Phase 1

TRIGGERS

Triggers are people, objects, feelings, and times that cause cravings. For example, if every Friday night you cash a paycheck, go out with friends, and use drugs, the triggers would be the following:

- Friday night
- After work
- Money
- Friends who use
- The bar or club

Your addicted brain associates the triggers with drug and alcohol use. As a result of constant triggering and using, one trigger can cause you to move toward drug or alcohol use.

The trigger thought craving use cycle feels overwhelming.

An important part of treatment involves stopping the craving process. The first and easiest way to do that is this:

1. IDENTIFY TRIGGERS
2. PREVENT EXPOSURE TO TRIGGERS WHENEVER POSSIBLE (for example, do not handle large amounts of cash).
3. DEAL WITH TRIGGERS IN A DIFFERENT WAY (for example, schedule exercise and an outside meeting for Friday nights).

Remember, triggers will affect your brain and cause cravings even though you have decided to stop using drugs and alcohol. Your intentions to stop must therefore translate into behavior changes, which steer you clear of possible triggers.

1. What are some of the strongest triggers for you?

2. What particular triggers might be a problem in the near future?
IDENTIFYING TRIGGERS

1. Place a check mark next to activities or situations in which you **frequently** used drugs or alcohol. Place a zero next to activities or situations in which you **never** have used drugs or alcohol.

- _____ When home alone
- _____ When home with friends
- _____ At a friend’s home
- _____ At parties
- _____ At sporting events
- _____ At movies
- _____ At bars/clubs
- _____ At the beach
- _____ At concerts
- _____ At the park
- _____ When I gain weight
- _____ Before a date
- _____ During a date
- _____ Before sexual activities
- _____ After sexual activities
- _____ After work
- _____ When carrying money
- _____ After going past dealer’s residence
- _____ When with drug-using friends
- _____ After going past a liquor store
- _____ After payday
- _____ Before going out to dinner
- _____ Before breakfast
- _____ At lunch break
- _____ While at dinner
- _____ After passing a particular freeway exit
- _____ At school
- _____ While driving
- _____ In the neighborhood
- _____ Before work

2. List any other settings or activities in which you frequently used drugs or alcohol. What were your patterns or triggers?

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