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| Breaking a Bad Habit |
| Mindful Planning |
| * Think about why you want to break your bad habit
	+ Imagine all the ways it will improve your life, your health, and sense of well-being.
	+ What are your top 3 reasons?
	+ Write them down to remind yourself; be very specific.
* What is stopping you? Do you make excuses for not changing?
	+ Write down your top 3 stumbling blocks/excuses to successful change
* To learn what prompts your bad habit, maintain a written record for one week, including:
	+ Time of day
	+ Where you are
	+ Who you are with. Are you usually alone? With a friend? In a crowded room?
	+ What kind of mood you’re in. Write down your feelings at the time. Are you angry? Nervous? Bored? Depressed?
	+ Read and think about what you write down. What does this habit do for you? Is it a reaction to feelings of anger, anxiety, boredom, stress?
* Decide you will give your very best effort. Say: “I will give my best effort every day”
* Write down your goal
* Write down some alternative behaviors that you could do instead of the habit that would be a more positive way to deal with the feelings or situation. Pick one you want to practice
* Set a specific date to begin
	+ Mark it in bold on your calendar
	+ Give yourself at least 1-2 weeks to prepare. Planning will dramatically improve your chances for success
	+ Pick a date when your stress level is likely to be low. In other words, don’t try to change all your bad habits when you’ve just lost your job or when you are going through a divorce
	+ Your birthday or anniversary, your child’s birthday, or other personal date might be a meaningful time to start
* Before your scheduled date to begin, remove (from your home, car, workplace, etc) triggers or items you associate with your bad habit (refer to your worksheet)
* Involve someone else in your effort – misery loves company
* Tell family and friends your plan and ask for their support. Don’t’ be shy. This is a very important and powerful step. Tell them your objective and start date. Tell them what they can do to help you such as catching you doing it, or saying a chosen word to remind you
* Try to catch yourself when you find yourself doing the habit, stopping yourself as soon as you become aware of it. Start the alternative behavior you chose to do instead. Aim to do this as often as possible. The more you practice a new behavior, the more it becomes the new, learned habit your new behavior.
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| Aftermath |
| * The greatest risk for relapse is the first three months after breaking a bad habit. Try to integrate stress reduction into your daily life.
* If you engage in your bad habit after your quit date, don’t give up. Instead, think of what you can learn from this. Review what led you to break your plan. Were you alone, or with others?
* How were you feeling before and after that snack? Did something happen that triggered the slip, such as a stressful time at work or a family fight? Think about what lead to the slip and plan a new strategy to deal with it.
* Be patient with yourself. Do not be tough on yourself. Beating yourself up is another bad habit to be broken.
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|  Planning Worksheet for Breaking My Bad Habit |
| Name:       | Date:       |
| Why do I want to break my bad habit? |
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| What is stopping me from breaking it? |
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| When I tried to break it in the past, what helped and what didn’t? |
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| What situations will be toughest for me while breaking my habit? How will I handle them? |
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| Who will I involve for support? |
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| What triggers do I need to remove (from home, car, work, etc) before my Target Date? |
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| Where will I post reminders before my Target Date (work, home, car, other)? |
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| What else will I do before my Target Date |
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| What ways can I still get pleasure after I break my bad habit? |
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| My Target Date to break my bad habit |
| Date: | Click Date |
| Personal significance about this date:       |
| Identify Your Bad Habit Triggers |
| Name:       | Date:       |
| **Date** | **Time** | **Where I exhibit my bad habit** | **Who I am with** | **My mood** **(anger, nervous, depressed, happy, etc.)** |
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