

FIXING HABITS IN THE BRAIN AT WILL

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Who lives in this marvelous hall of living walls of mortared osseous tissues fitted with the various ocular, tactual, auditory, olfactory and gustatory doors?

This hall of life—the human skull—presents a veritable epitome of a huge state. It includes the range of hilly convolutions of the cerebrum, inlaid with the arterial streamlets and dark rivers of veins. Is this exquisite territory vacant, unoccupied? Is this hall filled just with a senseless mass of physical cells?

Is there a book without an author, a child without parents, a clock without a maker, a rose without a designer? Nay! Similarly there are wondrous ruling agencies behind this kingdom of mystic beauty. Beneath the dome of the human skull is enacted scenes of intense activity and pulsating life and intelligence. The strange colony of myriads of little brainy cells are guided and controlled by a mixed host of good and impish invisible sprites, pixies and fairies of unseen habits.

There the little blood vessels are paddling their tiny boats laden with various vital commodities in the arterial stream. There is buying and selling, absorption and elimination, going on here. The little intelligent cells are engaged in banqueting or introspecting, or receiving the guests of sensations from the outer sensory doors, some are creating mischief by inviting sprites of invisible disorderly habits into this great commonwealth.

The habit lords and the commoners, the brain cells, are gathered together and are furiously debating who should assume the responsibility of the bodily government. These united states of flesh have been the scenes of many wars and revolutions. At certain election times, the whole state is in disorder and confusion. Who is going to be president? How many votes will the various candidates receive? Every human action, mentally or physically performed, is a voter. When a particular action is repeated, it swells the number of its votes, and a huge number of such actions elects a certain habit candidate. Then a collective vote of all human actions determines at different periods of life which habit is going to be the predominant one and rule supreme.

Election by numerical superiority often ignores the qualitative standard. If the majority of voters are morons or criminals, they are bound to blunder and elect the wrong habit candidate. Unless the voting human actions are guided by the supreme law of discrimination, they enslave themselves anew under an undesirable ruler.

A true spiritual democracy in this bodily kingdom necessitates the thorough education of the voting human activities. They should not only depend on their numerical power of repetition, but also on the quality of attentive performance. Above all, they should be trained to be guided by ideal rationalism and warned against the bribing effects of sentimental environment, leading to the misuse of their voting powers. The power of reason should select the candidates.

Habits of greed, anger, envy, drinking, excessive smoking, coffee or tea drinking, sloth, failure, result from their being elected to office by unwise hordes of little actions whose numerical strength alone elected them without thought of the after-effects of enslavement. Habit-slaves are not born, they make themselves so, unknowingly or knowingly, thru their constantly repeated actions. The first drink never made a drunkard, the first act of sensuality never made a sensual slave, the first use of dope never made a dope fiend. A series of mechanical or thoughtless repetitions of the wrong action elected the gripping habit as ruler. Quantitative strength won against the weak qualitative voice of reason that had no votes because it had not been exercising its powers.

Guard yourself against the first performance of evil actions. What you will do once, you are liable to do again. Like a rolling snowball, habit grows stronger and bigger by repetition. Use your reason in all your actions, otherwise you become converted into helpless slaves of undesirable habits.



Impeaching a Bad Habit President and Installing a Better One

A strong bad habit presiding for a long time in the bodily state brings chaos and misery. Spiritual famine, mental fevers, universal poverty of body and brain exist in a kingdom thus misruled. A strong bad habit should be impeached before a tribunal of daily introspective and conscience judges, who should reform the daily offending actions that the inevitable outcome

of their persistence will be nervous breakdown, wasted youth and exploded happiness. This constant note of warning may serve gradually to awaken the enslaved reason and will of the habit-bound victim.

Many excessive smokers, drunkards, sex-slaves, are not free because they do not think they are doing wrong and because they don't die immediately. But although the shovels of habits dig slowly, yet they dig surely a yawning untimely grave, preceded by the scorching flames of suffering.

Convince your actions of the tyranny of the undesirable ruling habit first, then begin the work of constitutional agitation and actual impeachment. A whining or sorrowing attitude, remonstrance, or even violent but spasmodic rebellion, is of little avail. You are the maker of your habits and you must undo them by regular effort.

Relate your actions to new, better ways. Keep them continuously busy, interested, attentive, in serving and fraternizing with good actions. If the actions begin to revert back to their old dangerous associations, don't get discouraged. Persist, give sufficient time and attention, and the voting strength of the new actions will increase and finally get power enough to overthrow the worthless ruler, and elect in his place their own good candidate habit.

A bad habit takes time to attain supremacy, so why be impatient about the growth of its rivaling good habit? Do not despair about your undesirable habits, simply stop feeding them by repetition.

The time used in the formation of habits varies with the individual kind of nervous system and brain cells, and is chiefly determined by the quality of attention. But any habit can be installed in the brain, almost instantaneously at will, by creating brain-grooves through the power of deep trained attention.

True democracy presupposes rational, willing obedience to good laws, unguided by higher authority or any other external influences whatsoever. Similarly, a wise man, one who is really free, avoids error and performs good, not compelled by habit, but from free reasonable choice.

"To him who hath shall be given; but from him who hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." This Biblical statement is very true of habits. A man of good actions increases in virtue, but a slave of bad habits loses all power of will and reason.

All natural tastes, human customs, are the results of habits, and are environmental in nature. Love of Americanism or Hinduism is the outcome of habit and familiarity. When I was a baby, if I had the choice, I would have preferred to be a human chameleon, free to embrace the desirable aspects of all nations and creeds.

Government of actions by internal self-evolved discrimination, unguided by good or bad habits, imparts unbounded power of will. A man with such power can instant-

ly fix a new habit in his brain, or stop one at will, without feeling the compulsion of a habit-president. One must not be dominated by a good habit, either, because the habit may be in power simply because there has never been any temptation of evil. Such a good habit is not permanently fixed in the nature, because it is born not from choice and reason, but thru circumstance.

One way we can test our power over our habits is to command the mind to like or dislike a certain food at will. When I first arrived in America, I was served at a dinner some Roquefort cheese and crackers. No sooner had Mr. Roquefort touched the palate and its arrival become known to the cerebral cells, than the habit lords rebelled and were about to upset the honored guests in my stomach. I didn't enjoy this sudden embarrassment, and saw that everyone else at the table was greatly enjoying this peculiar cheese. I strongly urged my senses to immediately elect the Roquefort-cheese-enjoying habit. I liked the taste at once and do so to this day.

Why do things happen contrary to your desires? Because your habits are also contrary to your desires, and your actions flatter your habits. Your habits must cater to your true Ideals.

Habit is an automatic mental mechanism for performing actions without the labor involved in initiating new actions. Wrongly used, this mechanism becomes man's arch-enemy. Be practical. Try from today to overcome the hidden enemy habits within you, garbed with your environmental likings, and be free to act from reason alone. Your habits are not you. Be yourself, and you will remember the lost image of God within you.

