

Working with Habits

These are some complementary approaches to undoing unproductive habits that I have found useful. They are derived from Alexander principles, Spira's Movement Educational Therapy, Cohen's Developmental Repatterning, and Somatic Psychotherapy.

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Approach 1: Simply practise replacing it with another habit...

- (a) Catch yourself at it (which involves increasing your bodily awareness);
- (b) pause (inhibit);
- (c) alter your thinking and intentions (directions);
- (d) then go ahead...

Approach 2: If the habit is very resistant to change...

"How can I strengthen the alternative(s)?"

eg, promote increased flexibility of tissues and nervous system patterns of movement, eg, using counter-rotation;
eg, developmental reflexes and whole body movement patterns (eg, Homologous, Homolateral and Contralateral) may need stimulating and strengthening;

eg, daily practices (meditation, t'ai chi, etc) which cultivate self awareness and a state of "being centered" from which new choices may emerge.

Approach 3: "Does part of me still need this habit?"

eg, "Is it trying to tell me something?"

"Is it part of my "way of being" in the world?"

"What if I exaggerate it? Does it have meaning?"

Let the meaning emerge (in a safe, supportive setting).

"Is there a dialogue I can begin between aspects of myself in order to negotiate letting go of this habit?"

"Can I let go of the struggle between keeping the habit ("indulgence") and overcoming it ("denial" / "death to my ego") to find a point of balance / freedom?"