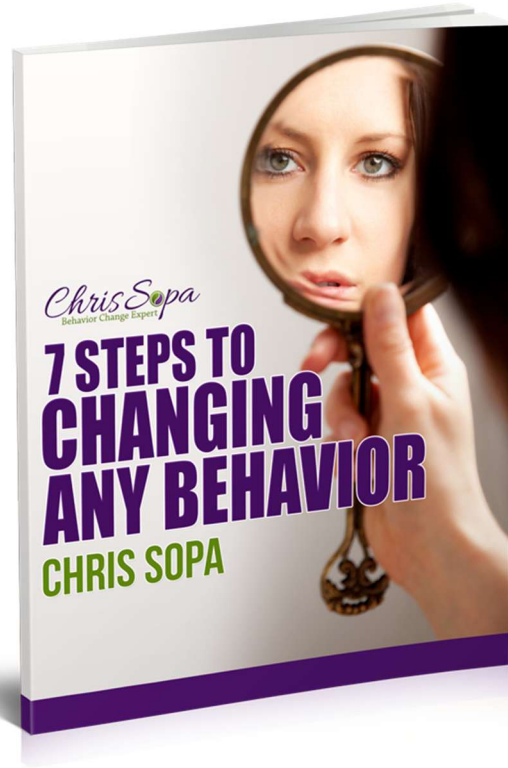




Free Behavior Change Guidebook

By: Chris Sopa

Your Behavior Change Expert

7 Steps to Changing Any Behavior

Welcome!

Thank you for deciding to download my free guidebook, **7 Steps to Changing Any Behavior**. Congratulations for deciding the time is right to change and start living the life you were born to live!

In this guidebook, you will find 7 powerful step by step strategies that will help you change your behaviors once and for all and a list of affirmations at the end to imbued these new behaviors into your subconscious.

We all have self-destructive behaviors, some we are aware of and some that still sit in the dark corners of our subconscious mind. Deciding that you want to change is the first step in empowering yourself to form new habits which lead to new behaviors.

Over 90% of our behaviors come from our subconscious mind. Our behaviors are the main way our subconscious mind expresses itself and 55% of how we communicate is through our behaviors. The challenge we have is that due to conditioning (the past experiences we have had that shaped most of our behaviors), 77% of the thoughts that sit in our subconscious mind are negative. Every past event leads to a thought. Every thought leads to a feeling. Every feeling leads to an action or behavior. If this is true, then the majority of your behaviors are leading you in the wrong direction.

This is why I decided to give you these guided steps that will allow you to become aware of those behaviors you want to change and then change them in a way that will be lasting so you can move on to creating new, positive behaviors. I want you to keep the behaviors that are working for you...let's just focus on the ones that are holding you back from a path of joy.

Over the past two decades I have been studying and working with individuals on changing their behaviors to finally live a life of joy. Using my Masters degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology and my life experiences of changing my own out-dated behaviors, I have come up with these steps which have worked for thousands of individuals.

I have compiled this guidebook for YOU in hopes that you embrace your inner power, change what needs to be changed and step into the person you were born to be. Let's finally get rid of what no longer serves you and release the past. I look forward to meeting you in person someday soon. In the meantime, remember that change is not just the cutting away of what you don't want in your life, it is realization and growth. Now use these steps and get out there and change!

Namaste, Chris

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#1 Become Aware of Your Current Behavior Patterns

We have all heard the old adage that says "you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make him drink." The horse has to realize it is thirsty before it wants to take a drink. Much like you have to be aware of the behaviors that are holding you back before you can choose to change them. Awareness is much like shining a light on an area of your life that is ready to be exposed.



How do we become aware of our behaviors?

First, identify the areas in your life in which you are currently not happy. We create our reality using our thoughts and behaviors so more than likely, that area of your life has been created by some limiting belief that is translating into a behavior that is giving you results you do not desire. Just like the effect of the wind blowing is the tree bending, the effects of your thoughts are your behaviors. Once you have identified this area of your life, take note if you see any patterns. Are you constantly attracting the same kind of person into your reality? Do you constantly find yourself in the same situation, just a different day - having no money to pay your bills, heartbroken due to being hurt in a relationship, etc?

What is the most predominant feeling that surrounds this area of your life? Do you feel angry when you think of this part of your life? Fearful? Vulnerable? Full of worry? Now work backwards from the feeling and try to identify what thought has lead to that feeling. That thought is your limiting belief, or in other words, the lie you are telling yourself that is leading to the unwanted behavior.

Awareness has many layers and like an onion sometimes you have to peel them back. One awareness usually leads to another, than another, than another. Sometimes there is a certain lesson we have to learn first before something comes to our awareness, a sequence of events that sets us up to be able to make the highest choice possible for our own good. Something does not come to our awareness until we are ready to change. Of course, change is always our choice. Remember, you never receive anything you cannot handle, so if you become aware of a behavior that needs to change, you definitely will be able to handle whatever you need to do to make that change.

The key to changing your life is to bring to your awareness as many things that are getting in your way of becoming the person you want to be. Buy a notebook and make it your *Behavior Change Notebook* and write down all of the awareness's that

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come to you regarding your behaviors. Ask your trusted friends what they notice about your behaviors and be open to the answers.

Once you are aware of something, you are then personally accountable and responsible for changing it. Until you become aware that the changes in your life that need to be made are YOUR responsibility and the situations are not the fault of anyone but YOU, change will not occur.

We have two choices when it comes to changing our behaviors: change it or accept it. The desire for change comes about through our life experiences and the lessons we chose to take from those experiences. It may be a dramatic event or just a simple ah-ha moment that came out of nowhere...either way, once the desire to change comes to our awareness, it is our responsibility to make the choice as to what to do with it.

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#2 Identify What You Want

Seems like a simple question, doesn't it? The funny thing is, not many people can actually answer this question. Most of the time, people just say that they want to be happy, or they start to name all of the things they want for their significant other, their kids or world peace.

The majority of people have no idea what they want. They allow life to push them around and just react to what life offers them instead of choosing what they want out of life and demanding that life deliver it to them. They have forgotten the power they have been given to create. This is why God gave us free-will...to be able to make choices and create the life we want.



Our wants stem from our dreams. Many of us have not dreamt (and I don't mean sleeping dreams) for quite some time. We have learned through our life disappointments to not want for too much just in case it doesn't come to pass.

Why is it so important to know what you want and how does that relate to changing your behaviors? Simply put, your brain does not work in a vacuum. Many times when we want to change a behavior or thought we simply claim that we just will no longer do that behavior or think that thought anymore. This never works. We cannot take something away in our brains without replacing it with something else. Our brain is wired with electrical and chemical signals that control our habits. That is why when you smell a cigar, you may think of your grandfather or when you hear a specific song, you may think of your senior prom. A stimulus triggered a memory (a thought) which then triggered a subsequent behavior.

Begin by starting your own list of wants. Call it your Bucket List, Dream Inventory, Possibilities...whatever you want to call it. The state of mind I want you to have as you write your list is this: pretend as if a Magic Genie is sitting at the top of the paper and will grant anything you write down. Do not worry about "how" you will accomplish it, who will approve, if you have the money or even if it is realistic. If it pops into your mind, write it down. As you write, also make a note of what thoughts make you hesitate writing something down on the paper. Are you thinking about what others will think? If you have the money? How it is impossible to accomplish? These are the limiting beliefs that usually stop you from going after what you want. Write everything that comes to mind down, no matter what. Be as specific as you can and if possible, find a picture that represents your want. Our subconscious mind thinks in pictures. That is its main language. If I say "chocolate

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cake,” you do not see the words chocolate cake in your mind; you see a picture of a chocolate cake. Be exact with your image. The subconscious mind only knows what you tell it and then acts on it accordingly.

And don’t worry...it is not selfish to declare what you want in life. When we are focusing on ourselves with the intention to make ourselves a better person, to feel better and to grow that is anything but selfish. When we are better, that means we are better for everyone and everything in our life.

If you find it hard to think about things you want, start out by making a list of things you know for sure you *don’t* want in your life. Then take that list and write down the opposites of what you wrote. Add to this list often and read it daily. Be sure to check off the things you accomplish. You will be amazed and how quickly what you want comes to pass.

Some questions to ask yourself to get the “want” juices flowing:

- What do you want your self-image to be?
- What books do you want to read?
- What places do you want to travel to?
- What organizations would you like to belong to?
- How much money would you like to make?
- What is your ideal job?
- What is your ideal weight?
- Where do you want to live?
- What languages do you want to speak?
- What kind of car do you want to drive?
- What foods would you like to try?

Get the picture...(pun intended!)

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#3 Believe in Yourself

The main reason people decide not to change a behavior is because they feel as if they do not deserve good in their lives. They feel guilty for past mistakes, regret past behaviors and now feel the need to suffer in mediocrity for the rest of their lives.

Believing in yourself begins with loving yourself. If you have children and I were to ask you if you loved your children, you would more than likely very quickly answer with a yes. Why is it that we can love an extension of ourselves so unconditionally but yet not love ourselves? For just a moment, be your own parent. Treat yourself as you would that child of yours. What is the first thing you would do for yourself? What is it that you most need at this moment? What do you need to do to get what you most need?



Our relationships with others are a mirror for us reflecting back how we feel about ourselves. Answer this question honestly: *If you were to say to your friends what you say to yourself and treat your friends the way you treat yourself, how many friends would you have?* That's what I thought...

The first step in self-love is taking the time to get to know yourself again. What do you enjoy doing? What do you like to eat? What and who makes you feel good? What is that one thing you like to do that when you do it you lose all sense of time? Begin to do those things again. Make a list of the things that you can do when you are feeling down, such as spend time in nature, go for a walk, drink a cup of tea, talk to a friend, listen to your favorite song, pet your cat, or if all else fails take three deep breaths. Make a list for when you are at work as well. It doesn't matter where you are, you can always choose to do something to make yourself feel better in the moment.

Take time out each day for you, even if you have to start at just 5 minutes a day (your time in the bathroom does not count!). Develop a routine that you can do daily, preferably at the same time every day. Pick a time of day when it is easiest for you where you have little distractions. Take this time and meditate, pray, say affirmations, read positive materials or exercise. Do these things alone and do them just for you. You do not need permission from anyone but YOU to love yourself. Remember, you do not take care of what you do not value. Value yourself enough to start to take care of you again.

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As time passes, you will begin to feel good about yourself. Naturally, you will begin to feel worthy of having good things in your life. You will be open to receiving the gifts that are being showered upon you in the form of opportunities. You will now begin to see these opportunities and have the esteem to act on them. Your self-image will be forever changed.

Why is having self-love, feeling worthy and having high self-esteem important in changing your behaviors? When you feel good about yourself, you feel as if you can do anything. You are thinking clearly, trust your own thinking, know what you want and don't want, and are in touch with your strengths and Divine gifts. You now believe in yourself and are making choices from a higher place. You are no longer afraid of what others may think and will change your behaviors to fit *your* needs now, not theirs.

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#4 Control Your Thoughts

The mind is powerful. We have only recently tapped into the mysteries of the mind and research says that we are using a mere 10% of the actual capacity of our mind. In order to truly understand how you can successfully control and change your thoughts and behaviors, a basic knowledge of how the mind works is needed.



For the purposes of this discussion, we are going to discuss the conscious and subconscious mind. Your conscious mind is your filter. It is the part of your brain that receives stimuli all day long through what we see, hear, touch, think and feel. We get bombarded with thousands of stimuli every day and can never possibly process it all. This is where the conscious mind comes into the picture. This is where you make your choices. When a stimulus comes into your conscious mind, it has the ability to choose whether to accept or reject the information it has received. This choice of whether the information was accepted or rejected then filters to the subconscious mind.

Your subconscious mind is a bit different. This part of your brain is where the majority of the functions of your body that are automatic are controlled; breathing, digestion, your heart beat and many others. When the conscious mind makes a choice, that choice then filters to the subconscious mind. The subconscious mind does not have the ability to choose; it only accepts the information it receives from the conscious mind. It does not know the difference between what you want and don't want, right and wrong, or good and bad. It assumes that what you choose in your conscious mind is your truth...no matter what it is. The subconscious then takes this information and translates it into a behavior.

In addition, the majority of your conditioning sits in the subconscious mind. Did you ever hear someone say that the best time to teach a foreign language to someone is when they are a child? Did you ever wonder why that is? The answer has to do with the rate at which the mind develops. The conscious part of your brain is not fully developed until around 7 years of age. That means that your filter, your ability to accept or reject information, was not intact all of the years before you were seven. So, anything you experienced, saw, heard or felt by-passed the conscious mind and went directly to your subconscious mind. You had no filter. Some of the experiences that sit there are good (23%) but the majority of them are not (77%) and work against you on a daily basis.

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In order to be able to change your behaviors, you first need to be aware of and then change the thoughts running through your head. If the majority of your thoughts are self-deprecating and negative in nature, I would venture to guess that the majority of your behaviors and experiences are along those same lines. Not only do your thoughts dictate your behaviors, but they also send signals to the Universe as to what it can do to help what you want come to pass. We are energy beings, made up of cells that vibrate and are filled with all kinds of energy. Our thoughts are energetic and depending on the level of thought, we send out either high vibration (positive) or low vibration (negative) signals to the Universe. Our Universe functions via the law of attraction, which states that like attracts like. So it follows that if you have a negative thought you can expect a negative experience. Why would it be any different, if you understand how the mind works? You had an experience, chose in your conscious mind to accept or reject it, that then told your subconscious mind what your choice (truth) was, the subconscious mind dictated a behavior to match the thought and then that behavior sent a signal to the Universe for help in making more of that same experience come to pass because it assumed, because you were thinking it, that was what you wanted.

Let's use an example to make this clearer. I give you a compliment and tell you that you look great in the color you are wearing. This information enters your conscious mind and you decide to reject the information and say to yourself, "she is just saying that. I know I look bad in this color." Your choice then filters to the subconscious mind and it dictates for you to behave accordingly. Maybe you act shy, decide not to respond to the compliment or avoid being around me in the future. The Universe then gets this signal and assumes that this is the experience you want so it sends you more opportunities to experience that same thing...more situations where you get compliments that you can choose to reject or experiences where people put you down and treat you as you treat yourself...unworthy of a compliment.

Begin to pay attention to the thoughts that run through your mind on a daily basis. Write them down if you have to. Ask yourself where they came from? Are they yours? How does having that thought make you feel? Is the thought true? What would you rather think? Notice what behaviors and actions stem from each thought. Remember, your thoughts become things. In other words, every thought leads to a behavior. The life you see now is simply the conglomeration of all of your thoughts. 80% of what we think is a lie. It is that small part of you trying to run the show. Engage your bigger self and change your thoughts.

Don't believe everything you think.



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#5 Use Your Feelings as a Guide

Society has done a pretty good job in teaching us that expressing our feelings is a sign of weakness. Using them as a guide to make decisions is unheard of in most circles, especially business.

Feelings are powerful tools. They are the language of the Universe and a physical manifestation of guidance pointing us in the right direction. Our ability to feel deeply is what makes us human. If you feel something that you interpret as bad, all that means is that at one point in your life you must have felt something good or you would not know that this thing was bad. All feelings have a place and purpose. We need to feel the entire gamut of them in order to really experience being human. As long as we are aware of what feeling we are experiencing, we should allow it to surface instead of hiding it; then, we can use our feelings as tools to help us make decisions to change our behaviors and to know where we are on our path to success.



We spent some time in step #4 discussing the power of our thoughts. Our thoughts and feelings are a powerful combination. If you remember, every thought leads to a feeling and every feeling leads to a behavior/action. Monitoring your thoughts and changing the ones that are not serving you is a must. But, paying attention to your feelings and what they are trying to tell you is even more important.

Your feelings are your guidepost telling you if you are on the path to right behaviors. What are the right behaviors? The behaviors that guide you to and keep you on your highest path...the ultimate path in which you came here to experience...your own personal mission.

Ultimately, there are two kinds of feelings, good and bad. Most people would agree that they want to feel good most of the time. But, the bad feelings also serve a purpose. As humans, we learn mostly through pain. Pain is one of the biggest motivators we have at our disposal. We do not like to experience pain, but the key to experiencing less pain is to look at our painful experiences, take away the lesson we are supposed to learn from it and then leave the painful experience behind. That way, more than likely, we will not have to experience that experience again in the same way. Most of us, unfortunately, carry the entire experience with us for our

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whole lives, never learning the lesson and feeling bitter and angry which causes more unwanted behaviors.

In order to manage your behaviors, you must manage your thoughts and feelings. You can think a good thought all day long but just thinking the thought does not change the behavior. If we use the analogy of a car, the thought is like the car and the feeling is like the gas in the car. Without the gas, the car is going nowhere. Without a feeling behind it, the thought goes nowhere. Remember how we discussed that our thoughts are vibrational in nature and get pushed out into the Universe so they can deliver more of the same experiences which match that thought? What pushes the thought out into the Universe is the feeling behind the thought. The feeling drives the behavior.

We make all of our decisions emotionally. Those of you who are analytical in nature are arguing with me right now. Decisions are logical, right? We must use our brain and analyze a decision at all angles in order to come up with the right decision, right? Wrong. Everything in your life is driven by a feeling. Where you work, the car you drive, the mate you are with...everything. When you decide to buy a new car, leave a job or find a new mate it is due to the fact that your feelings towards that thing or person have changed. You make your decision based on how you feel. Even though you may have bought your car for all of the right logical reasons, all of those reasons made sense to you because of how they made you feel. You feel safe with antilock brakes, comfortable with air conditioning, smart because it is good on gas, rich because it is a sports car, etc. How you feel drives everything you do...or don't do.

Pay attention to how you feel throughout the day. Ask yourself when you are faced with a decision, "how does this feel?" How does this place feel? How does this job feel? How does dating this person feel? How does choosing this specific behavior feel? Trust your gut and if it feels good, go for it. If it feels bad, don't. If you don't know or have a mixed feeling, wait. The answer will come.

More than likely, the behaviors you currently have that are not working for you feel bad when you act them out. Ask yourself, "in this situation, how would I rather feel and what behavior will make me feel that way?" Practice using your feelings as a guide to help you decide how to behave. After any behavior, ask yourself how you feel. Do you feel good? Peaceful? Satisfied? If you feel any bad feeling after a certain behavior, more than likely you let your feelings get the best of you and acted out of old habit and it is not a behavior that is in alignment with your highest path. You know down deep when a feeling is a result of a reaction to old wounds. Those feelings never feel good nor do they ever bring you good behaviors and outcomes.



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Use each situation as a learning experience. We were never meant to be perfect...only whole.



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#6 Re-frame Your Limiting Beliefs

Steps 1-5 have helped you become aware of your current behaviors, instilled a much higher belief in yourself, and helped you to identify what you want, what you are thinking and what you are feeling. Now the fun begins!

Knowing what you want is a pivotal part of this next step. When you have a clear idea of what you want out of life, what type of person you want to become and what you want to do with the rest of your life, it then makes it very easy to replace those old thoughts and behaviors with new ones that are more in alignment with the new you.



The next step is to identify the limiting beliefs, the lies you tell yourself, and re-frame them. We are creatures of habit and our attitudes and the thoughts we have are all habits. A stimulus presents itself and a reaction is triggered. The key is to *respond* and not react. Reacting is a knee-jerk type response that comes from the habits in your subconscious mind. Responding involves pausing before you act, thinking about the highest choice and then acting accordingly.

Let's say, for instance, that I grew up in a household where yelling was commonplace. This caused me to have the behavior of yelling when I was stressed or feeling any bad emotion. If an employee walks into my office when I am in the middle of working on a project, if I react out of habit, I yell at them and tell them to leave. Not a behavior that will win me the "Manager of the Year" award. If, however, when the employee walks in my office, I pause, am aware that my first reaction is to want to yell but instead of yelling I take a breath, remember that yelling is not a favorable behavior and choose to ask the employee nicely to come back when I am finished with my project, I have just *responded*. This is the idea of re-framing a limiting belief. My limiting belief in this instance was yelling gets people's attention and gets me what I want. Instead, I re-framed my action.

We can also do this with thoughts. By re-framing thoughts, you automatically re-frame the behaviors that follow. The first step is to be aware of the thoughts you have that are limiting you in one way or another. Make a list of all of your limiting thoughts. Some examples are:

- I will never be able to lose weight.
- I never have enough money to pay my bills.
- No one will ever want to date me.
- When I talk nobody listens.
- The world is out to get me.

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- Nothing ever goes my way.
- No one will hire me at my age.

We all have our own personal ones and most of them come from our conditioning. A great place to start is to think about all of the things your parents used to say to you. The don'ts of our childhood almost always become the can'ts of our adulthood.

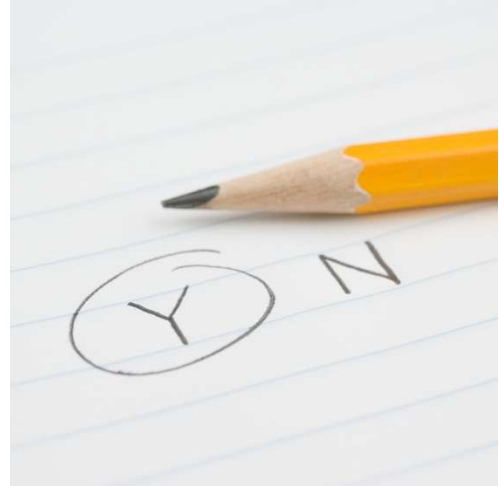
Take one limiting belief at a time, read it and identify how it makes you feel. Is it a true statement? Can you be absolutely sure it is true? Now, what would you rather feel? What do you need to think/believe to feel that way? What does the new behavior look like that is associated with this new belief? Write down this new statement. Whenever you catch yourself thinking the old thought, stop, take a breath and repeat the new phrase with the feeling behind it. (Remember it is the feeling that causes movement). This process takes time and patience. Remember, your thoughts and behaviors are habits. Habits you have had most of your life so they will take time to re-frame. Be patient and keep at it. Take one limiting belief at a time. It takes 30-45 days to create a new habit, which is nothing compared to how long you have carried around this habit!

Self-development work is not easy. It takes determination and a willingness to change. Keep in the forefront of your mind the reason changing a particular behavior or thought is important to you. Use that as your motivation when things seem hard. Changing is not easy but it is always worth it and the only constant we have in our lives.

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#7 Make a Different Choice

Your life consists of all of the choices you have made up to this point in your life. Your future is determined by the choices you make today. It is not possible to make a different choice if you are not aware of what needs to change. Some behaviors you may want to change and others you may not, or you may not be ready to change. Either way, by this point you have realized what you need to do to begin the process of becoming aware of your current behaviors and thoughts and making a decision as to whether or not you would like to change.



As you live your life day to day, take on an attitude of self-awareness. Ask yourself questions such as, "Why did I respond the way that I did?" "What other behavior could I have chosen in that instance?" "What assumptions did I make that lead me to that behavior?" Being self-aware is a decision you need to make every day when you wake up, much like the addict needs to make a decision daily to be clean.

Listen to your gut instinct, or intuition, allowing it to guide you using your feelings to let you know if you are on the right path to changing your behaviors. One easy way to do this is to ask yourself the following question:

If I could only feel one feeling for the rest of my life and no others, what feeling would I choose?

Think before you answer this question. Happy is not a deep enough response. My one feeling is inner peace. Now, as you go about your day being self-aware you can check in with yourself to see if you are on the right path to changing by asking yourself this question:

Does this choice bring me (fill in your one feeling answer here)?

If you go to behave in a certain way, pause first and ask yourself that question. If you get a yes, proceed. Your higher self has told you through your feelings you are on the right path. Be honest with yourself. Do not ignore a bad feeling or a no answer to this question. If the answer happens to be no, then a different choice is in order.

Using your feelings to guide you is a practice of living from your heart and not your head. Our minds are a great tool but we do not need to use them for everything.

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Much like the hammer in your tool box, just because you have a hammer does not mean you use it for every job. As a friend once told me, aim with your heart and steer with your mind. Expect miracles to happen!

Below are some affirmations you can use during your process of change:



I am perfect and worthy of positive change in my life.

I trust the process of life and allow my feelings to guide me to positive behavior change.

I am perfect and whole.

I am a person who (fill in here the behavior change you are seeking).

Perfect behaviors are my reality in each moment.

I trust myself to make positive behavior choices.

Now create some of your own affirmations. Remember to make them positive and present tense. Write them as if the change you want has already come to pass. Feel what that feels like and once you have the feeling in your heart, read the affirmation.

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It has been my pleasure to share this behavior change guide with you and wish you well on your continued success to positive behavior change.

Need help in changing some hard-wired behavior patterns?

Learn how you can be personally coached by me to help you obtain lasting behavior change! Visit us at www.ChrisSopa.com/Coaching.

I look forward to talking with you soon!

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