



ISSUE: I'm in the addictions recovery process and would like to manage my drug or alcohol cravings.

THINGS TO CONSIDER: A craving is a powerful and sometimes overwhelming need to use an addictions substance. Cravings are a major cause of relapse for people who are in the addictions recovery process from drugs or alcohol. There are different things to consider on the issue of cravings including:

- **Setup Behaviours:** Some of the behaviours that setup a person to relapse include a lack of communication, social conflicts, and continuing to socialize with friends or family who continue to use alcohol and drugs. Unfortunately, these behaviours may set up individuals for the potential to relapse.
- **Trigger Events:** Trigger events are anything that directly causes a craving or turn the craving 'on' switch. The triggers may be sensory cues, something you see, hear, smell, touch or taste, or they can start with people, places and things, a mind set, mood or sensations.
- **The Craving Cycle:** Obsession, compulsion, physical craving, and habitual craving ie; doing something without thinking about it.

THINGS TO DO: Ensure that you have a plan in place to 'break the craving'. The most effective strategy is to start with a 'Prevention Plan' to avoid getting a craving in the first place. If you have been unable to prevent the cravings then an 'Intervention Plan' is needed.

The Craving Prevention Plan: This plan is designed to lower your risk of cravings.

1. Start a recovery program
2. Know your triggers
3. Avoid or cope with you triggers
4. Know your se-up behaviors
5. Avoid or cope with your setup behaviors
6. Stop euphoric recall
7. Stop magical thinking about future use
8. Stop 'awfulizing' about sobriety
9. Deal with physical and social setups
10. Know what to do to stop a craving

The Craving Intervention Plan: This plan is designed to help you turn off a craving once it begins.

1. Recognize the craving
2. Accept craving as normal in the recovery process
3. Go somewhere else
4. Talk it through – 'a craving kept secret gets worse'
5. Exercise
6. Eat a healthy meal
7. Meditate and relax
8. Divert attention from the craving through another activity
9. Get a good night sleep



OTHER THINGS TO DO: It is important that an employee recognize potential trigger points in the workplace, in addition to the behaviours and triggers in their personal lives. In other words, alcohol use is a legal and socially acceptable behaviour at staff parties and celebrations. As part of their recovery process, employees may want to speak with their employer about the influence of alcohol in the workplace as a risk to relapse in their recovery process. Alternately, an employee may not wish to participate in staff celebrations where alcohol is served as a preventive measure to avoid cravings and relapse.

For more info on Potluck Recipes for Success: Heather O'Hara - Executive Director
T: 604.683.0073 ext. 379
E: heather@potluckcatering.com
W: www.potluckcatering.com