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# *Welcome to the Understanding Addiction, Trauma & Coping Workshop*

gaming shopping sex  
addiction food gambling  
internet  
alcohol drug  
pornography

## **Goals of the Understanding Addiction, Trauma & Coping Workshop**

To learn about what addiction is, and the symptoms of addiction.

To see how trauma and addiction intersect.

To identify and practice coping skills to address addiction and trauma.

This workshop is not a replacement for treatment by a professional, but an opportunity understand dissociation and to review skills already learned or to identify new skills that could potentially be helpful in addiction and trauma.

## **What is addiction?**

Addiction is related to addictive behavior, addictive personality, and substance use disorder:

- Addiction is a treatable, chronic medical disease involving complex interactions among brain circuits, genetics, the environment, and an individual's life experiences. People with addiction use substances or engage in behaviors that become compulsive and often continue despite harmful consequences.
- Addictive behavior is defined by compulsive use despite negative physical and social consequences and the craving for effects other than pain relief.
- An addictive personality is a personality that is more likely to become addicted to something. This can include someone becoming extremely passionate about something and developing an obsession or fixation.
- A substance use disorder (SUD) is a mental disorder that affects a person's brain and behavior, leading to a person's inability to control their use of substances such as illegal drugs, alcohol, or medications. Symptoms can range from moderate to severe, with addiction being the most severe form of substance use disorder.

## **Video:**

[6 Signs of An Addictive Personality](#)

## **Why People Become Addicted and Continue the Behavior**

- Factors such as peer pressure, physical and sexual abuse, early exposure to drugs, stress, and parental guidance can greatly affect a person's likelihood of addiction. Genetic development and environmental factors interact with critical developmental stages in a person's life to affect addiction risk.
- Instead of a simple, pleasurable surge of dopamine, many drugs of abuse and behaviors cause dopamine to flood the reward pathway, 10 times more than a natural reward. The brain remembers this surge and associates it with the addictive substance or behavior.
- We use our addictions to make us feel better about ourselves and our lives, to feel less alone. Sometimes we think drugs are providing us with feelings of solace and companionship. We might use our behavior of choice to bolster our self-esteem because without them we feel even more down on ourselves and insecure.

## **Risk factors**

Some risk factors for addiction may include:

- Family history of addiction. Drug addiction is more common in some families and likely involves an increased risk based on genes.
- Mental health disorder.
- Peer pressure.
- Lack of family involvement.
- Early use.
- Taking a highly addictive drug.
- Experiencing trauma

How can trauma lead to addiction? And how can addiction lead to trauma?

- With about two-thirds of all addicts having previously experienced some type of physical or sexual traumatic experiences during childhood, it's extremely important to understand how childhood trauma causes increased vulnerability to addiction.
- Trauma increases the risk of developing substance abuse, and substance abuse increases the likelihood of being re-traumatized by engaging in high-risk behavior. It is also true that individuals who are addicted are less able to cope with traumatic events.
- There is a robust correlation in the scientific literature between trauma and addiction.
- Trauma and chronic stress can lead to a dysregulated stress system, which may make individuals more vulnerable to addictive behaviors.
- Trauma can lead to depersonalization and numbness, which may make individuals more vulnerable to addictive behaviors.
- A trauma-informed approach is essential for the treatment of addiction.
- Co-occurring treatment: It is important to first be substance-free, then treat trauma and addiction. Both need to be dealt with to stay addiction free.

## **Types of Addictions**

- Alcohol addiction
- Food addiction
- Gambling addiction
- Heroin addiction
- Hoarding addiction
- Marijuana addiction
- Opioid addiction
- Pornography addiction
- Prescription drug addiction
- Sex addiction

- Shopping addiction
- Social media addiction
- Video game addiction
- Work addiction

## Questions to Identify an Addiction

Instructions:

For this activity, please number your paper from 1 to 29. With each question, you will answer yes or no as it applies to your use of a substance or addictive behavior.

1. Do you ever use your substance or behavior alone?
2. Have you ever substituted one habit for another, thinking that one particular habit was the problem?
3. Have you ever manipulated or lied to someone to obtain a substance or what you need for a behavior?
4. Have you ever stolen to support your habit?
5. Do you regularly use or engage in your behavior when you wake up or when you go to bed?
6. Have you ever used one substance or behavior to overcome the effects of another?
7. Do you avoid people or places that do not approve of your substance use or behavior?
8. Have you ever used a substance or behavior without knowing what it was or what it would do to you?
9. Has your job or school performance ever suffered from the effects of your use or behavior?
10. Have you ever been arrested as a result of your use or behavior?
11. Have you ever lied about what or how much you use or engage in your behavior?
12. Do you put the purchase of substances or behavior ahead of your financial responsibilities?
13. Have you ever tried to stop or control your use or behavior?
14. Have you ever been in a jail, hospital, or drug rehabilitation center because of your use or behavior?
15. Does your substance use, or behavior interfere with your sleeping or eating?
16. Does the thought of running out of your substance or being unable to engage in your behavior terrify you?
17. Do you feel it is impossible for you to live without your habit?
18. Do you ever question your own sanity?
19. Is your habit making life at home unhappy?
20. Have you ever thought you couldn't fit in or have a good time without your habit?
21. Have you ever felt defensive, guilty, or ashamed about your substance or your behavior?
22. Do you think a lot about your habit?
23. Have you had irrational or indefinable fears?
24. Has using a substance or a behavior affected your relationships?
25. Have you ever participated in a similar habit you didn't prefer?

26. Have you ever used a substance or behavior because of emotional pain or stress?
27. Have you ever overdosed or passed out due to your habit?
28. Do you continue to use a substance or the behavior despite negative consequences?
29. Do you think you might have a problem?

If you answered yes to four or more questions, this is something you may want to share this with a counselor or therapist to discuss further to see if you have an addiction.

## **6 Signs That You're Addicted to Something**

As you go through each of these areas, think about how you would answer these questions.

**Reward response:** Does doing the substance or behavior make you feel better or more in control? Does not doing it make you feel worse? Doing things, you enjoy makes you feel better while avoiding things you dislike can make you feel better, at least initially. There is a positive physical payoff to all this activity that can obscure the negative consequences.

**Prevalence:** Do you find yourself doing the substance or behavior more often and/or for longer periods of time than you originally planned? This is the never-enough compulsion. If you feel compelled to say, “Just a little bit more,” all the time, you’re carving out more and more space in your life for these activities.

**Cessation:** Do you feel anxious or uncomfortable if you cannot use or if you just think about not doing your substance or behavior? One way to gauge how important these things have become to you is to consider doing without them. Your initial emotional and physical response can be highly instructive. The higher the level of panic and pain you anticipate, the stronger the hold they have on you.

**Disruption:** Has use of the substance or behavior disrupted your life and your relationships? Do you find yourself trying to make more room in your life for your habit while pushing aside responsibilities or people that matter to you?

**Reverting:** Do you often say to yourself you’re going to do something different but then turn around and keep doing the same thing—or doing it even more? This is the “I’ll quit again on Monday” syndrome.

All of these signs point to a much bigger problem: addiction. Addiction is a behavior that controls you. Absent an outside substance or behavior involved, it’s you—your impulses, your pleasures, your anxieties, your fears, your preferences—taking center stage over your better judgment or reasoned decisions. If you believe you are struggling with an addiction that is negatively impacting the quality and health of your life, it may be time to seek assistance from a professional.

## **Stages & Patterns of Addiction**

### **1. Trying the substance or behavior**

Most people who try drugs or engage in risky behaviors don't become addicted. Some people can experiment with drugs or other activities and walk away without any problems. However, some people develop a physical dependence on the substance or activity. This means that their body becomes used to the drug or activity and they need it to function normally. Physical dependence can lead to addiction.

### **2. Regular Use & Substance Abuse**

People who develop a physical dependence on a substance or behavior often start using it regularly. They may use it to cope with stress, relax, or feel good. Regular use can quickly turn into abuse. Substance abuse is when you use a substance in ways that are harmful to your health or put you in danger. Abuse can lead to addiction. However, not everyone who abuses a substance will become addicted. People who abuse substances or engage in behaviors often do so to cope with emotional or mental problems. They may be trying to escape from reality or numb their pain. Substance abuse can make these problems worse and lead to addiction.

### **3. Dependency & Tolerance**

People who are addicted to something need it to function normally. They have built up a tolerance to it and need increasingly larger amounts or frequency to get the same effect. They may also experience withdrawal symptoms which can be physical or psychological when they try to quit. Withdrawal can be uncomfortable and even dangerous, which makes it hard for people to break their addiction.

### **4. Addiction**

People with an addiction have an intense craving for the behavior or substance and can't control their use. They continue to use it despite the negative consequences. This may lead to job loss, financial instability, relationship problems, and health issues. People with addictive behaviors often need professional help to overcome them. This can be difficult, but it is possible to recover from addiction. There are many resources available to help people overcome their addiction and live healthy lives.

## **Consequences of Addiction**

There are many ways in which being an addict can affect a person, depending on the type of addiction. It is very often not one type of complication that disrupts the daily life of a person with addiction. These factors often feed each other and work in tandem to create health risks.

Here are just a few examples:

The complications of addiction often depend on the type of substance or behavior. Sex addiction, for example, greatly increases the risk of sexual behaviors that could lead to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

Injecting intravenous (IV) drugs using non-sterilized needles can lead to the transmission of hepatitis C, HIV, and other harmful infections.

### **Physical complications**

Overdosing can lead to a life-threatening medical emergency.

Overusing mood- or physiology-altering substances can cause damage in a number of ways.

Overusing can cause gastrointestinal symptoms, chronic or acute.

Direct effects of substances: For example, snorting cocaine through the nose can damage nasal cartilage, and taking opiates can lead to a potentially fatal form of constipation if a person does not receive treatment. Regular tobacco use can cause a range of cancers and smoking methamphetamine might fuel a severe form of dental decay known as “meth mouth”.

Injury: This can occur during the administration of a drug, depending on the method. For example, injecting heroin with a needle can lead to skin and muscle damage at the point of injection, and many people take drugs by smoking, causing lung damage and respiratory illnesses. Hypersexuality could result in skin irritation, urinary tract infections, vaginal and anal tears. Gaming and social media addiction could lead to carpal tunnel syndrome. Exercise addiction could lead to sprains, strains, and muscle tears.

Often, drug use impairs coordination and balance and can lead to falls and injuries. Driving while under the influence of alcohol and other drugs is criminal in most countries and causes 30 percent of all deaths related to traffic across the United States.

Some substances induce violent reactions in people and increase the likelihood of risky or confrontational behaviors.

Overdose: Taking too much of one substance or mixing substances together can result in an overdose. While this can also occur with medications and pharmaceuticals, it is more likely to occur in a person who takes a substance to alter their mood or for recreational purposes. Experiencing hopelessness with addiction can lead to severe depression and suicide.



An overdose can result in coma and death. On average, 115 people in the United States die every day by overdosing on opioid painkillers.

Cardiovascular health: Many substances lead to spikes in blood pressure and heart rate, placing strain on the heart and blood vessels and increasing the risk of stroke, heart attack, and death. Hypersexuality and certain sex acts can lead to blood clots.

Loss of hygiene and routine: Addiction can become an all-encompassing feature in a person's life, and reward systems in the brain can rewire to prioritize the substance or behavior at the root of the addiction over nutrition, resolving stressful situations, and hygiene.

Addiction can also mean that a person dedicates large sums of money each month to obtaining the substance or behavior, increasing the risk of poor nutrition. In some cases, addiction can lead to homelessness, greatly reducing protection and resources and increasing exposure to the elements.

Fetal damage: If a woman takes substances while pregnant, this can lead to congenital anomalies or even death in the fetus.

Psychological complications: Addictions have a two-way relationship with mental health. Mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety, might occur ahead of addiction. However, drug use and addiction can also set off the symptoms of these conditions as well as causing them to develop when they were not present before.

Addiction not only impairs a range of bodily functions but also changes the way a person thinks. It alters how some brain circuits work.

Psychoactive substances: Many drugs directly cause hallucinations and longer-term psychological effects that can lead to severe mental health problems and drug induced psychosis.

Anxiety, depression, restlessness, guilt, and shame can also result from prolonged substance dependency and behavioral addiction.

Loneliness: People with addiction tend to push away the people closest to them and this removes or drastically reduces an individual's support network when they need it the most, pushing them toward more addictive behavior.

Suicide: A study showed that six times as many people who regularly misuse opiates attempt suicide as people who do not misuse opiates. Taking too much of a substance can also lead to overdose and death.

Personal complications

Relationships: Often, obtaining the substance or enacting the behavior at the root of an addiction coming first to other people, even family and dependents. Typical addict behavior in relationships

involves neglecting all of their relationships and only spending time with the people who share their addiction.

**Finances:** Not only can the costs of regularly purchasing substances or pursuing behavioral impulses mount up, but addiction can also drive a person further and further from their place of employment and financial responsibilities.

**Crime:** Many psychoactive substances are illicit, and even possessing them can put a person in jail. However, people may also resort to crime to fund drug misuse and addictive behaviors, especially as addiction can lead to unemployment as the substance or behavior starts to replace personal responsibilities.

Psychoactive substances often carry a range of toxic and destructive physical effects, such as the risk of physical damage, the side effects of the drugs or behaviors themselves, cardiovascular diseases including stroke and heart attack, and reduced nutritional intake.

The best way to handle these complications is to prevent them.

When dealing with addiction and having trauma, it's important to deal with both together. An individual needs to be substance free to do trauma work.

### **Ways to treat an addiction.**

1. Admit There Is a Problem. The hardest part to recovery is admitting you have an addiction. ...
2. Reflect On Your Addiction. ...
3. Seek Professional Support. ...
4. Appreciate The Benefits of Sobriety. ...
5. Identify Your Triggers. ...
6. Change Your Environment. ...
7. Exercise. ...
8. Accept The Past.

### **What Are the Four Pillars of Addiction Recovery?**

While there is no short, easy way to ensure addiction recovery, there are four pillars of recovery that help support this lifelong process. Without creating the right foundation for recovery, it is harder to ensure that you will be able to avoid substance misuse or the behavior in the future. These four pillars are health, home, purpose and community.

### **Ensuring Long-Term Health**

Try to live a healthy lifestyle-physically and emotionally. Exchange unhealthy habits for healthy ones. Try practicing mindfulness.

Home- Create a happy and stable home environment. Try to create and use a strong support system. Creating a group of friends who support your sobriety is important. Pets can offer a meaningful relationship. Pet adoption in addiction recovery gives individuals the ability to develop new, meaningful relationships with something other than a romantic partner. They offer unconditional love and provide company all day.

#### Creating a Life of Purpose

When you feel like you have a strong purpose in life, it provides you with a focus and a pleasure other than bad habits. This purpose could be a job, volunteer activities, caring for family members or creativity.

#### Developing Relationships in Community

A community is important to every person, and it is particularly important when you are having struggles with mental and physical health. Moving into a healthy space with your group of friends and your family members allows you to find the support you need to maintain ongoing sobriety. When you are seeking community, you should focus on:

Developing strategies for making friends, assessing your relationships, and setting healthy boundaries. Working in group therapy or counseling at a treatment center can help you do this. Finding someone with whom you can share your worries. This could be a group of close friends or it could also be a counselor. One-on-one connections are essential to your recovery.

Being in a place where your relationships are supportive and stable. The mental health challenges associated with an abusive or emotionally unhealthy relationship are a challenge not only to you mentally, but physically as you work to maintain sobriety.

#### **Types of treatment**

With several options available, people can find an addiction treatment option that best fits their individual needs. If you think you may need treatment you can choose what works best for you based on the substance, behavior, or activity you're abusing, the level of care you need, your personal mental health needs, or what health care options you can afford. Here are some of the most common addiction treatments that have set patients on a successful path to recovery.

#### Detoxification

Medically-assisted detox allows you to rid your body of addictive substances in a safe environment. This is beneficial because sometimes substance withdrawal can cause unpleasant or even life-threatening physical symptoms. Because detox does not treat the underlying behavioral causes of the addiction, it is typically used in combination with other therapies.

### Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is a valuable treatment tool because it can be used for many different types of addiction. Not only can CBT help you recognize your unhealthy behavioral patterns, but it can also help you learn to identify triggers and develop coping skills. CBT can be combined with other therapeutic techniques as well.

### Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy

(REBT) could help you recognize your negative thoughts and give you ways to combat feelings of self-defeat. The goal of REBT is to help you realize that the power of rational thinking lies within yourself and is not related to external situations or stressors.

### Contingency Management

(CM) can be used to treat a wide variety of addictions. Contingency management therapy reinforces your positive behavior (ie maintaining sobriety) by giving you tangible rewards. This type of treatment has been used successfully to combat relapse.

### 12-Step Facilitation

Twelve-step support ("12-step programs") can be used to help treat addiction. It is a form of group therapy that includes recognition that addiction has several negative consequences. This type of group begins with acceptance, then moves on to surrender to a higher power, then eventually transitions to involvement in consistent group meetings. Programs like the popular Alcoholics Anonymous use group meetings for discussion and mutual support. Support groups are usually used in addition to other forms of treatment.

### Treatment with Medication

Medication can play an important role in recovery when combined with behavioral therapies. Certain medications can be used to reduce cravings, improve mood, and decrease addictive behaviors. For example, the FDA recently approved lofexidine to help reduce cravings and withdrawal symptoms in patients receiving treatment for opioid addiction. Medications can help reduce drinking behavior. Typically, however, medications are only used to treat opioid addiction. It's important that people talk to their doctor regarding taking any medications

Other forms of treatment available include Brain spotting, EMDR, Somatic experiencing, Dialectical behavioral therapy, and more.

## **Relapse Prevention Exercise–Pen and paper**

### **Coping Skills:**

List 3 activities or skills you can enjoy getting your mind off of using a substance or behavior.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### **Social Support:**

Who are 3 people you can talk to if you are thinking about using a substance or behavior?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**How will your life change if you stay sober from the substance or behavior?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**How will your life change about if you relapse back on the substance or behavior?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### **Tips to avoid relapse:**

- **Cravings will eventually pass. Emotional cravings last the longest. Do your best to distract yourself and ride it out.**
- **Don't become complacent. Relapse can happen years after you've quit. It probably won't ever be safe to "just have one".**
- **Avoid situations that you know will put you at risk of relapse, such as spending time with friends who use or going places that remind you of your past use.**
- **The decision to relapse is made when you put yourself in risky situations, long before you actually use.**
- **Don't view relapse as a failure. Giving up and falling back into old patterns because of a slip will only make the situation worse.**

## **Healthy Coping Tips**

Coping with cravings and urges is a major component of changing problematic addictive behavior.

### **1. Set a Timer**

Urges tend to run out of steam after 30-45 minutes, setting a timer for a ½ hour can help to ride out the urge. Think of cravings as sprinters, they are intense but run out of steam pretty quickly.

### **2. Distract Yourself from the Craving**

Do something that requires focused attention – watch a movie, listen to your favorite album while reading the lyrics, play a musical instrument, go for a drive, count backwards from 1,000 by 3's, do 100 push-ups, sprint as far as you can, etc.

### **3. Recall A Moment of Clarity**

Go back to a time when you swore you'd never use again. Imagine it clearly and fully, recall how it felt, where you were, who else was around, why you swore it off, what you were wearing, how cold it was outside... every little detail you can remember from that moment when you knew you wanted to change.

### **4. Substitute**

Have a Pepsi instead of a beer, chew gum instead of smoking a joint, get your favorite drink instead of having too much food, do a craft instead of going shopping, watch a good movie instead of going gambling, go outside for a walk or bike ride instead of engaging in watching pornography or engaging in sexual behavior. Harm-reduction works, substitute something less harmful especially early on in your efforts to change. These substitutions won't feel as good at first but over time you will feel better about your choices than feeling the guilt and shame about choosing the addictive behavior.

### **5. Delay the Beginning:**

Have a strong urge now? Permit yourself to indulge tomorrow if it's still strong, or an hour from now, maybe even combine this technique with the first technique. Delaying the onset builds a sense of empowerment and reminds you that you control how you respond to urges.

### **6. Personify the Substance or Behavior Cravings:**

Imagine your craving as something destructive, or deceitful, or manipulative. Maybe the craving is a used car salesman trying to sell you a lemon, maybe the craving is a scary creature trying to destroy you. Find an image with personal meaning to enhance the usefulness of this method.

### **7. Cost-Benefit Analysis:**

Write all the benefits of using, all the costs of using, all the benefits of not using, and all the costs of not using. Then, go back over all your answers and mark which ones are short-term and which are long-term. Remind yourself that acting on long-term gratifications is fundamental to changing addictive behavior. Oh, and make sure you start with the benefits, it isn't helpful to have all the benefits of using as the last thing on your mind!

## 8. ABC

You have an urge, so analyze it. What brought the urge on (A=Activating Event), what irrational thoughts are there about the urge (B=Beliefs), what are the emotional and behavioral results of the irrational beliefs (C=Consequences). Then, dispute the irrational beliefs and replace them. Example – I don't have to drink to relax after a stressful week at work, or I don't have to have a drink to be a good conversationalist at a party. Three irrational beliefs are common regarding cravings – 1-It's going to last forever, 2-It hurts me, 3-I have to do something to stop cravings. In fact, you can dispute and replace the common irrational beliefs about cravings with three facts; 1-Cravings are time limited, 2-Not harmful, and 3-If we do nothing they will pass.

## 9. Talk About the Craving

Naming something, saying it out loud, and sharing it with someone else can take the power away. Keeping things to ourselves, bottling them up, and isolating gives urges more power.

## 10. Breathe

Deep, slow breathing oxygenates our blood, activates the parasympathetic nervous system, and calms us down, period. There is no such thing as 'breathing doesn't work for me.' Sit down, look at a clock with a second hand or turn on your smartphone stopwatch, and count six breaths per minute for at least 2-3 minutes, or challenge yourself with five minutes. You will be calmer unless you choose to sit through the entire exercise thinking 'this is stupid, it's never going to work.' Breathe slowly in through your nose, then breathe out through your mouth. Focus on your breathing and how your diaphragm and chest move as you breathe. It can help to place your hands on your abdomen and your chest.

## **Exercise–Urge Surfing: Guided Meditation Script**

Now we will practice a relaxation technique called visualization. This will help you continue to ride out your urge. Please close your eyes and if you prefer, gently gaze downward to reduce distraction.

Use all your senses to imagine the following scene.

Imagine you're standing on a beautiful, sandy beach. You feel the warmth of the sun on your face, and a gentle breeze on your skin.

15-25 second pause

You begin to walk slowly down the shore. With each step, the sand crunches beneath your feet.

15-25 second pause

Birds sing in the distance, and ocean waves rumble steadily along the shore.

15-25 second pause

You take a step toward the ocean and stand at the edge of the surf. Cool water rushes over the top of your feet.

15-25 second pause

The air is warm and smells salty.

15-25 second pause

You look out toward the ocean and notice the water contains every shade of blue and green. When the waves peak, they shimmer in the sunlight, before disappearing onto the shore.

30 second pause

You continue standing on the shore, taking in the sensations of the beach, the ocean, and the waves.

60-90 second pause

The waves in the ocean are just like your urge. They are powerful for a short time, but before long they peak, and then fade away. You don't have to suppress your urge or try to change it. It will simply fade away on its own.

brief pause

Now, begin to focus on your breathing. For the next few minutes, you'll practice taking slow, deep breaths, which will help reduce stress and anxiety.

brief pause

You'll inhale for 4 seconds, hold the air in your lungs for 4 seconds, then slowly exhale for 6 seconds. When inhaling, focus on completely filling your lungs with air.

brief pause

To start, follow along as I walk you through the breathing cycle. Let's begin:

brief pause

Inhale, 2, 3, 4



Hold, 2, 3, 4

Exhale, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Inhale, 2, 3, 4

Hold, 2, 3, 4

Exhale, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Inhale

3 second pause

Hold

3 second pause

Exhale

5 second pause

Inhale

3 second pause

Hold

3 second pause

Exhale

5 second pause

Continue practicing on your own for a few minutes.

60-90 second pause

During deep breathing, it's normal for your mind to wander. When you notice this happening, simply return your attention to your breathing, noticing how it feels to take slow, deep breaths.

120-180 second pause

This exercise is nearly complete. Before continuing your day, take one more moment to observe your thoughts and feelings. Notice if your urge has changed.

30-45 second pause

When you feel ready to do so, open your eyes and stretch.

15 second pause

This concludes the urge surfing exercise. If you'd like to continue practicing, you can start the exercise again, as many times as you need.

### **Self-Care**

Taking care of yourself emotionally and physically is one of the most important ways to fight addiction and bad habits. Prioritizing your well-being is a must, everyone has bad days and if you mess up it's okay. Try seeing each new day as an opportunity to do better.

Recognizing what works for you is the most important thing to ensure that you're really looking after yourself.

Here are some other useful self-care ideas.

- Maintain your friendships. Connect regularly with family and friends and do things together that you all enjoy.
- Get regular exercise. Try aiming for 20 minutes a day, even a 10-minute walk will benefit you.
- Keep a balanced diet. Eat nutritious food as this helps with energy levels and stress management.
- Ask for help and accept it when it is offered. This one may seem tricky however no one expects you to deal with whatever is going on in your life alone.
- Think of yourself as your own best friend. Be kind to yourself. Encouraging and rewarding yourself for getting through a difficult period or achieving a goal, however small, will reinforce your self-confidence.
- Plan something to look forward to, whether that be a trip with your family or friends or taking yourself on a day-date
- Try to spend some quality time for yourself, away from the usual demands, even if it's just 15 minutes a day.
- Get good quality sleep and make it into a routine. If you're finding it difficult to get to sleep, try a relaxation technique or an app that helps you feel relaxed.

Here is a popular saying used by Narcotics Anonymous saying about approaching addiction:

“We are powerless over addiction and our lives are unmanageable; Although we are not responsible for our disease, we are responsible for our recovery; We can no longer blame people, places, and

things for our addiction. We must face our problems and our feelings. **The ultimate weapon for recovery is the recovering addict.”**

**Video:**

How to Quit Any Addiction – Wayne Dyer - <https://youtu.be/zLuH3lUYrM0>

12-Step Support Groups:

SAA-H.org-Sex Addicts Anonymous

FAA-FoodAddicts.org-Food Addicts Anonymous

OEA-OA.org-Overeaters Anonymous

AA.org-Alcoholics Anonymous

NA.org-Narcotics Anonymous

CA.org-Cocaine Addicts Anonymous

NACR.org National Association for Christians Recovery

Celebrate Recovery-CelebrateRecovery.com

GamblersAnonymous.org

Spenders.org-Spenders Anonymous

ClutterersAnonymous.org

Coda.org-Codependents Anonymous

DebtorsAnonymous.org

SLAAFWS.org-Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous.

Workaholics-Anonymous.org

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