

WHICH OBSTACLE TO CHANGE IS HOLDING YOU BACK?

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Change occurs naturally, but it can be difficult to keep it flowing in the direction you want. According to some estimates, 80% of New Year resolutions fail. When it comes to losing weight, more than 95% of dieters regain the weight they lost within three years.

Even if you sincerely want to make positive changes in your life, success may elude you. Maybe you're sabotaging yourself without realizing it. Maybe you're skipping essential steps that would make your efforts pay off.

Find out what is holding you back from living the life you want. Take a look at three common obstacles to personal change and learn how to overcome them.

Living With Uncertainty

Clinging to what's familiar can give you a sense of security. However, staying in your comfort zone may mean missing out on a more meaningful life.

1. **Let go of judgements.** Stop rushing to categorize people or events. Slow down and open up your mind to other viewpoints.
2. **Clarify your vision.** When you know what you're trying to accomplish, it's easier to make specific plans. **Reflect on your goals and write them down.**
3. **Focus on gains.** When you're taking on a challenge, imagine the rewards as well as the possible pitfalls. Motivate yourself by thinking positive. Even if the outcomes aren't what you had in mind, you can learn from the experience.

4. **Start small.** Begin with modest changes. Each victory will boost your confidence and abilities.

Gathering Resources

There are many simple and free things you can do to take care of yourself. On the other hand, you may have some goals that will require time, money, and other resources. Learn how to build your capacity.

1. **Set priorities.** Trying to change too many things at once can be overwhelming. Pick one or two top concerns and focus your efforts there.
2. **Get organized. You can accomplish more when you have a system.** Clear away mental and physical clutter. Invent routines that will save you time and money.
3. **Revise your budget.** Look for ways to cut spending and increase your income. Bring your lunch to work instead of eating at sandwich shops. Turn your hobby into a side income.
4. **Seek information.** Maybe you need additional knowledge and skills to make the changes you have in mind. Sign up for training at work or take a course online.
5. **Ask for support. Having a strong network makes you more resilient.** Ask your family and friends for the assistance you need.

Transforming Habits

Habits are powerful. Unless you examine your actions, you may wind up reacting to situations automatically instead of choosing the options that will make you happier

and more productive.

1. **Identify triggers.** Maybe you're trying to quit smoking, but you reach for a cigarette as soon as you pour your morning coffee. Figure out the triggers that distract you from your positive intentions.
2. **Develop substitutions.** Once you know the situations where you're likely to lapse, you can craft alternative responses. Keep your hands busy with needlework or a video game instead of smoking a cigarette.
3. **Practice mindfulness.** Research shows that it often takes a couple of months for new habits to solidify. Plus, **being consistent during the first few days of starting a new practice will increase your chances of success.** Remind yourself that being patient and vigilant now will benefit you.

It's important to embrace change if you want to grow. Once you understand what's holding you back, you can come up with strategies that will help you reach your personal and professional goals.