

Stimulant treatment handouts

Calendars and Dots

It is useful to both you and your counselor to know where you are in the recovery process at all times. Marking a calendar as you go along helps in several ways:

- 1) It's a reminder of how you are doing with your effort to reduce stop your cocaine/meth use.
- 2) You can feel proud of your accomplishment.
- 3) Its hard to recognize your accomplishment unless you can measure your progress in short units of time.

Get a blank calendar page and put a sticker on each day you have been abstinent from cocaine and meth. Each day with a sticker is a success.

If you record your days free from cocaine/meth, this simple procedure will help you and your counselor see your progress more easily.

Drug-using Friends

The most common circumstance for use of stimulants is when you spend time with friends who use. Sometimes these people are long time good friends who were the people you used with during your involvement with stimulants. Sometimes, they are dealers and suppliers of stimulants. Sometimes they are sex partners or significant others. It really doesn't matter. People who are associated with stimulant use are major triggers for you.

People not associated with stimulant use

Cocaine/meth-using friends/acquaintances

Your ability to stop using cocaine/meth will be directly affected by which of these groups you spend time with. The decision to be around drug using friends is a decision to use cocaine/meth.

Getting Rid of Paraphernalia: Place of Safety

Drugs

It is critical to throw away any drugs you still have. Over time, you may have stashed drugs in many places, some you don't even remember. Your home, your car, and the places you go need to be as safe as you can make them.

1. Which rooms have stashes of drugs/alcohol/paraphernalia? _____

2. Where specifically would you likely find drugs/alcohol in your house? _____

3. How safe is your car? _____

Paraphernalia

Paraphernalia are items used for, or related to, your drug use. Paraphernalia can trigger intense cravings. It is important to get rid of all paraphernalia as early in your recovery as possible. Use the following checklist to remind yourself of items that you need to get rid

Vials

Pipes

Scales

Straws

Rum, Baking Soda, Chemicals

Other _____

Lighters/Torches

Spoons

Storage Boxes

Phone Numbers

Needles/Syringes

Other _____

“Detox” Smart Phones and remove all drug and sex contacts. Replace with recovery apps.

Trigger - Thought - Craving - Use

Triggers:

Triggers are the people, places, things, times of day and emotional states that have previously been associated with stimulant use. Triggers are created by an automatic conditioning process in the brain. They include: money, drug using friends, parts of town, phone numbers, drug paraphernalia, boredom and many other things.

Triggers lead to drug thoughts;

Once you have become triggered, you are likely to begin to think about using. You may consider if you should buy cocaine/meth, where you would get it, where you could get the money, how you could get to the drug and you might argue with yourself about why you should not use. However, the longer you think about it, the more likely you will begin to crave the drug.

Thoughts become cravings

Craving involves a physical reaction in your brain. It can happen quickly or can take 15-30 seconds to begin. Your heart rate will increase, you will start to feel increased energy, you will get a feeling in your stomach, but most importantly, you will feel a powerful urge to get the drug and use it.

The "Automatic" Process

With addiction to cocaine and meth, triggers, thoughts, cravings and use all seem to run together. However, the usual sequence goes like this:

TRIGGER → THOUGHT → CRAVING → USE

Once this starts is use inevitable? No!

1. To the extent possible, AVOID TRIGGERS
2. Don't spend time thinking about using cocaine/meth. Distract yourself
3. If you begin to crave have some strategies for "going through the craving" consider exercise, calling a sober friend, taking a walk, meditating.

External Trigger Questionnaire

1. Place a check mark next to activities or situations in which you frequently used stimulants. Place a zero (0) next to activities or situations in which you never have used stimulants.

Home alone Before a date After payday
 Home with friends During a date When you get your check
 Friend's home Before sex Going to the clinic
 Parties During sex After getting your dose
 Bars/Club After sex When you talk to a user
 Movies Before work After work
 When carrying money In a specific part of town
 With drug using friends When Driving At the park

2. List any other settings or activities where you frequently use stimulants.

3. List activities or situations in which you would not use stimulants.

4. List people you could be with and not use stimulants.

Internal Trigger Questionnaire

There are often certain feelings or emotions that trigger the brain to think about using drugs. Read the following list of emotions and indicate which of them might trigger (or used to trigger) thoughts of using for you:

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Afraid | <input type="checkbox"/> | Frustrated | <input type="checkbox"/> | Neglected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Angry | <input type="checkbox"/> | Guilty | <input type="checkbox"/> | Nervous |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Confident | <input type="checkbox"/> | Happy | <input type="checkbox"/> | Passionate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Criticized | <input type="checkbox"/> | Inadequate | <input type="checkbox"/> | Pressured |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Depressed | <input type="checkbox"/> | Insecure | <input type="checkbox"/> | Relaxed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Embarrassed | <input type="checkbox"/> | Irritated | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Excited | <input type="checkbox"/> | Jealous | <input type="checkbox"/> | Bored |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Exhausted | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lonely | | |

A. Circle emotional states that are: associated with your use of cocaine/meth

B. Has your use in recent weeks/months been:

1. Primarily tied to emotional conditions
 2. Routine and automatic without much emotional triggering.

C. Are there any times in the recent past in which you were attempting to not use and a specific change in your mood clearly resulted in your using chemicals? (i.e., You got in a fight with someone and used in response to getting angry.)

Yes No

If yes, describe: _____

Trigger Chart

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: List people, places, objects, or situations below according to their degree of association with stimulant or alcohol use.

0%
Chance of Using

100%
Chance of Using



Never Use

Almost Never Use

Almost Always Use

Always Use

These are "safe" situations.

These are low risk, but caution is needed.

These situations are high risk. Avoid if possible

Very high risk involvement means use

Be Smart; Not Strong

"I can be around cocaine. I am certain I don't want to use and once I make up my mind, I'm very strong."

"I have been doing well and I think it's time to test myself and see if I can be around friends who are using. It's just a matter of willpower."

"I think I can have a drink or smoke a joint and not use stimulants. I never had a problem with alcohol anyway."

Reducing/stopping your use of cocaine/meth does not depend on strength. People who are able to maintain abstinence do it by being smart. They know that the key to not using is to keep far away from relapse situations. The closer you get, the more likely a relapse becomes. Smart people stay off cocaine and meth by avoiding trigger situations as much as possible.

DON'T BE STRONG. BE SMART.

How smart are you being? Rate how well you are doing in avoiding relapse:

	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>
1. Scheduling	1	2	3	4
3. Keeping appointments	1	2	3	4
4. Avoiding triggers	1	2	3	4
5. Not Using alcohol	1	2	3	4
6. Avoiding cocaine/meth users	1	2	3	4
7. Avoiding drug use places	1	2	3	4
8. Exercising	1	2	3	4
9. Being Truthful	1	2	3	4

Scheduling

What is scheduling?

A schedule is a plan you make for yourself. Your schedule should reflect what you actually *will* do; not what you think you *should* do. Scheduling just means planning your behavior to leave less room for impulsive, addicted behavior. The first step in not continuing to be an alcoholic/addict is not acting like one.

Why should I schedule?

Schedules help provide structure. Your schedule is your structure. Without this support, getting life back under control is difficult and sometimes impossible.

When do I need to schedule?

Scheduling is a tool you will want to learn and use whenever life begins to overwhelm you. You cannot learn scheduling when you are in crisis.

Schedules change. You are not locking yourself into a schedule by simply making a plan. The idea is to schedule safe, healthy days. If you make changes, those changes should also be to non-addict, non-triggering activities. Your schedule is your safeguard.

Do I need to write it down?

Absolutely. If you write it down you will be more likely to follow it.

Daily/Hourly Schedule

Date: _____	Date: _____	Date: _____
7:00 _____	7:00 _____	7:00 _____
8:00 _____	8:00 _____	8:00 _____
9:00 _____	9:00 _____	9:00 _____
10:00 _____	10:00 _____	10:00 _____
11:00 _____	11:00 _____	11:00 _____
12:00 _____	12:00 _____	12:00 _____
1:00 _____	1:00 _____	1:00 _____
2:00 _____	2:00 _____	2:00 _____
3:00 _____	3:00 _____	3:00 _____
4:00 _____	4:00 _____	4:00 _____
5:00 _____	5:00 _____	5:00 _____
6:00 _____	6:00 _____	6:00 _____
7:00 _____	7:00 _____	7:00 _____
8:00 _____	8:00 _____	8:00 _____
9:00 _____	9:00 _____	9:00 _____
10:00 _____	10:00 _____	10:00 _____
11:00 _____	11:00 _____	11:00 _____

Notes/Reminders: _____

Addict Behavior

Addict behaviors are behaviors that are part of your drug using activities.. Learning to recognize when you are beginning to act like a drug user will help prevent relapse to cocaine/meth use.

Which of these behaviors do you think are related to your cocaine/meth use?

_____ Lying

_____ Stealing

_____ Being irresponsible (not meeting family/work commitments)

_____ Being unreliable (late for appointments, breaking promises, etc.)

_____ Being careless about health and grooming (wearing "using" clothes, stopping exercise, poor diet, messy appearance, etc.)

_____ Housekeeping gets sloppy

_____ Behaving impulsively (without thinking)

_____ Behaving compulsively (too much eating, working, sex, etc.)

_____ Changing work habits (working more, less, not at all, new job, change in hours, etc.)

_____ Losing interest in things (recreational activities, family life, etc.)

_____ Isolating (staying by yourself much of the time)

_____ Missing or being late for treatment

_____ Using other drugs or alcohol

Exercise

Exercise is an important tool in stopping cocaine/meth use. People who engage in regular physical exercise get better results in stopping stimulants than those who do not exercise.

Research has shown that exercise can help people stop using cocaine/meth by helping restore normal brain chemistry and helping people feel better.

Twenty to thirty minutes of aerobic exercise (such as dancing, walking, biking, weightlifting machines, jogging, tennis, swimming, or roller skating) stimulates endorphin production. It also provides other benefits that are extremely important to recovery. Below is a list of the benefits of exercise in this recovery process. Try building exercise into your schedule.

Regular exercise:

1. provides structure
2. aids stabilization of sleep process
3. improves spirit and mood
4. builds self-esteem
5. releases excess energy/invigorates when energy is low
6. helps prevent weight gain during recovery
7. offers an escape from stress

A. What type of exercise do you plan to do?

B. What will be your exercise schedule?

Relapse Analysis and Chart

If relapse happens, it is important to analyze the events surrounding it. By doing this, you can make necessary changes to avoid future relapse. Use the relapse analysis chart to help zero in on the causes of relapse.

Look at events over the week period preceding relapse. Note every change or stressor even if it doesn't seem relevant. Areas to look at are:

1. Career Events – events or change in status relative to a career or a job.
2. Personal Events – events or a change in the status of relationships with family/friends as well as other events or situations unrelated to any other category.
3. Treatment Events – events or a change in status of the regular treatment plans as well as transition from one phase of treatment to another.
4. Drug/Alcohol Related Behaviors – behaviors directly related to drug and alcohol consumption (e.g. drinking, going to bars, visiting a dealer)
5. Behavior Patterns – new or resumed addict behaviors that are part of addiction (e.g. lying, stealing, behaving compulsively, isolating, etc.)
6. Relapse Cognitions – thoughts that seem to condone or justify relapse, even if they were brief and seemed minor. Fantasies about using or the behaviors that go above with using. Dreams about drugs and drug use.
7. Health Habits Status – events or a change in status or routine of normal eating, sleeping, exercise, or grooming behaviors. Illness or injuries are particularly pertinent.

It is not likely that there will be significant events in every single category. It is important to get a picture of overall vulnerability before the actual relapse occurred.

Relapse Analysis Chart

Name: _____

Date of Relapse: _____

A relapse episode does not begin when drug ingestion occurs. Frequently there are pre-use events that occur, which are indicative of the beginning of a relapse episode. Using the chart below, note events occurring during the week immediately preceding the relapse being analyzed.

CAREER EVENTS	PERSONAL EVENTS	TREATMENT EVENTS	DRUG/ RELATED BEHAVIORS	BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS	RELAPSE COGNITIONS	HEALTH HABITS STATUS

FEELINGS RELATIVE TO ABOVE EVENTS

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28 - Staying Busy

Learning to schedule and to provide a structure of activities to support your recovery is an important first step in outpatient treatment. Staying busy doing things is important for several reasons:

Has free time ever been a trigger for you? _____

How could you respond to prevent relapse if the above happened to you? _____

When drug use gets severe enough, the user will often begin to isolate. Being around people is uncomfortable and annoying. Being alone results in fewer hassles.

Did you isolate when you used? _____

Does being alone now remind you of that experience? _____

Being involved with people and doing things keeps life more interesting.

What have you done lately to have fun? _____

When people are involved in an addict lifestyle, many of the things they used to do and people they used to do them with get left behind

How have you reconnected or built new activities and people into your life? _____

Sleep, Nutrition and Exercise

If you think of your body as an automobile, you can think of sleep, nutrition, and exercise as maintenance of the machine. When you are taking drugs and drinking your body takes a beating. Ask yourself the following questions regarding maintenance of your body on a regular basis:

1) **Am I getting enough sleep?**

It takes awhile for a regular sleep cycle to develop in recovery. You may need to try various means of learning to relax prior to going to bed, napping during the day, or using sleep inducing techniques to get yourself back into a healthy sleep cycle. Talk to your counselor or doctor if you're having trouble with sleep patterns.

2) **How am I doing with my diet?**

It is important to eat three balanced meals each day. It is easy to consume too much sugar or too much caffeine. Either of these can result in your feeling exhausted and stressed. Make sure you are not relying on short-term energy-producing foods to push you on when you need to rest.

3) **Am I exercising regularly?**

It is difficult to take time to exercise, especially when you're tired. However, the less exercise you get the more tired you will be. Don't plan an impossible exercise program but make it regular and aerobic. Exercise can make a major difference in reducing depression. Talk with your counselor about your exercise plan.

