



## Break the Habit

### Do you ...

...bite your fingernails? ...use swear words? ...smoke cigarettes? ...say a particular phrase too much? ...twirl your hair? ...crack your knuckles? ...doodle during class?

Do you ever wish you didn't?

Bad habits can be really hard to break. Sometimes, even if you WANT to break the habit, something in your brain makes you keep doing it.

Choose one thing that you would like to change about yourself. Write down what it is, and how you will try to stop. Then over the course of the unit, try to break the habit.

Your struggle with a simple habit may help you understand how difficult it is to overcome an addiction, and what you learn in this unit about the molecular basis of drug abuse may help you understand why it is so difficult to break the habit.

Answer these questions before you begin, and then again at the end of the unit.

- Can you successfully break the habit?
- How difficult is it to change your habit?
- Is the habit harder to resist in any particular situation?
- Do you think that there is something in your brain that makes you want to do it?
- Do you realize that you are doing it before, during or after? What does this say about the habit?
- Do other members in your family do the same thing? Do you think that your habit is genetic or something that you have learned?