

Step 4: Brainstorm possibilities for the reward/craving that drives your habit

- Spend some time on this one. If you are not working with the correct reward/craving, attempts to change the routine will likely fail.
- Example: The reward of staying up late watching TV may be a direct desire to watch TV, but it may also be a desire for alone time after the family has gone to bed, a desire to avoid the struggle of trying to fall asleep, or a desire to numb your brain so you do not need to think about topics that trouble you.

Step 5: Design variations on your routine to test each possible reward/craving listed above

- Try to alter one variable at a time to allow you to pinpoint the correct reward/craving
- Example: If your reward is actually watching TV, plan a weekend in which you are able to watch all your TV before the bedtime you are aiming for. If you want quiet time apart from your family. Find a place to go to give yourself an hour alone before bed. If your struggle is actually falling asleep, try getting up very early so as to be just as tired earlier. If TV is used as an escape, choose an alternate method of ‘numbing’ (ie reading).

Step 6: Implement each variation until you identify the reward/craving that drives your habit

- During this period, do not worry about trying to otherwise change your routine.

Step 7: Design an improved routine that incorporates the original cue and reward/craving

Final Thought: To create a new routine from scratch, deliberately design a cue and thoughtfully choose a reward to frame your desired routine. Repeat your routine until you begin to crave your reward. A habit is born!