



The Flammable Area Exercise- (Coming up with your own personal motivators for change)

- A. What are some things that you like about using your substance of choice?
- B. If you had to give up using your favorite substances, is there anything else you might miss about it?
- C. Does using drugs or alcohol use ever serve a need for you? In other words, being honest, does using ever *help* you with anything (for example, “it helps me relax and sleep”, “it helps with boredom”, “it helps me calm down when I am angry”, “it makes certain activities more enjoyable or tolerable”, etc.)
- D. On your own, can you come up with any reasons why you would possibly want to one day quit? (Even if there is no reason now to stop, think about things in the future that could influence that decision such as getting a good job, having children, health issues, etc.)– In other words, what could happen to you that could make you at least think more about quitting?

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____



- E. You may have to use your imagination on this part. To the best of your ability, list some reasons why some of the following people might say that you should either quit or cut down your substance use and make some positive changes in your life. If a listed person does not know about your use, like your children for example, write what you think they may say if they did know. Try to speak for them and take a good guess at how they may feel if they did know. Do the best you can by being creative if you need too. Put “NA” (for Not Applicable) for any people below that you cannot think of an answer for:
- ___ Mother (or Mother figure in your life if no mother) -for example – “I worry that you are going to get in trouble”
 - ___ Father/Father figure, for example – “You are wasting your life by not living up to your potential”
 - ___ Spouse/Partner/Significant other – “I would trust you more if you stopped using”
 - ___ Children – “ I don’t want my Daddy to do drugs because they taught me that drugs are bad in school and you could die”
 - ___ Other family not already listed – “ Grandpa – You are better than that kid, you could be anything you wanted to be if you could get your life together”
 - ___ Your Employer (if they knew what you were doing) “I want you at your best and that stuff makes you tired and stressed out”
 - ___ The Legal System (probation, parole, judge, etc.) “The minute I catch you, its jail time for you”
 - ___ Society – “Grow up, you are getting too old for this”
 - ___ Your Body (If it could speak to you) “ Please take better care of me, I want to live a long healthy life”
 - ___ YOU from the past, before you ever started using – What would the YOU of the past say to YOU now? – “I never would have imagined you would do drugs for this long, and I never thought I would ever get arrested!”
 - ___ YOU from the future speaking to YOU now: “I am hoping you stop at some point because you need to start saving some money and start planning ahead”



Now go back for each item you answered in sections **D** and **E** above, and rate the importance your answer based on the following scale using the small line ____ provided for each item in sections D and E above -

0– I don’t care at all about this

1 – I care very little about this

2 – I kind of care about this but not really

3 – I care a moderate amount about this

4 – I definitely care about this

5 - I care about this a significant amount

Finally, this is the most challenging part: Go back one last time and look at how you rated the items in sections D and E and find the top three or four things that you cared about the most (highest rated). Carefully re-write these issues in your own words from the perspective of what you might gain if you were to change your behavior. In other words, rewrite the three or four most significant answers you identified above in your own words

Some examples:

“My mother would be happy if I stopped using drugs and we would get along better”

“I wouldn’t have to worry about getting arrested any more if I stopped”

“I would save a lot of money if I was clean”

“I probably would be in better shape and be better at sports if I wasn’t getting high”

Write your answers below taken from the areas you cared about the most, rewritten from your own viewpoint:

1.

2.

3.

4.

These are your “flammable areas”. Even if you have little or no desire to change anything now, you have identified these areas as potential areas that could ignite the spark for change because they mean something to you