

## Make Small Adjustments

The wonderful (and terrible) thing about human behavior is that it tends to support itself. Lives fall into behavioral patterns. We do what we do, because it's what we've always done. This can become problematic for all the reasons described: we can fall into psychologically rigid habits. But small behavioral direction changes can build to create a huge change in direction over time. The trick is to calibrate your efforts.

Initially it's best to make changes that are simple and quick. If you want to read more and watch television less, start with no television after work until you've read for 30 minutes. Even if the commitment you've decided on is small, it can help to make it smaller still. Make it 15 minutes of reading, or cut out a single show you think is mindless but you find yourself watching anyway (do you really need to see more back episodes of "Cupcake Wars"?).

It does not matter how small it is. You're making progress.

There are exceptions to every rule. You cannot leap across a canyon in two steps. For example, if you've tried the well-established harm reduction approach to dealing with an addiction and it did not work, it may be time to make a full-stop commitment to sobriety. That's a case of tailoring which methods you practice to suit your challenge. The good news is that psychological flexibility skills help with such challenging leaps.