

## Practice Exercises for Managing Thoughts about Using

One way to cope with thoughts about using is to remind yourself of the benefits of not using, the unpleasant results of using, and the stumbling blocks or high-risk situations that may make it hard to keep your commitment to abstinence. Use this sheet to make a list of reminders in each category, then transfer this list onto a pocket-sized index card. Read this card whenever you start to have thoughts about using.

**List the POSITIVE benefits of NOT using:**

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**List the NEGATIVE, or unpleasant, effects of using:**

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**List stumbling blocks, or high-risk situations, to keeping commitment to abstinence:**

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**What is your overall level of personal commitment to remain abstinent?**

None    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10    Extremely

**Reminder: Here are several ways of managing your thoughts about using drugs:**

- a. Challenge your thoughts.
- b. Think of the benefits of not using.
- c. Remember unpleasant using experiences and after-effects.
- d. Distraction: Think of something unrelated to using.
- e. Positive thinking: Remind yourself of your success so far.
- f. Delay the decision to use for at least fifteen minutes.
- g. Leave or change the situation.
- h. Call someone and try to talk it out.