

Coping with Cravings and Urges

Reminder Sheet

- Urges are common in the recovery process. They are not a sign of failure. Instead, try to learn from them about what your craving triggers are.
- Urges are like ocean waves. They get stronger only to a point, then they start to go away.
- You win every time you defeat an urge by not using. Urges only get stronger if you give in and feed them. An urge will eventually weaken and die if you do not feed it.

Practice Exercises

For next week, make a daily record of urges to use drugs or drink, the intensity of those urges, and the coping behaviors you used.

1. Fill out the DAILY RECORD OF URGES TO DRINK
 - a. *Date*
 - b. *Situation*: Include anything about the situation or your thoughts or feelings that seemed to trigger the urge to drink.
 - c. *Intensity of thirst*: Rate your thirst, where 1 = none at all, 100 = worst ever.
 - d. *Coping behavior*: Use this column to note how you attempted to cope with the urge to drink. If it seems like it would help, note the effectiveness of your coping.
2. Below is an example of how to fill out the record form.

DAILY RECORD OF URGES TO DRINK

Date	Situation (include your thoughts and feelings)	Intensity of cravings (1-100)	Coping behaviors used
5/16/91	Was feeling stressed. Had a disagreement with my boss.	75	Shut myself in office and relaxed. Felt better after 20 minutes
5/17/91	Antsy at bed time. Trouble getting ready to go to bed.	60	Took a hot shower, listened to the relaxation tape. Shower better than tape.
5/18/91	Went to Andy's Diner for lunch, where I always used to order something to drink.	80	Ordered tonic with lime. It was a close call. Should have prepared in advance.
5/19/91	Pay day. Bob wanted to party after work.	68	Suggested we go for coffee. Bob agreed. Boy—was I surprised!

