

Summary of Counteragents

Cognitive Counteragents

1. **Contemplation** – Make conscious decisions about who you want to be and how you want to conduct yourself. Successful contemplation results in a total internal commitment as to how you intend to proceed (see #2 below).
2. **Precommitment** – This is where the results of your Contemplations become actionable commitments. You will have to decide what your commitments to yourself actually mean – are they commitments or mere suggestions?
3. **Growth Mindset** – According to Dr. Carol Dweck, you're either stuck in a fixed mindset that makes transformation an arduous process, or you're in a mindset that promotes growth and evolution. How you view yourself, others, and the work of changing are vastly different depending on your mindset. The website has a table comparing the Fixed and Growth mindsets.

How do you change from one to the other? Easy. You simply become aware of the fixed mindset and use volition (your will) to shift to the other. Yes, your mind is that flexible. You may, however, need to have a chat between your Great Self and the parts of your small self that are fearful or doubting because they don't know or trust the Great Self to get it done. What do they need?

Emotional Counteragents

Pain Signals – Remember: Changing is not about willpower (which doesn't even exist), it's about paying attention to the totality of the situation. It's painful to remain enslaved to habitual patterns, and you either get the skillful pain and discomfort you choose, or the unskillful pain and discomfort you don't. It's painful to act against your Great Self, so start paying attention to that. Do not, however, allow the mind to go to guilt or shame, as these merely help you stay stuck by telling yourself that you're too weak or worthless to rise to the occasion, which is simply not true. Or, allow yourself to be disgusted by the object or behavior – think about what eating garbage is doing to you, you'll get sick of it eventually now that you see it in its true light.

Liberating Signals – Pay attention to the good feelings of non-arrogant pride and freedom that you feel when you are stacking W's against your afflicted habitual patterns.

Emotional Mastery – You don't avoid situations, you avoid how you're going to feel in that situation. Emotions are controlling you and that will need to change. Use the tools in Chapter 7 until emotions mean nothing to you in terms of how you conduct yourself. They're just emotions, so get over them already – you've been controlled for long enough.

Behavioral Counteragents

Field Availability Reduction – If something triggers you into a behavior, get rid of it. Find another way home so you don't see the liquor store. Stop buying potato chips. If certain people encourage you to stay stuck, encourage them to help you change or avoid them if they aren't willing to support you.

Habitual Reaction Alteration – Program in a different response to the same cue. For example, if you get home from work and immediately sit on the couch, put your running shoes where you drop your work bag. Getting home now means going for a run, not sitting on the couch.

Wholesome Conflict – Add other elements to your life that will make remaining stuck in a particular pattern more difficult. If you want to stop vaping, start exercising. You'll get sick and tired of not being able to breathe.