

# Rid Yourself of Unwanted Habits



*The Edinburgh Reporter's Mike Smith is a fully qualified hypnotherapist. In the latest of a series of articles, Mike looks at how hypnotherapy can help you get rid of unwanted habits or disorders.*

Now we are well into a new year, are you back in the old routine? If you had a break over Christmas and New Year (and I'm well aware many people didn't) was your routine disrupted? And did you find some degree of comfort in returning to this routine once the tinsel and tree was taken down for another year (well, until October...)

Although many people complain about their lives, there is something about some kind of routine which is strangely comforting. Why? Because it's habit-forming. It's what we're used to. Up early, wash, breakfast, jump in the car or on the bus or train to work. Every day. If you use the bus, like I do, chances are you will see the same people on the bus every day at the same time, getting on at the usual bus stops. It's life. It's routine. It's habit. And., for the most part, these are good habits.

But what if you have some unwanted habits? How can you deal with these?

For example, if you are prone to snack and overeat. If you track your actions, you may find a familiarity about them. You may have breakfast and then a cup of tea and a biscuit for elevenses – just to keep you going until lunchtime (whether you need this or not) Then it's lunch. Quite possibly a similar lunch every day during the week. Then, mid-afternoon, another wee snack to 'keep you going until supper time'. Then,

perhaps a big supper 'as you've hardly eaten all day'. And before you head to bed, how about a couple of slices of toast?

Sound familiar? It's a habit. And if you're looking to lose weight it's an unwanted habit but because it's a habit you're used to, you're comfortable with. Too comfortable if you're looking to lose weight.

Hypnotherapy is the art of changing your habits. Of replacing your unwanted habits with healthier ones.

For example, if you want to stop snacking then cut out the elevenses in the morning and the mid-afternoon snack. But I need to do something, I hear you cry. Well, that couple of minutes you spend mid-morning eating that chocolate digestive could be used to step away from your desk – and walk along the corridor at work. Or, if you're at home, go for a walk around the block. No calories consumed because you've not had a biscuit. Actually, you've burnt off some calories because you've gone for a wee walk. A small measure you may say. But if you add this up, twice a day, five days a week then it can make a difference.

After a couple of days, your subconscious mind will no longer be expecting a chocolate digestive; your new habit will mean your subconscious mind is now expecting you to go for a walk, however brief.

Now take that a stage further. Instead of sprawling on the couch of an evening, why not go for another walk. This time for about half an hour. Now, I know the Scottish weather doesn't make this a particularly attractive idea sometimes. But it's amazing how invigorating a half-hour walk can be. Even if the weather is inclement, why not pop down to the gym for half an hour?

I know what you're thinking – I don't go to the gym. And I can't be bothered walking after a tough day at work. I just want to chill out. Which is perfectly fine if you're happy

doing that. But if you're serious about wanting to lose weight then you need to replace those old habits with new ones.

Hypnotherapy can help you do that. One of my clients constantly snacked on chocolate and crisps – because it was what he did. It was a habit. That's why people who are addicted to whatever are labelled as having a 'habit'. It's what they are used to. But hypnotherapy can change your subconscious mind to think differently. Think differently about food. Think differently about cigarettes. Think differently about alcohol. Think differently about any unwanted habit.

Even if you're not addicted to something, habits and routines can be changed. I must confess that I didn't do much recycling until last year. I live in a flat and it was all-too convenient to shove all the rubbish in a bin bag and thrown down the chute. There, gone. Out of sight out of mind. But this was doing all kinds of damage to the environment. So, my wife and I decided to change our habit. We now put empty plastic bottles, glass bottles and papers to the other side of the kitchen from the general waste. We then make a conscious effort to take these materials downstairs to the various recycling bins around the corner from us. It's a tiny contribution to trying to save our planet but it's a contribution nonetheless. But the point I'm making is that we now automatically put plastic, glass and paper to one side. We don't even have to think about it. It's become a new habit which has replaced an unwanted one.

We didn't need hypnotherapy for this but for people who are serious about losing weight or stopping smoking or have an unwanted habit they wish to get replaced – whether this is an eating disorder, a phobia about spiders, rats, flying – then a fully qualified hypnotherapist can help them achieve their goal.

You're not put to sleep. You're fully aware at all times,

you'll never be doing anything you don't want to do – and you'll be feeling so relaxed that you will feel you can achieve anything. Which you can.

So, if you are someone who wants to lose some weight, stop smoking, cut back on alcohol – but find your willpower evaporates after a few weeks – or if you are someone who has a phobia (for example, fear of spiders, rodents, flying) – contact me today to arrange an appointment for a consultation. My website and email address is below – you can leave a message on my mobile phone at any time, day or night.

If you would prefer a home visit, I would be happy to arrange this.

Take the first step to changing your life!

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