

What better way to start the New Year, than starting with an anti-inflammatory cleanup on aisle 5!

You know exactly what I'm talking about—the endless holiday food, drink and merrymaking have a tendency to take a toll. And while that's mostly a given considering the holidays, it's also an opportunity to reflect on the year and your habits to figure out what needs to shift.

Shifting from long-established habits to forming new, better ones is a journey that involves both understanding the psychology of habit formation and implementing practical strategies. There isn't a one-size-fits-all "secret sauce," but a combination of well-established principles can guide this transition effectively:

1. **Understanding Habit Loops:** Every habit consists of a cue (trigger), a routine (the behavior itself), and a reward (what your brain gets out of it). Identifying these components in your existing habits helps you understand them better and lays the groundwork for change.

2. **Start Small:** Begin with small, achievable changes. Large goals can be overwhelming, so breaking them down into smaller, manageable tasks makes the process more feasible and less daunting.

3. **Consistency Over Intensity:** It's more effective to engage in a new, better habit consistently, even if it's in a small way, than to pursue it intensely but irregularly. Consistency reinforces the new behavior pattern in your brain.

**4. Leverage Existing Habits:** Attach new habits to existing ones. This technique, known as "habit stacking," (I call it piggybacking habits) involves adding your new habit immediately before or after an established habit. For example, if you already have a habit of drinking coffee every morning, and you want to start journaling, you might decide to journal each morning as you have your coffee.

**5. Focus on the Reward:** Make the rewards of your new habit explicit and enjoyable. Rewards reinforce habits. If the reward is immediate and pleasurable, the habit is more likely to stick. Think Pavlov's dog.

**6. Environment Design:** Alter your environment to make good habits easier and bad habits harder. For instance, if you want to eat healthier, stock your fridge with healthy foods and avoid buying junk food.

**7. Mindset Shift:** Cultivate a growth mindset. Instead of seeing failures as setbacks, view them as learning opportunities. This mindset encourages resilience and adaptability.

**8. Accountability and Support:** Share your goals with friends or family, or join a group with similar objectives. Social support and accountability can significantly boost your chances of success.

**9. Patience and Persistence:** Understand that habit formation takes time. It's common to slip up or face challenges. Persistence,

patience, and a willingness to keep trying even after setbacks are crucial.

**10. Reflect and Adjust:** Regularly reflect on your progress and be willing to make adjustments. Adapt your strategies as you learn what works and what doesn't for you personally.

These principles, when combined and tailored to your individual needs and circumstances, form the "secret sauce" for transitioning from habits you want to ditch to habits you want to enforce.

Start with your body—it's the only place you have to live. Take care of it and it will take care of you.

Are you ready to SPRINT?