

# TogetheriCan

20

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## HABITS DEFINED

**Definition of Habit:** an **acquired behavior** pattern regularly followed until it has become **almost involuntary**.

Definition: A settled or regular tendency or practice – especially one that is hard to give up.

I'd say that it is a **practice that we do almost automatically**.

Typically, it's a thought that when triggered, is followed by an almost automatic reaction.

*What exactly are habits?*

*Where do they come from? How are they developed? How do Habits form?*

*Are Habits good for us or are they bad?*

*Where do Habits reside?*

*Can Habits be changed?*

*Do Habits always have Triggers? Most Habits will always be tied to a Trigger.*

**Habits are typically a reaction of a learned behavior.**

**Perception:** The **way we interpret things**. Our interpretation need not necessarily be the truth. Five people seeing an accident will all have different versions of what really happened.

When a person hears a **certain** sound, smells a **particular** smell, feels a texture, or tastes a **familiar** taste, the mental **thought** process **is joined by the emotions** associated with that past activity.

Two separate portions of the brain function to react to a trigger. **The Prefrontal Cortex** typically contains thought, reason, and decisions. Emotions are said to be found in the Amygdala.

Typically, **habits come from the subconscious portion of the mind**, not the conscious mind.

In other words, many times we are totally unaware, consciously, that we are reacting to some unknown trigger.

Sometimes when we feel something, it's just a feeling and has no meaning attached to it. However, if we **start tying a process** to that feeling, it can **become a Habit**.

Each Habit requires a separate evaluation as to whether it is beneficial to us or is detrimental to our progress towards a goal. **A habit that holds us back, disempowers us**, causes us to feel shame or blame, is possibly **not a good habit to hang on to**.

**Habits can be our Slaves** (beneficial – adding to life) or **we can become a slave to them**. Habits can hold us in bondage (becoming detrimental – keeping us in a rut).

*How do Habits develop, how are they created, where do they come from?*

**Four times / ways** the subconscious is programmed:

1. Through **Repetition** / Rote (being told you are worthless over and over) (something practiced over time)
2. During a period of extreme **Trauma** (rape, severe beating, car accident)
3. During a period of extreme **Illness / Sickness, Medical Emergency** (high fever, near death experience)
4. At a time of extreme **fatigue and danger** (dehydration, outworking your conditioning)

*Where do Habits reside?*

The **Subconscious** Brain works to connect input from the senses (Smell, Touch, Taste, Sound, Sight) and converts them into thought. Thought is then married to a related emotion experienced sometime during a person's life. As the function of the brain proceeds to tie thoughts, feelings, and emotions together, it can be said to be creating Mind.

**Mind is where learned behavior resides.** What is contained in the Mind is scattered throughout the body, the musculature. Many times it takes releasing it from the body as well as the brain.

*Are Habits good for us or are they bad?*

**Habits can be very beneficial** and provide us assistance during an emergency.

Stepping off the curb and hearing a horn honk may cause you to jump back, almost automatically. This would be a habit that might save your life.

However we can become a slave to our habits, which **can be detrimental**.

Being told to clean our plates as children, over, over, and over again. Repetition!

The habit— we forced ourselves consciously to eat everything on our plate even if we were full. Doing this over and over again could very possibly form a belief of how we are supposed to act and develop a lifelong habit.

This leads one to become overweight and possibly obese, a dangerous condition leading to insulin resistance, type II diabetes, high cholesterol and heart conditions.

**Habits can also create phobias and unnecessary fears, worries and anxieties.**

I know of an apartment manager who once had a pillowcase put over her head and beaten unmercifully. It took her years and many counseling sessions to be able to walk down an enclosed hallway.

I, myself, laid a motorcycle down on its side while rounding a corner. The cars passing me were so close I became fearful of being run over. This led to a fear, a concern, and I gave up riding motorcycles on the street. (Probably a good thing). I can no longer ride a motorcycle and feel comfortable.

I know of instances where people under anesthetic having surgery heard the doctor's voice giving the opinion that they stood no chance of living a normal life. Hearing this message, it became a reality until they later found the source of the thought.

*Can Habits be changed?*

One thing that we can say about habits is they are a "**learned behavior**."

It's also known that **anything that has been learned** can be, through effort, **unlearned and replaced** with new knowledge.

The problem exists that a **learned behavior exists only in the subconscious mind and not in the conscious mind**. Therefore, it cannot be addressed the same way and changed with reason, as we can do with the conscious mind.

*Most Habits will always be tied to a Trigger? Identifying those triggers.*

My voice changes when I become frustrated and I don't even know I'm changing it. It takes the assistance of someone listening to tell me that my tone has changed and has now become harsh.

The way to identify habits is to **recognize** the **results** of our performance.

**Our actions will always speak louder than words.**

Do we react or do we respond? By **monitoring our reactions**, many times we can identify an action created by a habit. Many times a reaction is nothing more than a response to a habit.

Many times a reaction comes from a habit, where **we don't stop and think** or consider what we're doing.

We act.

By **learning to respond**, we can change that habit.

We must also **be completely willing to improve** (change) our thinking.

If we continue to tell ourselves that's just who we are, then chances are, we will continue to do the same things. We will continue to be a slave to Habits and allow them to rule our lives.

**No new learning takes place in a closed mind.**

## **Together (with my Habits defined) i Can**

*Michael McCright*

Free Health Coaching – provided by the "Together i Can Group"

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