

Developing Positive Addictions

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Positive addiction: Any regularly repeated behavior that leads to positive outcomes; flow states that are repeated often enough to induce cravings for them and withdrawal if halted

1. At first, the activity is not easy or doesn't feel that pleasurable. It takes some initial effort, commitment and willpower.
2. It is usually something that you think, believe or feel would be good for you.
3. You must persist past the "not wanting to do it" feeling and keep doing it regularly, usually for an hour each day, until it becomes addictive. This may take up to a year, but usually takes less time.
4. It is often helpful to develop rituals and a regular time to perform the activity.
5. Try, as much as possible, to accept that you are not going to be good or proficient at it and decrease or eliminate self-criticism (and shield yourself from the criticism from others until the positive addiction is well established).
6. You can typically tell when you've established the positive addiction when you find yourself having the urge or craving to do the activity that used to take effort, you miss it emotionally or physically when you don't do it (or, put another way, you experience withdrawal) and you jealously guard the time it takes to do it.

List of some positive addictions: Running; meditating; gardening; reading; exercising; practicing, playing or performing music; learning; artistic pursuits of any kind; knitting or any handiwork/craftwork; birding; outdoor activities (hiking, skiing, boating, rock climbing, mountain climbing, etc.); walking; bike riding

Note: Any positive addiction done to excess, in which it causes physical harm, emotional distress, relationship problems, money problems, and so on, becomes less or not positive.