



## Don't Make Change Too Complicated: Instead Just Begin

By Doug Lisle, PhD  
August 14 2012

My good friend Debbie called me the other day and asked for a little motivational help. She was struggling with giving up caffeinated tea, and asked me for the secret to giving up bad habits. She was setting in for a long explanation, figuring this had to be complicated, but with enough insight, she might just find the motivation to quit the habit.

I told her there *was* a secret, and to get ready. “OK”, she said, “I’m ready.”

So I told her the secret. It is to *just begin*.

Too often, we overcomplicate the process of change. We wait for a great moment, turning point, an inspiration. Forget it. *Just begin*. You might not finish. You might not stick with it. You may not beat the problem this month or this year. Who cares? You want to get rid of a bad habit? Just begin.

I told Debbie I could help her right then, but we would have to “commit a crime.” She laughed. What did I mean?

“Go get out your tea, bring it over to the sink while we are talking, and get some scissors,” I said. She laughed nervously. “I can’t believe you are making me do this!”

I had her cut the tea bags, and put them down the disposal. Gone. Poof. Kaput. Now she could just begin. I pointed out that if she wanted to change her mind, she could run to the store tomorrow and get some more tea, no problem. Well, that was two weeks ago, and guess what? She hasn’t bought any more, and she is kicking her habit. She’s begun.

Don’t wait for the golden moment. The turning point. The magic key. There isn’t one. If you want to change something in your life, don’t plan to change the whole thing at once and “really get into this.” Forget it. Just begin. Once you start, you just might build a little momentum. Commit a crime or two....toss some of the

junk down the sink. Clean out the cupboard a little. A little crime can help get you going.

And a little saintly behavior can help too. Can’t get into an “exercise program?” Then don’t. Just begin. Six pushups, eight situps, a little jogging in place until you are tired. Right in your living room. You can begin right now....and in just a few minutes, you have discovered the great secret to change.

***Ready to get started?*** *Learn more about the life-saving [plant-based diet](#), access hundreds of delicious [free recipes](#), buy and download our convenient [app](#), and register for our [online cooking course](#)!*