




Tips for Avoiding Relapse




Try to control your exposure to triggers which may involve making sacrifices

- ▶ You have more control than your craving when you are not exposed to a trigger
 - ▶ Examples of a trigger:
 - ▶ Going to a party with alcohol
 - ▶ Hanging out with alcohol drinking friends
- ▶ If you used during a specific activity, such as watching a game on TV with friends, you may have to change your routines
 - ▶ Ex: Not watching the game, or making new friends
- ▶ It is not easy, but the sacrifices help in your recovery

Try to wait out urges to use and remind yourself that cravings will pass

- ▶ If you try to distract yourself for 30 minutes, it is likely that your craving will become less intense
 - ▶ It is easier to control even if it does not completely disappear
- ▶ It is similar to the feeling when you are sick and you cannot remember what it feels like to be not sick
 - ▶ However, if you give it time the feeling will go away





Replace drug use with new positive activities and come up with new rituals

- ▶ If you used to go out after school and drink, finding a new after school activity can occupy that time
- ▶ Boredom and inactivity during the time you used to spend with drugs can be dangerous
- ▶ Try joining a club or a sport that you enjoy
- ▶ If using alcohol or other drugs is how you celebrate holidays or major life events

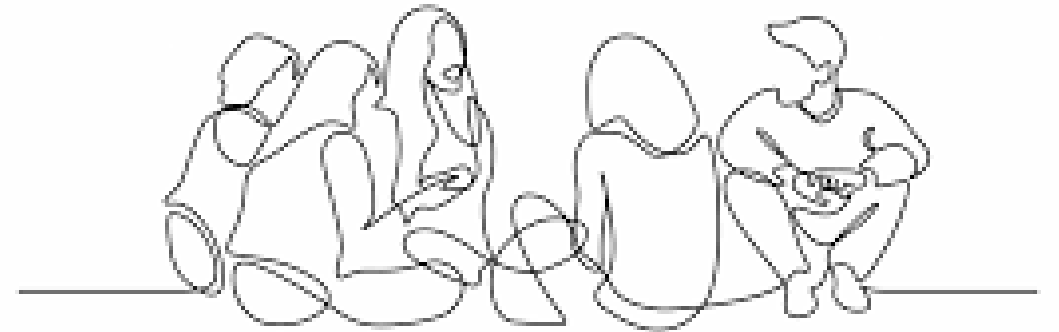
Don't try to do it alone

- ▶ Sharing your goals of sobriety with a friend can make a big difference
- ▶ Accountability is important and sharing can give you a friend that holds you accountable when you are making questionable decisions
 - ▶ Ex: If you say you want to hang out with your friends that are frequent drug users and you say you won't use, your friend can help you stay away and think of an alternative option
- ▶ Friends can also be there for support when you are struggling



Have a plan for when things get bad, because it is likely this will happen at some point

- ▶ Life gets hard, people lose their jobs and get heartbroken, and lose family
 - ▶ Keeping a plan of how to get through major life events without using drugs prior to these events happening



Don't become complacent with your sobriety

- ▶ If you someday consider having “just one drink at a party”, don't make that decision lightly
 - ▶ If you've struggled with addiction in the past, you are much more likely to develop an addiction again





If you do relapse, don't give up

- ▶ A lot of people find it helpful to keep track of how long they have been sober, but don't confuse this count with your true goal of leading a good life
 - ▶ You may be 100 days sober, but if you make a mistake and end up back at zero you are not starting over
 - ▶ You have gained knowledge, experience, and confidence, and slipping up is not a license to go on a binge