

EXERCISE: CREATE YOUR DISTRACTIONS LIST

Objective: Develop a personalized list of distractions you can turn to when experiencing a craving. Having a pre-planned list of distractions is as essential as having a plan for responding to triggers. It's about being proactive rather than reactive in your recovery journey.

Here's a list of potential distractions to get you started.

- **Take a Walk:** Get outside for some fresh air and a change of scenery.
- **Call a Friend:** Have a chat with someone who supports your recovery.
- **Read a Book:** Immerse yourself in a good story or an interesting topic.
- **Listen to Music:** Put on your favorite songs or explore new ones.
- **Practice Deep Breathing:** Focus on slow, deep breaths to relax your mind.
- **Do a Puzzle:** Engage your brain with a jigsaw, crossword, or Sudoku puzzle.
- **Watch a Movie or TV Show:** Watch something entertaining or uplifting.
- **Cook or Bake:** Experiment with a new recipe or make a favorite dish.
- **Write in a Journal:** Express your thoughts and feelings through writing.
- **Gardening:** Spend time tending to plants, either indoors or outdoors.
- **Exercise:** Do some physical activity, like yoga, running, or cycling.
- **Play a Musical Instrument:** Play or learn to play an instrument.
- **Draw or Paint:** Express yourself creatively with art.
- **Photography:** Take a camera and capture what you find interesting.
- **Meditation:** Practice mindfulness or guided meditation.
- **Knit or Sew:** Engage in crafts that require focus and creativity.
- **Visit a Museum or Gallery:** Get inspired by art and history.
- **Volunteer:** Spend time helping others in your community.
- **Attend a Support Group Meeting:** Connect with others in recovery.
- **Go Fishing:** Enjoy the calmness of fishing if accessible.
- **Explore Nature:** Go for a hike or visit a park.
- **Play Video Games:** Engage in an immersive game.
- **Learn Something New:** Take up an online course or watch educational videos.
- **Organize or Clean:** Tidy up a space in your home.
- **Do a DIY Project:** Start a home improvement project.

EXERCISE: CREATE YOUR DISTRACTIONS LIST (CONTINUED-1)

- **Go Window Shopping:** Explore shops without the pressure to buy.
- **Bird Watching:** Find a peaceful spot to observe nature.
- **Star Gazing:** Look at the night sky and learn about constellations.
- **Take a Bath or Shower:** Refresh and relax yourself.
- **Play with a Pet:** Spend time with your animal companion.
- **Explore a Hobby:** Dedicate time to a hobby you love or find a new one.
- **Plan a Future Trip:** Research a place you'd like to visit.
- **Watch Funny Videos:** Lighten the mood with some comedy or cute animals.
- **Dance:** Put on some music and dance around.
- **Practice a New Language:** Use apps or online resources to learn.
- **Go Biking:** Take a bike ride around your neighborhood or park.
- **Visit a Library:** Spend time in the quiet environment of a library.
- **Go to a Coffee Shop:** Enjoy a coffee or tea in a different environment.
- **Practice a Skill:** Work on improving skills like cooking or coding.
- **Watch a Sports Game:** Get involved in the excitement of a game.

List ten distracting activities you can do when you feel an urge or craving.

Distractions
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EXERCISE: CREATE YOUR DISTRACTIONS LIST (CONTINUED-2)

AS YOU WRAP UP THIS EXERCISE ON DISTRACTIONS, REMEMBER THEIR CRITICAL PURPOSE IN YOUR RECOVERY JOURNEY. THESE DISTRACTIONS ARE NOT JUST ACTIVITIES TO PASS THE TIME; THEY ARE STRATEGIC TOOLS TO REFOCUS YOUR BRAIN AWAY FROM THE URGE TO DRINK. WHEN CRAVINGS STRIKE, IT'S CRUCIAL TO HAVE THESE DISTRACTIONS READY, LIKE A WELL-REHEARSED PLAN.

THINK OF THESE DISTRACTIONS AS YOUR FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE. THE MOMENT YOU FEEL AN URGE, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO PIVOT IMMEDIATELY TO ONE OF THESE ACTIVITIES. TO MAKE THIS EFFECTIVE, IT'S ESSENTIAL TO HAVE THESE DISTRACTIONS WRITTEN DOWN, MEMORIZED, AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE. THIS COULD MEAN ALWAYS HAVING A BOOK NEARBY, KNOWING A WALKING ROUTE BY HEART, OR HAVING A FRIEND YOU CAN CALL IMMEDIATELY.

THE GOAL IS TO SHIFT YOUR FOCUS SWIFTLY AND EFFECTIVELY, GIVING YOUR BRAIN SOMETHING POSITIVE AND ENGAGING TO CONCENTRATE ON INSTEAD OF THE CRAVING. THIS SHIFT HELPS YOU MANAGE THE IMMEDIATE URGE AND STRENGTHENS YOUR OVERALL RESOLVE AND RESILIENCE IN RECOVERY.

REMEMBER, THE MORE PREPARED YOU ARE WITH THESE DISTRACTIONS, THE MORE POWER YOU HAVE OVER YOUR URGES. THEY ARE A VITAL PART OF YOUR TOOLKIT IN BUILDING A SOBER, HEALTHIER LIFE. SO, TAKE THIS EXERCISE SERIOUSLY, PRACTICE THESE DISTRACTIONS, AND BE READY TO USE THEM. YOUR COMMITMENT TO THIS PROCESS IS A TESTAMENT TO YOUR COMMITMENT TO YOUR RECOVERY.

"THE WORLD AS WE HAVE CREATED IT IS A PROCESS OF OUR THINKING. IT CANNOT BE CHANGED WITHOUT CHANGING OUR THINKING." — ALBERT EINSTEIN.