

Principles of Adjusting to a New Lifestyle

1. **Adjust slowly? Or abruptly?** Likely there are some things you will need to go all out on and change right away. But you will need to change *many* things. You need to decide which actions need to be changed now and which ones slowly.
2. **Acknowledge that old habits are indeed hard to break.** Will power is not enough. You have a body, spirit and mind that are all three at the same time pressing your *will* to make a choice. You need to ask a series of questions.
 - (1) How can I train my *body* to adjust to this new lifestyle?
 - (2) What can I do *spiritually* to adjust to this new lifestyle?
 - (3) What truths can I fill my *mind* with about this new lifestyle?
3. **You need help.** Of course you need help! But DO NOT run too quickly to the advice of the world, rather run to God for help. Beg Him, and ask Him for help. It is *not* first about saying “No” to old and unhealthy lifestyle habits, but rather about seeking God *first* so that you are *satisfied* in Him (Ps. 16).
 - a. Seek and ask Him for wisdom: James 1:2-8, esp. v5.
 - b. Do not seek the world: James 4:1-10
 - c. You may not need professional help, but you do need to *connect* with (1) the body of Christ in a general/larger sense (Heb. 10:24-25) and (2) a smaller/intimate personal way (Ecc. 4:12). A journey alone in establishing new habits is too hard, even impossible.
 - i. Are you worshiping with the body of Christ regularly and faithfully?
 - ii. Are you praying with one or two people, in person, regularly?
4. **Be practical, but work on your heart too.**
 - a. Root out any unhealthy/sinful *DESIRE*: Holy Spirit convicts you of sin through your mind being renewed in the Scriptures (John 16:8, Rom. 12:1-2).
 - b. Avoid temptation by making sure you don’t have a source of temptation readily *AVAILABLE*.
 - c. Be watchful that you do not put yourself into a position so that you have the *TIME* to even be tempted. “Pray that you may not enter into temptation (Luke 22:46).” But if you do find yourself tempted, flee the temptation (I Cor. 10:13, 6:18)! Are there people or situations in your life who encourage this bad lifestyle, whom you need to avoid?

5. Next Steps

- a. What are the *first two* steps that would make a real difference for you in this area in the next week?
- b. On a scale of 1-10, how committed to these two steps are you?
- c. What are the obstacles you can foresee holding you back?
- d. What kind of support do you need to follow through with this?

“I think that the will is redirected not by just deciding I'm going to redirect it, but by setting my affections on Christ, the love of God in Christ, the glory of God, the reality of eternal life. As I do that, then my will is going to be gradually moved in the direction of wanting to do the will of God rather than doing what my flesh desires.”

Jerry Bridges