you want to go?" Or, "What is it in you that is preventing you from accomplishing your dreams?"

\*Replace your Destructive Habits with Positive Ones.

What are your negative patterns or habits? Why are you, sometimes, your own worst enemy? Why do you, occasionally, sabotage your efforts toward accomplishment of a given goal? How can you want something so bad you can taste it and yet, fail to seize the opportunity when it is right in front of you?

The answers to those questions lie in the habitual patterns you keep. Your success in life, whatever you deem success to be, is simply based on the habits you have...it all starts with you.

1. Once you understand your patterns, accept full responsibility for them. Go ahead, set your ego, pride and emotional feelings aside for a moment. In as practical of a format as you can, look in the mirror and simply accept who you are and all the "stuff" that comes along with it. Take full responsibility for your habits and realize that the best is yet to come. It is much easier to skip this part and yet, you will see no appreciable results without it.

Side note: this is not about perfection; after all, you are only human. Just because you may have some self-destructive patterns within, it does not mean you are a failure. It all depends on what you want out of yourself and life.

2. Begin to shed yourself of the negative habits by replacing them with positive ones. Create a statement, and vision, based on how you want things to be; not as they currently are. It is not effective to sit and tell yourself to not be a certain way --- that just makes you think about it even more. However, you can create a picture of how you

want things to be. That is the beauty of your imagination. It is stored and you have the freedom and power to create whatever kind of scenario you want to work towards. The key is to replace the not-so-healthy thoughts and habits with positive ones.

That is where change begins. Write down your vision if it will help. It is a great process for clarification and commitment.

If you begin to make an adjustment, and fall off track, so what! Just start over again. The beauty is that you'll realize it sooner than later. The benefit is that rather than going on blindly in the same fashion that you always have, you'll recognize it and adjust as needed. Let it go and move on.

A profound statement is, "In your greatest weakness is where you will find your greatest strength." What is your greatest weakness? Discover that and before you know it, it will turn into your greatest strength!

\*Be aware of your environment.

What kind of people do you surround yourself with: positive, optimistic people or, depressing, pessimistic individuals?

You are a product of your environment. What that means is that the environment that you live in, work in, socialize in and volunteer in will determine your overall outlook, and therefore, effectiveness, in life. If you are not accomplishing the results that you are looking for, it may be due to the environment that you have put yourself in or allowed yourself to stay and be a part of.

Many people who are looking for the meaning of happiness and success and, even more importantly, how to obtain it, will go to people for advice that don't necessarily have the answers. If you continuously surround yourself with people that have negative attitudes or no desire to improve things, how can you expect those people to guide you to greener pastures?

If you grew up in an environment of love, and support, and passion for life, more-than-likely you will still have that mindset with you today. However, if you grew up in an environment of limitations, put-downs and jealousy towards the "successful ones", without even realizing it, you could be carrying that habit with you as an adult.

How many times have you limited your actions or thoughts based on what someone else's opinion is? How often have you shared a dream with someone only to have it squashed by a negative reaction? How often have you told yourself that you could not do something based on your own limiting behaviors?

Be aware of who you surround yourself with. Your current environment has a large impact on the way you feel about life, your behavior around successful people and your actions when opportunity is in front of you.

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