

Coping Skills for Cravings

Quick Strategies to Stay on Track

Cravings are a normal part of recovery. Use these evidence-based strategies to ride out the urge and stay on your path to healing.



Delay & Wait

Tell yourself you'll wait 10 minutes before acting on the craving. Often, the urge will pass. Repeat as needed.



Deep Breathing

Practice 4-7-8 breathing: inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 7, exhale for 8. This calms your nervous system.



Distract & Engage

Shift focus with an enjoyable activity: read, listen to music, watch a video, or start a creative project.



Urge Surfing

Notice the craving as a wave—observe it rising and falling without judgment. You don't have to act on it.



Hydrate & Nourish

Drink water slowly and mindfully. Proper hydration can help reduce physical tension and cravings.



Move Your Body

Go for a walk, stretch, or do jumping jacks. Physical movement shifts your energy and focus.



Practice Mindfulness

Ground yourself: name 5 things you see, 4 you hear, 3 you touch, 2 you smell, 1 you taste.



Reach Out

Call or text a friend, sponsor, or support group member. Connection is powerful in recovery.



Positive Self-Talk

Use affirmations: "I am strong," "This feeling will pass," "I choose my recovery."



Journal It Out

Write about the trigger, your feelings, and which coping strategy you used. Track your progress.

"You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."

Your journey matters. Every step counts.

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