



IDENTIFYING BAD HABITS

Identifying bad habits/mental flaws will give you the opportunity to replace them with something more helpful. Many of these flaws have become a habit because we have been doing them for so long and for one reason or another our brain thinks they are helpful when they're not. Look at the list below to help you identify which bad habits or mental flaws you have which make playing freely and confidently almost impossible.

Common Examples:

Overthinking

Anxiety

Anger

Complaining/Blaming

Comparing

Impatience

Rumination

Seeking Revenge

Changing Strategy

Distraction

Panic-Practicing

Self Criticism

Entitlement

Relying on Past Success

Other Opinions

Perfectionist

Dwelling on Mistakes

I just have bad luck

Making up from a bad start

High Expectations

Playing Tight

Too focused on Results

Playing Too Safe

Will Power (Just do it)

More Training is Better

Need to Validate Effort

Should Statements

Self-Loathing

Doubt

Example

Habit	Overthinking
Trigger	Make a mistake
Behavior	Overthink Mechanics
False Reward	Feeling like I am "doing something" to prevent the mistake from happening again

Habit	Self-Criticism
Trigger	
Behavior	
False Reward	

Now pick 3 of your own bad habits or mental flaws you feel are holding you back the most. Write down what triggers these behaviors and why your mind might find these behaviors helpful.

Habit	
Trigger	
Behavior	
False Reward	

Habit	
Trigger	
Behavior	
False Reward	

Habit	
Trigger	
Behavior	
False Reward	

Identify What The Bad Habits Actually Do For You (Part 2)

Part 2 is your opportunity to detach from this old habit. Asking yourself two simple questions you'll find below will help your brain recognize these mental flaws aren't as helpful as you once thought.

1. What does it feel like to engage in this behavior?

2. What do I get from this behavior?

Example

Habit	Overthinking
Trigger	Make a mistake
Behavior	Overthink Mechanics
False Reward	Feeling like I am "doing something" to prevent the mistake from happening again

What does it feel like to engage in this behavior?

Forced, confused and angry. Feels like I'm lost and don't know what to do.

What am I getting from this behavior?

It makes me second guess. Makes me feel like I should be perfect and makes it hard to commit to competing and focusing in the moment.

Habit	Self-Criticism
Trigger	
Behavior	
False Reward	

What does it feel like to engage in this behavior?

What am I getting from this behavior?

Insert your 3 mental flaws chosen in part 1 and fill out the corresponding questions below.

Habit	
Trigger	
Behavior	
False Reward	

What does it feel like to engage in this behavior?

What am I getting from this behavior?

Habit	
Trigger	
Behavior	
False Reward	

What does it feel like to engage in this behavior?

What am I getting from this behavior?

Habit	
Trigger	
Behavior	
False Reward	

What does it feel like to engage in this behavior?

What am I getting from this behavior?

Replacing Bad Habits with Grounding, Curiosity, Acceptance, Adjusting (Part 3)

Part 3 is about replacing the reward of a bad habit with something more helpful for your mind. Once you recognize your negative thinking habit don't just tell yourself to stop, this is unproductive. You recognize the habit, take a deep breath to ground yourself, be curious why you're engaging in the habit again.

Example

Habit	Overthinking
Trigger	Make a mistake
Behavior	Overthink Mechanics
False Reward	Feeling like I am "doing something" to prevent the mistake from happening again

What does it feel like to engage in this behavior?

Forced, confused and angry. Feels like I'm lost and don't know what to do.

What am I getting from this behavior?

It makes me second guess. Makes me feel like I should be perfect and makes it hard to commit to competing and focusing in the moment.

Now we replace our old habit with a better and more effective option

1. **Ground Yourself:** Focus on a deep breath. This serves as an anchor and brings you to the present moment (the place where our best performance is located).
2. **Be Curious:** Hmm, how interesting that I think overthinking will help me play better when what it really does is make me robotic/slow/anxious.
3. **Find Acceptance:** I am accepting the mistake, accepting I was overthinking about the mistake as well.
4. **Fact to Flexible:** "The fact is I made a mistake, and I am bummed about it.....and (Flexible).....I have to accept it and focus on my new intention/plan."

Habit	Self-Criticism
Trigger	
Behavior	
False Reward	

What does it feel like to engage in this behavior?

What am I getting from this behavior?

New Habit:

1. Ground yourself:
2. Be curious:
3. Accept:
4. Fact to Flexible:

Add in your 3 flaws from part 1 and part 2:

Habit	
Trigger	
Behavior	
False Reward	

What does it feel like to engage in this behavior?

What am I getting from this behavior?

New Habit:

1. Ground yourself:
2. Be curious:
3. Accept:
4. Fact to Flexible:

Habit	
Trigger	
Behavior	
False Reward	

What does it feel like to engage in this behavior?

What am I getting from this behavior?

New Habit:

- 1. Ground yourself:**
- 2. Be curious:**
- 3. Accept:**
- 4. Fact to Flexible:**

Habit	
Trigger	
Behavior	
False Reward	

What does it feel like to engage in this behavior?

What am I getting from this behavior?

New Habit:

- 1. Ground yourself:**
- 2. Be curious:**
- 3. Accept:**
- 4. Fact to Flexible:**

Putting it all Together: (Part 4)

Now you're probably wondering, how am I supposed to remember all this information in the middle of a stressful game?

The answer is this. By filling out this packet you are simply bringing awareness and acknowledgment to your old and unhelpful habits and patterns. Here is where you take your time understanding your impact on you and your performance. The more you go over your bad habits here the quicker you will have access to change them in real time. Once you have a strong idea of a bad habit you can use the 4A method in real time during any competition.

Keep in mind just like your sport, you will have to train this skill many times before you become the master of it. Do not give up on this, I promise if you stay committed and practice practice practice, you will see immense benefits in your mental game going forward.

The 4A Method is simply a shortened version of all the information learned earlier in the packet

4As:

- 1. Awareness-** You must first be aware of the signs both internally and externally which indicate you're about to fall victim to one of your bad habits that lead to poor performance.
- 2. Acceptance-** Sit in and accept your current experience without trying to change, stop, fight or ignore it.
- 3. Acknowledge-** Nonjudgmentally acknowledge you are engaged in a bad habit even though you have recognized this is unhelpful to you and your performance.
- 4. Adjust-** State the fact of the current circumstance and adjust your focus back on what you want to see and do in this very moment.



 [239] 355-4954   athleticmindperformance  eric@athleticmindperformance.com

www.athleticmindperformance.com