

# **Epicurean strategies for dealing with bad habits and urges.**

**Post by “Martin” of November 24, 2025 at 5:35 AM**

Here are examples of what has worked for me:

Chocolate mousse:

In the past, I splurged on chocolate mousse at a buffet restaurant where I ate about once per week. Eating a lot of chocolate mousse was certainly a bad habit because of the high sugar content.

When the restaurant changed from a big bowl, from which I would take several portions per meal, to prefilled small cups, this helped in providing a simple way to measure and limit the consumption.

I found that 3 cups provided already the maximum pleasure of the moment and more would go into saturation. Later on, I took only two cups and partially compensated the loss of pleasure by eating other tasty food with no sugar added.

After a while of keeping to the temporary habit of eating only two cups, the urge for a third cup/lack of the related pleasure disappeared. So, I limited the intake to one cup per meal, whereby I chose the cup which appeared to be filled the most.

After a while, the craving for a second cup disappeared. Then, I chose the cup which appeared to be filled the least.

After a while, the craving for that small amount disappeared. I did not take any more chocolate mousse and no other sweetened dessert. I watched my colleagues eating multiple cups of chocolate mousse and other sweetened desserts, without that I would crave again for the chocolate mousse.

Alcohol:

As a young adult, I rarely drank alcohol but when I did, I sometimes did binge-drinking. Each hangover made me dislike the particular type of alcoholic drink for an increasingly longer period, and eventually the dislike became permanent. In this way, I lost the taste for lager beer, which was bad because it has been the most common social drink in my circles. I felt that losing the taste for an increasing number of alcoholic drinks was bad.

At middle age, I started to drink spirits moderately in the evening during the cool season and almost none during the hot seasons in Thailand. I used a measuring cup to measure the alcohol intake per occasion, observed up to what dose the aftereffects were acceptable and limited the intake to that dose.

Eventually, I got hypertonia, about 5 years ahead of my age group. I measured that at the established limit of alcohol intake, there was a slight but significant increase in blood pressure in the morning.

So, I reduced the limit to half of what I had established before. At that level, it still gave me a

little bit of a kick, so there was no big loss in pleasure.

Eventually, I went to a doctor, who prescribed blood pressure medicine, encouraged me to record my blood pressure daily, and answered "No" to my question whether I should discontinue drinking alcohol.

After preliminary retirement, my sleep deprivation disappeared because I could take naps at daytime. In turn, I could no longer fall asleep easily in the evening. I noticed that drinking spirits about half an hour before going to bed helped most of the time with falling asleep. As I monitor my blood pressure and treat it with medicine, I increased the alcohol intake to the limit which I had established in middle age. The further plan is to try to decrease the limit again as long as I can still easily fall asleep at bedtime.

In conclusion, measuring a "bad" habit accurately, observing the effects of dose variation and gradually establishing a healthier habit for better long-term pleasure (health) has worked well while keeping short-term pleasure high.