



A Simple 4 step strategy to help stop positive habits from sabotaging your mental health



Okay, let's dig straight into the simple 4 step technique I promised to share with you.

I call the strategy the NSDR technique.

The NSDR Technique for coping better emotionally in Life and Relationships

NSDR is simply an acronym for the steps within the strategy

N stands for Notice it.

S stands for Stop it.

D stands for Do something opposite or alternative,

R stands for Review and repeat

So how does it work exactly?

Step 1: Notice it



What are we noticing here?

You want to start noticing when you are using the positive habits that you have highlighted as problematic.

But before you can start noticing them, you need to label them so you can see them clearly.

Start by writing down five of these habits. (I will just be working with one example to illustrate how the process works.)

[You can use this list of 36 positive habits as a guide](#)

Example Positive Habit:

I like helping people

Then in order to ascertain if these positive habits are actually contributing to your anxiety or depression, consider the possible disadvantages they are bringing into your life.

Example Related Problem from habit of helping people:

- I am inundated with too much to do.
- I don't have time for myself and my loved ones.
- I keep neglecting the important things.
- Stressed because I end up with so many deadlines.
- Feel depressed because I can't cope with everything I have to do.

Important note:

It is essential to see how the positive habit is clearly connected to your problems with anxiety and depression before moving on.

Once completed, the next step is to pay more attention to yourself. You want to notice whenever you fall into using this positive habit.

When you notice, the positive habit come into play, you apply the next step.

And the next step of the NSDR technique is “Stop it.”

Step 2: Stop it

Here, stopping literally means you just stop, take a step back and think about what you are doing or about to do.



Try to stop yourself from going into auto pilot mode with the habit.

You will most likely find that trying to stop is easier said than done.

Why is this so?

It's because some positive habits come jam packed with intense distressing emotions. This surge of emotions makes you feel like you are about to do something wrong.

Interestingly, that wrong and threatening sensation you feel in this case actually signifies that you are on the right path.

It's time to move to the next step.

Step 3: Do something opposite or alternative.



Continuing with our example of the habit of helping people.

If you are one to hate letting people down, stopping yourself from automatically saying yes when someone asks for help would make you feel extremely uncomfortable.

It feels like you are about to hurt someone and most likely do damage to your reputation as a good, friendly and reliable person.

So, doing something opposite or alternative to your positive habits might feel like too much to take on initially.

At this stage, remember to keep your main goal in mind. Your main reason for doing all of this is that you want to avoid

relapse, and live a life where you are not constantly sacrificing everything in order to keep well.

Now for step 3, you need to answer the two following questions correctly.

Question 1. Should you go for an opposite or alternative action?

If the opposite sounds totally wrong, then you should go for an alternative action.

Question 2. Which opposite or alternative action should you take?

Here is an example to clarify what I mean.

Let's say that my positive habit is that I over love my kids and this turns them into spoilt brats.

What would be an opposite action?

The opposite action of love is hate.



I certainly can't hate my kids, can I?

Obviously, no.

So, what would be an alternative action to take.

Whilst still loving them, I could add in some discipline when they've done bad. Or I could hold back on giving them things sometimes. This helps me to introduce an alternative action.

Applying this Idea to our initial example of helping others too much, what opposite or alternative action will help balance things out and reduce the pressure?

Well you could say no more often, but not all the time.

You could say, I am busy right now, but I am willing to help you out latter.

Or you could go for the FULL OPPOSITE and also start asking other people to help you out too, since you are most likely prone to helping others but not asking for help yourself.

And now, it's time to move on to the final step.

Step 4: Review and Repeat.



In step for you review the progress you are making keep tweaking your action plan until you notice that you are feeling more able to maintain things without collapsing under the pressure.

Whenever you find yourself stuck or threatened by something in your life, be mindful that there is often a positive habit lurking somewhere, getting in the way and making it harder to cope better in that situation.

Then all you have to do is repeat the whole system.

Find out what positive habits are sabotaging you.

Find out the best opposite or alternative action to those strengths.

Now once you arrived at your new plan, view it as an experiment.

Whenever you **NOTICE** yourself using that habit again, do your best to **STOP**. Take a step back and think about what you are doing. Remember that the strength could be sabotaging you.

Then your next step is to **DO** the opposite or alternative reaction to what you usually do.

Finally, you **REVIEW** the outcome of your plan then make changes and keep on using the changes.

And that's The NSDR Technique for coping better emotionally in work life and relationships.

Tomorrow, I'll be sending you another exciting email.

If you've ever been stuck in a situation where you feel like there's simply too much crap going on in your life that you can't stop

thinking negatively or you are constantly left feeling emotionally wrecked.

Then I am sure you'll love the next email you'll be getting from me tomorrow. So keep an eye out.

Until then, bye for now.

Adewale