

## Acknowledgements:

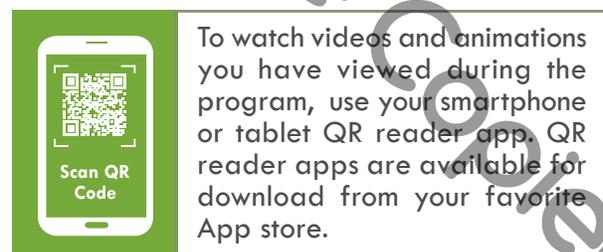
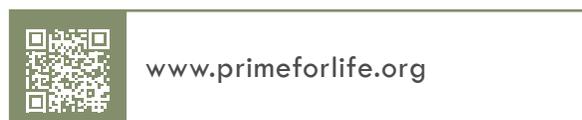
We thank Michelle Ellison, Ejna Mitchell, and Melanie Snyder for their time in preparing this workbook for your use as well as the rest of the Version 9 development team which includes David Rosengren, Ph.D., Allan Barger, and Mark Nason. The Prime For Life Version 9 media team included Mike O'Bryan, David Guinnip, Hong P. Huynh, and Daniel Bodinof. The research team includes Blair Beadnell Ph.D., Pam Stafford, and Michele Crisafulli. It would be impossible to complete a project of this magnitude without the administrative skills of Charlie Crouch, Diane Padgett, Jennifer Locker, Jo Marie Lammy and Paul Marx. Thanks also to our editors Colleen Carter-Lunceford, Ph.D., and Tom "Frosty" Frostman. Additional thanks to Aaron Foster for his contributions to this 420 edition.

Icons on pages 1, 11, 13, 31-33, and 35 are created by Freepik from [www.flaticon.com](http://www.flaticon.com) and licensed under CC BY 3.0 [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/).

## Copyright Information:

Prime® and Prime For Life® are registered trademarks of Prevention Research Institute. This workbook is copyrighted by Prevention Research Institute. It is a violation of copyright laws of the United States and other countries to reproduce, photocopy, distribute, or transmit this publication in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of Prevention Research Institute.

Copyright © 2018 Prevention Research Institute. All rights reserved.



For Review Only. Not to be Copied.

# prime for life® 420™

## PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

Version 9.0 420

Every participant who attends a Prime For Life® 420™ program receives a new workbook. It is a violation of copyright laws for anyone to provide you with a photocopied or used workbook. The workbook is a guide for you to use as you reflect on concepts and complete activities. At the completion of the course, it is yours to keep. We hope you and your family will use it as an ongoing reference to reduce risk for alcohol- and drug-related problems in the future.



## INTRODUCTION



### About The Program

We will explore risk and what we can do to reduce our risk so we can protect the things we value the most in life. We each decide what we value most; Prime For Life 420 gives us a way to reduce risk for future problems with alcohol and drugs. The program provides research-based information about alcohol and drug risks. We each decide what to do with the information and how much risk we are willing to take.



### About Prevention Research Institute

Prevention Research Institute (PRI) is a nonprofit organization based in Lexington, Kentucky. PRI pioneered the Lifestyle Risk Reduction approach to alcohol and drug problems in 1983. The professional staff has extensive experience in the prevention, early intervention, and treatment of alcohol and drug problems. PRI is committed to evaluation of program impact, and its Risk Reduction programs have shown positive behavior change in both internal and independent studies.



### About the Authors

Ray Daugherty and the late Terry O'Bryan, co-founders of PRI and co-authors of the program, dedicated years of experience and strong commitment to their work of reducing the incidence of alcohol- and drug-related problems.

Their work has been recognized by CSAP (The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention) and SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) and featured in *USA Today*, *Drug Abuse Update*, *Adolescent Counselor*, and *Weekly Reader* supplements for parents and teachers. Ray is co-author of *Reducing the Risks for Substance Abuse: A Lifespan Approach*, Plenum Press, New York, 1998. He continues to be actively involved at PRI. Terry retired in 2000 and passed away in 2013. Her contributions to the program and its ongoing developments are felt daily.



### About the Workbook

Your workbook is a summary of the Prime For Life 420 experience. We hope you will find the activities and summary a useful guide both during and following Prime For Life 420.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### UNIT 1: EXPLORING

What Is Most Important To Me? .....	7
What Most People Say .....	9
Risks We Can And Cannot Change .....	10
Heart Disease .....	11
Alcoholism And Addiction .....	14
Body, Brain, Biology .....	15
Choices .....	18
Psychological Factors Influence Choices .....	19
Social Factors Influence Choices .....	21
Putting It All Together .....	22
How Does High Tolerance Trick Us? .....	23
Beliefs Influencing High-Risk Choices .....	23
Impairment and Drugs .....	24
Choices .....	25
A Closer Look at my Drug Choices .....	26

### UNIT 2: REFLECTING

Phases of Use .....	30
The Green Phase .....	35
The Yellow Phase .....	37
The Orange Phase .....	42
The Red Phase .....	49
Where I Am in the Phases .....	53
What An Arrest Costs .....	55

**TABLE OF CONTENTS, cont.**

Reflecting On What I Value ..... 62

**UNIT 3: PROTECTING**

My 24-Hour Clock ..... 64

Moving Toward My Future ..... 66

Identifying Support ..... 68

Finding Support ..... 69

My Strengths ..... 70

Learning About Me ..... 72

Finding Fun, Relaxation, and Excitement! ..... 75

Rewarding Myself ..... 77

Overcoming State Dependent Restriction ..... 80

Be Ready, Be Quick ..... 83

My Values, My Commitment ..... 84

My Message ..... 85

My Formula ..... Inside back cover

For Review Only. Not to be Copied.

**What would it feel like to know your top values are alive and thriving in your life in the future?**

For most of us, prevention requires new ways of thinking about reducing risk or reducing the likelihood of problems. Good intentions and determination are not enough. We practice prevention once we understand the need for it. For example, to reduce the risk of mechanical problems with our cars and trucks, most of us change the oil, rotate tires, maintain proper tire pressure, check fluid levels, and set reminders for scheduled maintenance.

We also learn effective ways to reduce risk to protect our health. We brush our teeth, sleep, eat, and use sunscreen to prevent problems. This is prevention or risk reduction. Preventing these things can become so routine in our lives we may not even think about them. Yet, we may not have applied the same thinking to our alcohol and drug choices. Sometimes this happens because we may not have known specifically what to do or how to do it. This program is about learning how to prevent future problems related to alcohol and drug use and, most importantly—how to protect the things we value most.

On the next page is a list of items most people value. Take a few minutes to look over this list and make it more personal to your life today. If there is something in your life you value but it is not on this list, add it in the blank areas. When we finish, this list will represent the things you value most in life.

---

The aim of education is the knowledge, not of facts, but of values.

~ William S. Burroughs ~

# WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO ME?

Job, career, rank



---

Good health



---

Family



---

Self-Respect



---

Loving and being loved



---

Freedom/No legal problems



---

Making my own decisions



---

Partying



---

Religion/Spirituality



---

Good friends



---

Other values

---

---

---

What would it feel like to know these values are alive and thriving in your life in the future?

---

---

---

## Two Types of Problems

There are many different THC problems, and they basically fall into two categories: health and impairment. To protect the things important to us, we need to know how to prevent both types of problems.

### Kind of Person

We can all make a list of the words most people would say describe the kind of person who develops alcoholism or addiction. We grow up hearing these beliefs, seeing them in movies and on TV, and they can subtly shape what we think or believe. Most of us do not think of ourselves as “that kind of person.” If we believe it only happens to “that kind of person,” we may not see any need to take our alcohol or drug choices too seriously. Others look at the list and think maybe it does resemble them and they might feel hopeless.

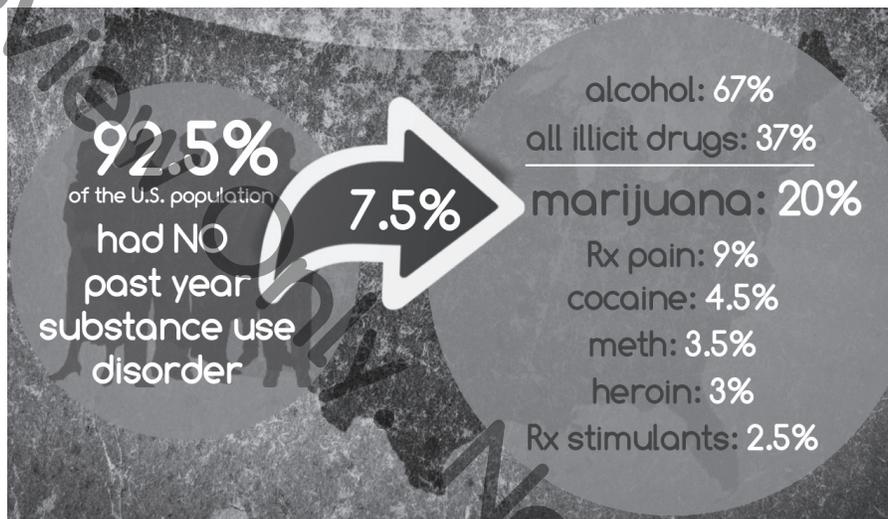


People “on the street” are not the only ones who hold these views. Researchers and other professionals sometimes hold these views too, so researchers have set up studies to find out what kind of person does develop alcoholism or addiction.

Based on these research findings, we now know people do not become addicted just because of an addictive personality or because of mental health issues. Some people have mental health issues before they develop problems with alcohol or drugs. Other people develop mental health issues after they use alcohol and drugs over time.

## KIND OF DRUG?

We saw earlier addiction does not happen because of the kind of person someone is. Just like some people say, “I’m not that kind of person.” Others will say, “My drug is not addicting.” This question is common for those who use marijuana which leads to the question is THC addictive?



Of the 7.5 percent of the US population who have any substance use disorder 2/3 have an alcohol use disorder which we would expect since it is the most commonly used and most available impairing substance. What might be unexpected is The next largest group is for cannabis use disorder. Again this makes sense because it is the next most commonly used impairing substance. What might be surprising is that this rate of cannabis use disorders equals the rate of prescription pain medications, cocaine, methamphetamine, and heron use disorders all combined. Research suggests risk for marijuana addiction seems specific to THC.



### Key Points

- Most people do not develop addiction due to mental health problems.
- Addiction is not caused by the type of person someone is.
- Research has not found an “addictive personality.”
- Happy, healthy people also have risk!
- THC can be addictive.

 **RISKS WE CAN AND CANNOT CHANGE**

CANNOT CHANGE		CAN CHANGE
<input type="checkbox"/>	Smoking	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Exercise level	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Weight	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cholesterol level	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Amount of fat and cholesterol in diet	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Male relatives with heart disease	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Female relatives with heart disease	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Activity level	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Amount of meat, eggs, fruits, and vegetables in diet	<input type="checkbox"/>

## HEART DISEASE



Let's look first at heart disease, a lifestyle-related health problem most of us are familiar with and most people believe could possibly happen to them. We tend to think very differently about our risk for developing heart disease or cancer than we do addiction. These are more alike than we might think.

The most common form of heart disease is a lifestyle-related health problem. It is related to our lifestyle choices around diet and exercise.

Many of us are familiar with heart disease and most of us believe we have some risk for developing it. Let's explore how heart disease develops and think about the advice we have been given to prevent it.

There are two types of risks for all lifestyle-related health problems—risks we can change and risks we cannot change.

Risks we can change are the personal choices we make every day. The most important choices to reduce risk for heart disease are diet, exercise, and smoking. High-risk choices increase our risk. Low-risk choices reduce our risk.

Risks we cannot change are related to our biology—our bodies. Think of the point at which heart disease develops as a trigger point. We are born with different levels of biological risk for developing heart disease. People with increased biological risk are closer to the trigger point. They can develop heart disease more quickly. Some people have greater risk for developing heart disease because their birth family has a history of heart disease. Other people have no family history of heart disease and less biological risk. A very small number of people are born with a degree of biological protection. They can still develop heart disease but as a group have extremely low rates.

Biology sets a trigger point for each lifestyle-related health problem. Our biology sets our level of risk, which determines how close we are to that trigger point. Biology also determines what choices will be low risk. Each of us has a different level of biological risk.

There is a basic formula for understanding how heart disease develops. Our choices interact with our biology to determine the outcome. When our choices reach the trigger point, we develop heart disease.



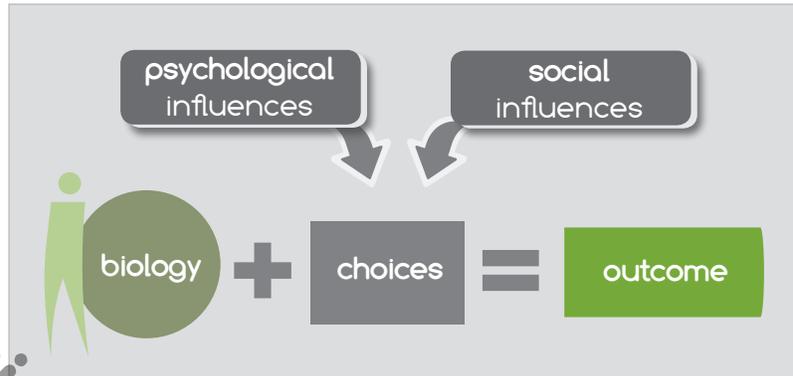
Low-risk choices for someone with a standard level of risk may be different than someone with a family history who probably has a higher level of risk. People with a family history of heart disease or people who have high cholesterol or high blood pressure may need different guidelines; some may even need medication. Also people who already have heart disease have different “recovery” guidelines to prevent problems in the future.



Psychological and social factors influence the choices we make. Psychological influences come from within. These include our attitudes, beliefs, values, preferences, and personality traits. In reference to heart disease, these might be attitudes like, “It’s a waste of time to exercise—I never see any benefit,” or preferences such as, “I prefer meat over vegetables.”

Social factors include the influence of friends, family, media, and social norms.

Psychological and social influences add a new dimension to the formula and give us a better understanding of how the pieces work together. It is easy to see how psychological and social factors can influence our choices, but we are not powerless to reduce our risk. Each person can make low-risk choices regardless of our personality or social group.



### Key Points

- Everyone has a trigger point for heart disease.
- If we make enough high-risk choices, we trigger heart disease.
- A family history of heart disease means we're closer to the trigger point. Fewer high-risk choices can trigger heart disease.
- The basic formula is **BODY/BIOLOGY + CHOICES = OUTCOME**. We can change the choices part.
- Choices interact with biology to trigger or prevent heart disease.
- Psychological and social factors influence our choices.
- Our choices give us power.



### THINGS TO CONSIDER

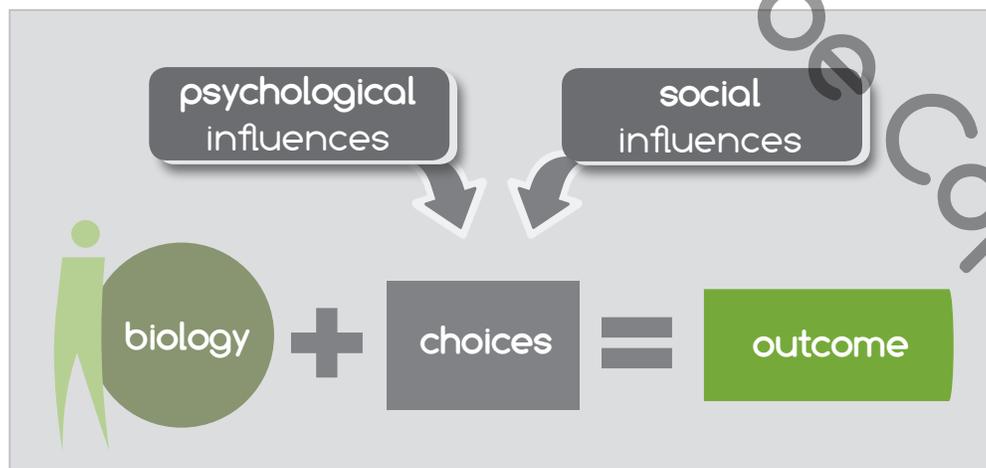
1. How does this information relate to me or someone in my family?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Do I have increased biological risk for heart disease? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What changes, if any, am I willing to make to reduce my risk for developing heart disease? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Even if I don't have a family member with heart disease, in what ways might this information still be important for me?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## THC ADDICTION

Because THC addiction is also a lifestyle-related health problem, the same principles apply. There are risks we can and cannot change for developing THC addiction:



- The risks we cannot change are biological—they have to do with how our body responds to alcohol and drugs. Biology sets a trigger point for alcoholism and addiction. Our biology sets our personal level of risk. Our personal risk level determines how close we are to the trigger point. If we have increased biological risk, we are closer to our trigger point and addiction could develop with fewer high-risk choices.
- The risks we can change are our choices. Together, our biology and our choices determine our total level of risk. We develop addiction when we make enough high-risk choices to reach the trigger point.



## BODY, BRAIN, BIOLOGY

While heart disease is centered in the heart and blood vessels, alcoholism and drug addiction are centered in the brain. Let's think of the first part of the formula as body, brain, or biology.

Biology is an important part of the risk for heart disease. Many people may not have considered how important biology is in their risk for alcoholism or drug addiction. Let's turn to research to understand more about our risk.

### Adoption Studies

adoption  
research

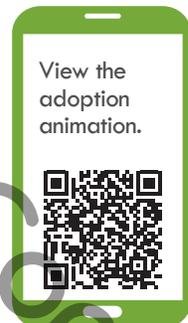


Denmark  
Sweden  
United States

Many people have noticed alcoholism and drug addiction often run in families. Is this because of biology or family environment?

One way to find out is by exploring adoption research. Adoption studies look at adults who were adopted as children. Birth parents determined their biology and adoptive parents determined their living environment. Scientists designed the research to show whether biology or family environment influenced alcoholism or drug addiction in the children. Like many of us, researchers initially believed family environment influenced the rates more strongly.

So our body, brain, and biology help explain why alcoholism and drug addiction often run in families. Our biology sets a level of risk we cannot modify or control.



### Biological Responses

The adoption research changed how people think about alcoholism and addiction. Instead of focusing on what kind of person develops alcoholism, researchers realized we might be able to identify biological differences that can help people know whether or not they have increased risk.

Studies found those who experienced the most stimulation and the most pleasure from alcohol experienced the most problems with alcohol use. Those who have a negative physical reaction have a low rate of alcoholism.

Researchers confirmed people who have a family history of serious alcohol problems are more likely to develop serious problems themselves. They also found high tolerance was a stronger predictor of who develops problems with alcohol. It was even a stronger predictor than family history by itself. Both family history and high tolerance were especially good predictors of early onset of problems.

addiction runs in families because of increased biological risk



### What About Drugs?

There are similar findings for drugs. Having a mother, father, brother, or sister with dependence on marijuana, amphetamines, or prescription sedatives increases a person's risk for having either drug or alcohol problems.

Similar to alcohol, the biological response to drugs can vary greatly from person to person. Researchers wondered if people's biological response to drugs would affect their risk for drug problems, just as it does for alcohol. So, they explored THC. They found out use was more risky for those who experienced the most positive responses.

as adults...

↑  
4x  
greater risk for alcoholism and drug addiction



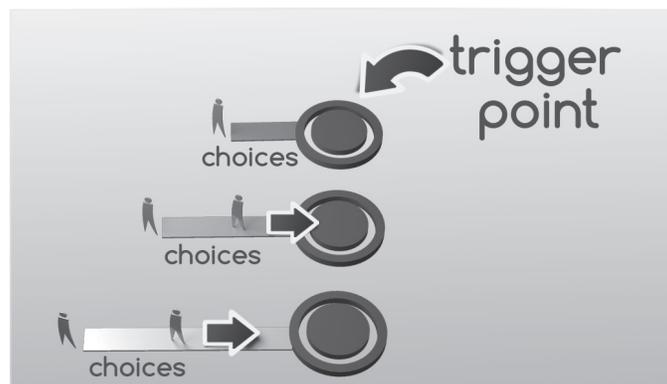
For Review



The more positive responses a person has, the more likely they are to continue use and develop serious problems.

When you think about it, this just makes sense. The more pleasurable a substance is, the more likely people are to use it. And the more they use it, the more likely it is to cause them problems. Our biology can increase or decrease our risk through pleasure.

Our biology sets our trigger point and people have different levels of biological risk. Some people have a standard level while others have greater or lesser risk. We cannot change this inherited risk. Regardless of where we start, addiction is triggered when we make enough high-risk choices to reach that point.



Only Not to be Copied.

## CHOICES

What moves us toward the trigger point? The formula for lifestyle-related health problems shows that risk comes from our choices. Our choices interact with our biology to either move us toward our trigger point or keep us away from it. Remember our choices are the risk factors we can change.



For heart disease the choices that matter are diet, exercise, and smoking. For addiction the choices that matter are the quantity and frequency of use—how much and how often we choose to use, if at all.

In two surveys of the U.S. population conducted about 10 years apart, we see the role of choices. They found the rates of those using THC in the past year doubled, and at the same time, those with THC dependence also doubled.



### Key Points

- **Biology sets our trigger point.**
- **Some people have a standard level of risk. Other people start closer to the trigger point because of increased biological risk.**
- **Whether our level of biological risk is high or low, addiction is triggered when we make enough high-risk choices to reach our trigger point.**
- **High-risk choices increase the risk of reaching our trigger point. Low-risk choices are unlikely to increase risk of reaching our trigger point.**
- **Biological responses can influence choices.**
- **Choices are the risk factor we can change. Our choices give us the power to protect the things we value.**



### Reflection Question

Think of someone in your life whom you would like to share the most important things we have explored so far in this program. What would you tell this person?

---



---

## Psychological Factors Influence Choices

Psychological factors can influence our choices. Let's explore four traits common among people who develop addiction:



1. **Sensation seeking** – feel a need to experience new things, prefer a lot of activity and stimulation, and become easily bored
2. **Gregarious** – outgoing and like to be with groups
3. **Impulsive** – spontaneous and tend to do things without planning or forethought
4. **Rebellious** – do not like to follow rules and want to do things their own way

At their best, the traits influence people to be creative or start their own business. They can also influence people to break rules, act without thinking, or violate the

law. Some people use the traits in productive ways, and some people use these traits in destructive ways. The traits are not abnormal. In fact, our society values these traits when they are focused in a productive way. Unfortunately, they can also influence people to make high-risk choices.

These traits tend to encourage social activity, and people who like to experience a lot of different sensations are more likely to use more.



For some people, opposite traits can influence high-risk choices. For example, being extremely shy might influence some people to use in order to feel comfortable enough to socialize. Those who are anxious or depressed might discover high-risk choices temporarily reduce their anxiety or depression.

Some people make high-risk choices because they have psychological or emotional problems. There are also a lot of mentally healthy people who make high-risk choices to relax, unwind, or socialize and have fun. People use for a lot of reasons, not just because they have problems. Why people use is not as important as how much and how often they make high-risk choices.



### We all want to be happy!

Everyone wants to be happy, and research has shown a simple way to make us happier. It even makes us more attractive to other people!

Every day before going to bed, make a list of three or more things you are grateful for and why you're grateful for those things. That is it! It makes gratitude conscious in our lives. People who do this are happier within about three weeks. The effect stays if we keep doing it.

Conscious gratitude helps us be happier!

## Social Factors Influence Choices



Social factors can influence people to make low-risk or high-risk choices. Groups that accept and encourage drug use have higher rates of alcoholism and drug addiction. This is the most important way social factors influence rates of addiction.

Social encouragement to make high-risk choices is built into our everyday lives. Because it is so common, we may not even notice it. Things like social media, “hemp” fests, T-shirts, bachelor or bachelorette parties, house parties, gaming, and movies like “Pineapple Express” can influence our choices.



### Key Points

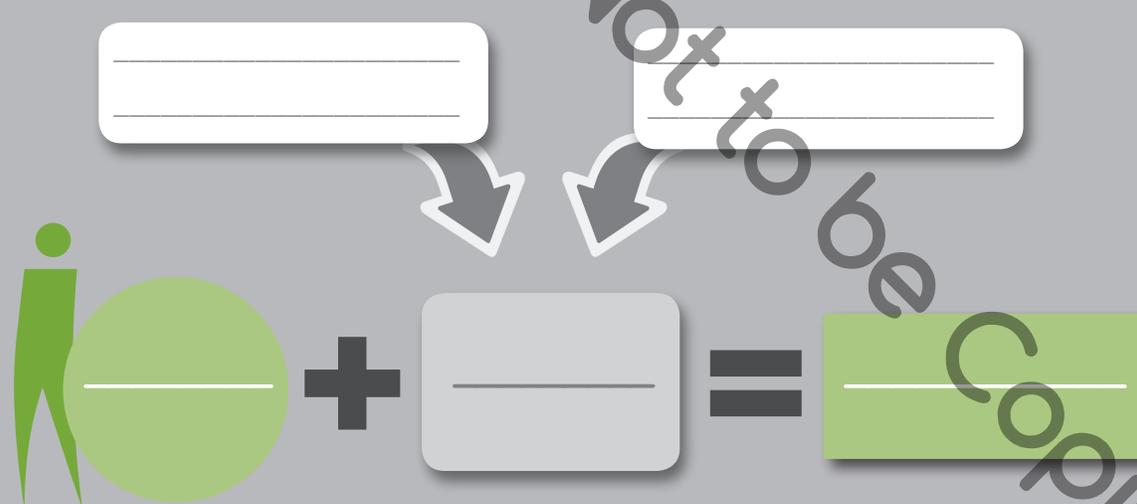
- Family history is one measure of increased biological risk.
- Risk for addiction is not limited to people who have a family history of those problems.
- A person who makes low-risk choices is less likely to trigger addiction. A person who makes high-risk choices is more likely to trigger addiction.
- Choices are the one part of the formula we can change.
- People who are sensation seekers, gregarious, impulsive and/or rebellious are more likely to make high-risk choices and experience problems. Shyness, anxiety, stress, or depression may also increase risk. Any feeling, attitude, or belief that influences us to make high-risk choices is worth paying attention to.
- Personality can influence the choices people make about drugs. However, personality traits do not cause addiction.
- Groups that accept or encourage high-risk choices have higher rates of addiction.
- Anyone who makes high-risk choices can develop addiction.

 **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

Working with a partner or in a small group, fill in the blanks on the formula below. After you answer the questions, be ready to explain how what we have explored supports your answers.

1. Who can develop addiction? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How does it develop? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How can it be prevented? \_\_\_\_\_
4. If a person does not have a family history of addiction, why is this formula still important to understand? \_\_\_\_\_

**What Research Says**



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

 **Reflection Question**

Something new or surprising to me about what we have covered so far is:

\_\_\_\_\_

## How Does High Tolerance Trick Us?



Most people use their own tolerance level to determine “how much is too much” for them. They may believe they have not had too much until they slur their speech, fall down, or get sick. As long as they are not doing these things, they feel they are “handling it.” By the time obvious physical impairment

occurs, it may be too late to prevent a problem.

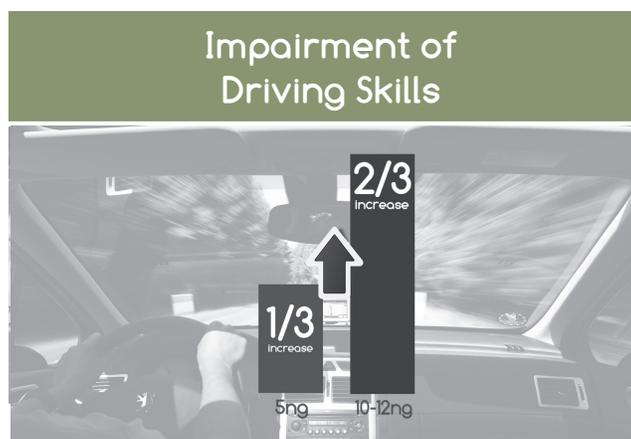
We have two tolerance levels. People typically use their physical tolerance level to gauge how much they can “handle.” But, our mental tolerance level is at a much lower level and increases more slowly. We need those mental skills to respond to emergency situations. If we rely on our physical rather than mental tolerance to determine impairment, our risk for problems goes up.

If I continue to make high-risk choices, both physical and mental tolerance will increase, though at different rates. My physical tolerance will go up faster than my mental tolerance, tricking me into believing I am less impaired than I am. The point where I am impaired and the point where I know I am impaired get further and further apart. As a result, I may believe it is safe for me to drive when it is not.



## THC Levels Impair Driving Skills

At 5 ng about one-third of driving skills are impaired. Between 10-12ng about two-thirds of driving skills are impaired. This was regardless of whether the THC was inhaled or eaten.



## IMPAIRMENT AND DRUGS

When we hear about impaired driving, we usually think of alcohol. But impaired driving can occur with many substances. All substances that people use to get high, as well as many prescription and some over-the-counter drugs, can cause impairment and impairment problems.



### Key Points

- THC users have increased risk for impairment problems related to driving, similar to people drinking to a BAL of 0.10.
- Using THC and alcohol combined increases risk more than using either one alone.
- Stimulants, narcotics, and many medications can impair driving skills and greatly increase risk for problems.
- Designated drivers can reduce arrests and traffic fatalities. Yet, if we drink high-risk amounts or use drugs when using a designated driver, we increase our risk for all other types of problems such as falling.
- Extra effort cannot overcome impairment.



### THINGS TO CONSIDER

Something new or surprising to me about drugs and driving is:

---

Does using a designated driver prevent impairment problems? Why or why not?

---

## CHOICES

Our individual tolerance level determines how much use will cause impairment for each of us. When we use enough THC to reach our tolerance level, we become impaired and are more likely to experience problems. Every time we exceed our tolerance level, we raise it. If we think back to the formula, our choices are the only thing that we can control to avoid all types of impairment problems.



### Key Points

- The combination of our Body, Brain, Biology plus our Choices determines whether or not we become impaired.
- Tolerance is initially set by our biology and can go up or come back down depending on our choices.
- As tolerance goes up, sensitivity goes down, and we are less aware we are impaired.
- Mental impairment occurs before physical impairment.
- Physical tolerance develops more quickly than mental tolerance, meaning we become increasingly mentally impaired before reaching physical impairment.
- High tolerance feels protective, but it actually increases our risk.



### Reflection Questions

Something new I have learned about high tolerance is:

---

---

What I would like to tell a friend about high tolerance is:

---

## A CLOSER LOOK AT MY DRUG CHOICES

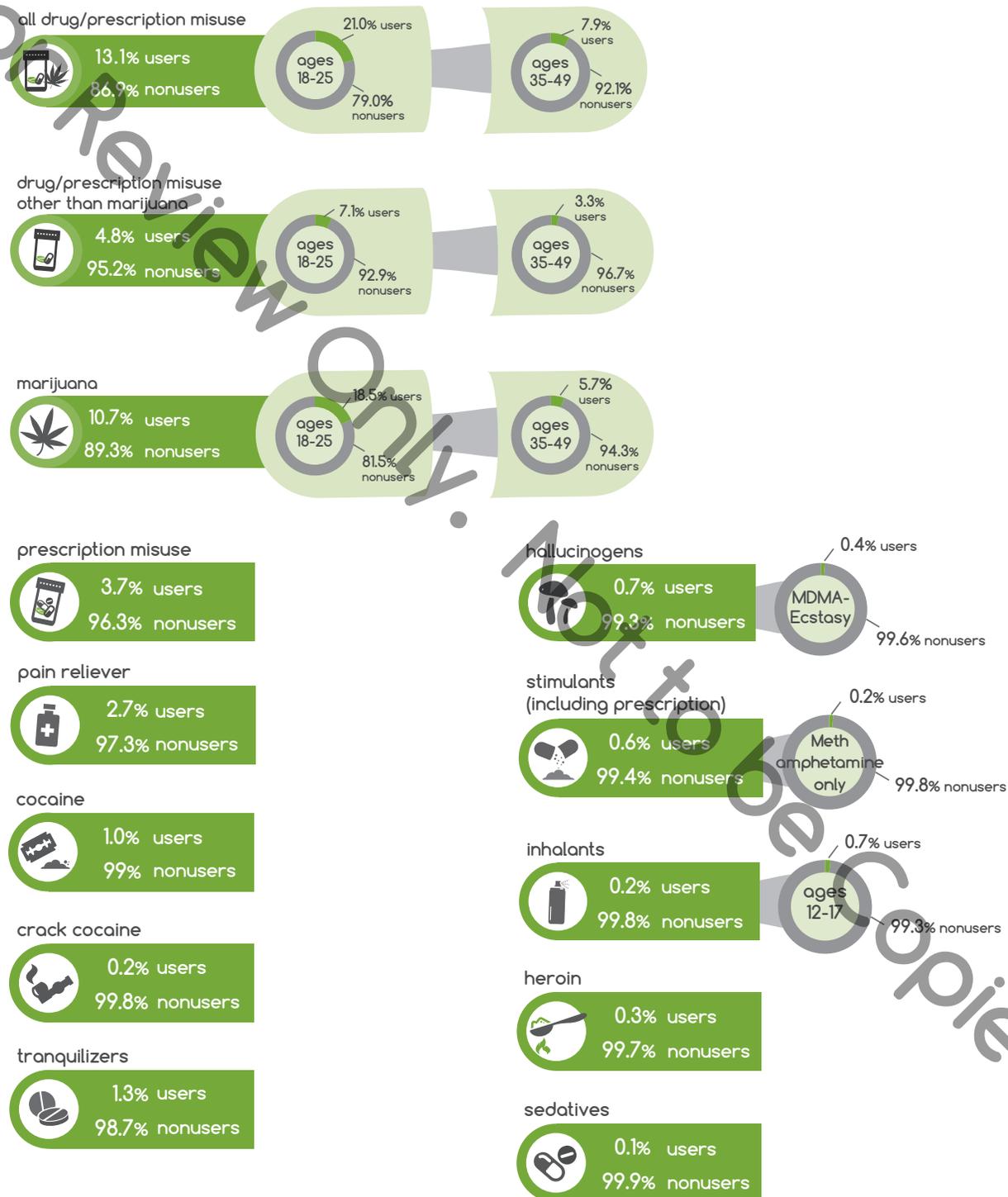
Review the list of drugs on the next page. If you had any occasions of non-medical use of these drug types in the past 30 days, please note the percentage of people who report using those same types of drugs. Some of the categories are also broken down by age groups. Below are some definitions of the different drug groups.

**Non-medical use of prescription drugs (prescription drug misuse)** is defined as any use without a prescription of your own or using the drug to get high.

**Hallucinogens** include LSD, PCP, peyote, mescaline, psilocybin mushrooms (“shrooms”), or Ecstasy (MDMA).

**Inhalants** include nitrous oxide, amyl nitrite, cleaning fluids, gasoline, paint, aerosol sprays, glue, or any other substance breathed in for the purpose of getting high. (This does not include “snorting” cocaine or other drugs.)

## PAST MONTH USE AMONG U.S. CITIZENS AGES 18-49\*



\*Ages are 18-49 unless otherwise noted. Except for inhalants, a lower percentage of people younger or older than this age range reported using. Additional age groups are included where there are substantial differences within the broader age range of 18-49 (as with "any drug misuse" and marijuana) or when another age group reported higher levels of use (as with inhalants). All data are from online analysis of the 2012 National Survey on Drug Use and Health [United States Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2012. ICPSR34933-v1, Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2013-11-26. <http://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR34933.v1>].

## FACTORS THAT CAN INCREASE RISK FOR ALCOHOL IMPAIRMENT

We have talked about impairment problems and there are additional factors that can increase impairment to alcohol and perhaps other substances as well. Any of the following can increase impairment. To avoid problems it's important to understand these factors.



adjusting  
the low-risk  
guidelines...

### Less Body Fluid

Drink for drink, a person with less body fluid usually becomes more impaired than a person who has more body fluid to dilute the alcohol in the blood. Total body fluid is determined by body size, gender, and age.

Women often have a smaller body size and also have less fluid per pound of weight. This results in greater impairment more quickly. Also, younger adolescents and the elderly have less body fluid and are likely to become more impaired.

### Drugs/Medication

Many medication bottles, both over-the-counter and prescribed, are labeled, "Do not drink alcohol while taking this medication." Drinking alcohol with many medications increases impairment. It is important for people taking any type of prescription or over-the-counter drug to check with their doctor or pharmacist before drinking alcohol or taking any other kind of drug. Drinking alcohol and using THC can create more impairment than either substance alone and put us at more risk for problems. Combining alcohol with illegal substances can also create additional risks.



### Illness/Tiredness

A person who is ill, recovering from a recent illness, or who is tired is likely to experience greater impairment than usual from alcohol.

### Empty Stomach

A person who drinks on an empty stomach will experience more impairment than usual from drinking.

#### Key Points

- Anyone can develop addiction. However, those with a family history, a high tolerance, or unusual pleasure responses have increased risk.
- High tolerance is not an ability but a liability. The higher our tolerance, the closer we are to our trigger point for developing addiction.
- If we continue to make more high-risk choices, our tolerance will reach our trigger point and addiction will be present.
- We have a trigger point for all lifestyle-related health problems, and our choices determine whether or not we will develop them.

#### Reflection Questions

The most important thing to me about my formula is...

---

---

My reaction to these guidelines is...

---

---

My motivation for following my guidelines is...

---

---

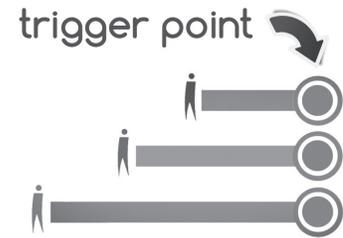
---

## PHASES OF USE

We have used this image of our level of biological risk to visualize how THC addiction occurs and how it can be prevented.

How close am I to my trigger point?

How do I know if I already reached my trigger point?



At this point people often have questions such as, “How close am I to my trigger point?” or, “How do I know if I have already reached my trigger point?”, or “If I seem to be getting close, what can I do about it?”

This unit will answer these questions by focusing on the space that lies between the level of risk and the trigger point. We will divide the journey into four phases to examine what happens as people travel the path between their level of risk and the trigger point. We will explore and reflect about one low-risk phase and three high-risk phases.

The phases are mostly about the journey toward the trigger point. Only the final phase—the Red Phase—describes addiction. By learning about all four phases, we can determine where our choices have placed us. Not everyone experiences all phases or everything within a phase, but everyone can find themselves in one of these four phases—so this is a great chance to learn more about ourselves and our experiences with THC.



It's choice - not chance - that determines your destiny.

~Jean Nidetch~

## DEFINING STANDARDS

To define low-risk and high-risk drinking choices, we need to start with a definition of a standard drink.

### What is a Standard Drink?



A “standard drink” refers to 0.6 ounce of pure alcohol in any alcoholic beverage. Beer, wine, and distilled spirits all contain the same type and amount of alcohol in a standard serving.

### What About Medicines?

THC, prescription drugs, and over the counter drugs always have risk even when used as directed. With prescription drugs the physician manages risks through specific quantity and frequency instructions. Since marijuana cards are permits rather than medical prescriptions, they typically lack this guidance for THC.

## THE GREEN PHASE

### Low-Risk choices characterize the Green Phase

Low risk does not mean safe. Low risk means there is less chance of harm or danger. We use research on risk for health and impairment problems to identify what is high risk and what is low risk. We do not base what is low risk on legal status for any substance.

### Getting “high” or “buzzed” is high risk.

Any time a person is impaired on any substance, it is high risk. While this applies to both alcohol and drugs, there is one main difference. Most adults can consume a “standard drink” of alcohol without impairment. But, the “standard dose” of most drugs is generally enough to cause impairment, which is why people use them.

### What is low risk for non-medical purposes?

Drugs are almost always taken for the purpose of getting at least a little high or buzzed. In addition, for illegal substances there is no standardization. In states that have legalized marijuana, there is standardized packaging but THC levels are only estimates. Research indicates these estimates are often incorrect. For example, in a study of labeled edibles sold in legal dispensaries of 47 different brands 83% were incorrectly labeled for THC content.

For all the above reasons, the only low-risk choice we can identify for non-medical use of drugs including THC is abstinence.

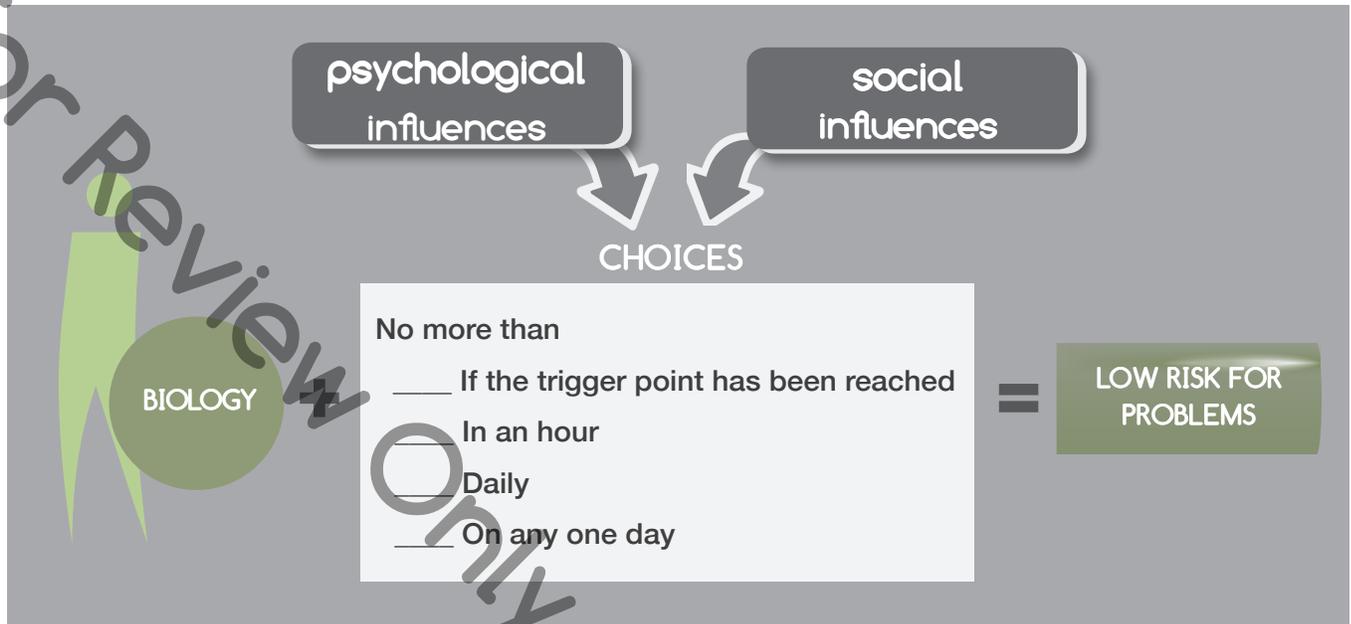
### What is low risk for alcohol?

There are reasons for drinking alcohol other than getting high. A person may drink a beer as a refreshment on a hot day to cool off or because it goes well with pizza. Another person might have wine because it goes well with steak. There is substantial research to guide us on defining what is low risk for alcohol.



## Key Points

- Low risk does not mean “no risk;” it means less chance of harm or danger.
- The only known low-risk choice for THC used for non-medical purposes is abstinence.
- A “standard drink” means one 12 oz. beer (5%), or one 5 oz. glass of wine (12%) or one 1 1/2 oz. serving of liquor (80 proof).
- Risk for health problems begins at three standard drinks per day.
- Risk for impairment problems begins at more than one standard drink in an hour.
- For medications, follow the label, use as prescribed, consult with a physician, and remember that impairment can be present.
- The only low-risk recovery guideline for people who have already reached their trigger point is 0.

 BUILDING LOW-RISK ALCOHOL GUIDELINES

## REVIEW

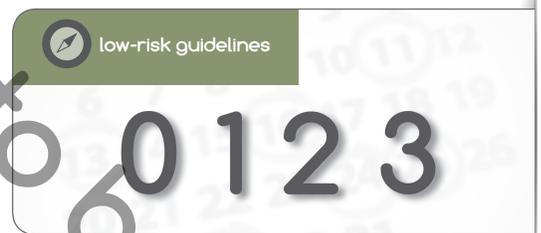
## Low-Risk Guidelines

For some people, 0 is always the recommended low-risk choice:

- People who are taking certain medications.
- People who have certain health problems such as addiction or liver disease.
- Women who are pregnant or who are planning to get pregnant.
- People with increased risk for cancers like breast and colon cancer may also want to consider drinking infrequently or abstaining.

For certain times and certain places, zero is the only low-risk choice consistent with the law or policies.

- The legal purchase age is 21. No matter what our age, there are times and places where drinking is either illegal or against policy (e.g., work or school).
- When driving, boating, or operating other machinery.



## THE GREEN PHASE

The Green Phase includes people who abstain from alcohol and drugs as well as those who consistently follow their 0 1 2 3 guidelines for alcohol. People in this phase do not have an increase in tolerance because they are not becoming impaired, and they do not move closer to their trigger point as a result. The majority of people in the general population spend most of their lives in the Green Phase.

### People in the Green Phase:

- Make 0 1 2 3 low-risk choices.
- Do not have an increase in tolerance.
- Have a take-it-or-leave-it feeling about alcohol.
- Do not use recreational drugs.
- Use medications only as prescribed.
- Are not likely to develop alcohol- or drug-related health or impairment problems.
- Protect the things they value.



### Response to the Green Phase

People can stay in the Green Phase for life if they continue to make low-risk choices. There is nothing about the Green Phase that leads to any sort of progression to the high-risk phases.



#### Reflection Question

What are the benefits of being in the Green Phase?

---

---

 **GREEN PHASE SELF-REFLECTION**

- Y  N 1. My choices about alcohol, THC, and drugs are protecting the things I value.
- Y  N 2. I use my medications as prescribed.
- Y  N 3. I always follow the 0 1 2 3 guidelines for alcohol, which might include abstaining from alcohol.
- Y  N 4. I always follow the 0 drug guidelines, which includes no recreational use of drugs.
- Y  N 5. I adjust my 0 1 2 3 guidelines downward when needed to prevent problems, like when tired or on medication.



Once I begin making high-risk choices, how much and how often I use becomes the most powerful predictor of what happens to me.

**Transition to the High-Risk Phases**

The transition from low-risk choices to high-risk choices is perhaps the most important transition that occurs in the phases. What might seem to be an insignificant choice at the time is actually a major life change. High-risk choices include recreational drug use, using prescription medication not as prescribed, drinking more than one per hour, more than two per day, or more than three standard drinks on any occasion, or not adjusting for individual differences that could increase risk for problems.

Many things can influence us to move from low-risk choices to high-risk choices. Influences can be as simple as the wish to be like our friends and have a good time or as complex as experiencing post-traumatic



stress disorder. Whatever the reason for the shift from low-risk to high-risk choices, once we begin making high-risk choices, the choices become the most powerful predictor of movement through the phases.

## The High-Risk Phases: Yellow, Orange, and Red

Once we begin to make high-risk choices, we enter the high-risk phases. High-risk choices interact with our biology to determine our progression along the path through the phases.

### THE YELLOW PHASE

High-risk choices characterize the Yellow Phase. People enter the Yellow Phase either by beginning to use drugs, using prescription drugs to get high, or drinking more than the 0 1 2 3 guidelines. We increase our risk for problems anytime we make high-risk choices. However, in the Yellow Phase we are beginning to see a pattern of high-risk choices emerge.

#### Reward and Pleasure Response

If I feel nothing or don't like the feeling, I am not likely to continue making high-risk choices, but the more it does for me, the more likely I am to continue.

#### Increased Tolerance



brain changes  
increased  
use means  
increased  
tolerance

In the Yellow Phase, people might make high-risk choices because they want to experience the high. As a result, brain changes occur.

The first brain change is increased tolerance. As tolerance goes up, it takes more alcohol or drugs to get the same effect. Tolerance may develop more slowly and be harder to see with some drugs such as THC, but it does occur with most.

Some THC users say they do not see an increase in tolerance, yet others do, and tolerance is measurable in laboratory studies. Why is there a disconnect between science and experience? Since THC is typically smoked or vaped, people can vary their dose by inhaling more deeply or holding it in their lungs for different periods of time. There is also no standard potency of THC in marijuana, so people are getting different doses. Since THC tolerance develops more slowly than some other drugs, it is harder to notice and people are less likely to believe it has happened. Still, research supports tolerance increases when using.

## Memory

The second brain change is in memory. There are several ways high-risk choices begin to affect our memory.

### Short-term Memory Impairment

Regular users might have impairment in short-term memory, even when not using. This makes it hard to clearly remember things we recently heard, learned, or experienced. We might do well remembering things learned a long time ago but are less able to remember things just learned or upcoming appointments. These types of memory problems can increase stress.



short-term  
memory  
impairment

### State Dependent Restriction May Begin

Another memory change that can occur in the Yellow Phase is called state dependent restriction. State dependent restriction means what we learn or experience in one mental or emotional state is best recalled in that same state. This can occur with alcohol, THC, and a variety of other drugs. The things we learn while sober are recalled best when we are sober. However, things we learn while using alcohol or drugs are not remembered as well when we are sober.



State dependent restriction limits us by causing us to believe we can be at our best only when drinking or using drugs. We can relearn these skills when we are abstaining or making low-risk choices. Until we relearn them, state dependent restriction influences us to continue making high-risk choices whenever we are in a situation that calls for our state-dependent skills.

### Memory Blackouts

memory  
blackouts

Memory blackouts happen with alcohol and with some drugs, especially some sedatives such as benzodiazepines and some sleeping pills. THC does not cause blackouts but sometimes there are multiple drugs being used together and blackouts can occur. We are not passed out, but we are

unable to remember things that happened while we were awake and making high-risk choices. They are blank holes in our memory. Sometimes people joke about blackouts, and they can seem funny. However, when you think about it, putting enough of a chemical in my brain to prevent it from recording memory is serious. If I say or do something that damages a relationship, I may never know what happened, how it happened, or even that it did happen.



### Muddy Thinking

Muddy thinking refers to changes in our ability to think clearly and quickly. It especially affects the kind of mental skills we use to solve problems, prioritize, work a puzzle, figure out why a car is not

working, or do any other mental task that requires understanding things we cannot actually see or feel. Muddy thinking in the Yellow Phase can be quite subtle. For example, the guy in this picture is trying to figure out why his car engine is not working. Normally he would be good at this, but today, he can't quite figure it out. This problem is most likely to occur after we drink, smoke, or use a large amount in a day.



The choices I make today affect me—and possibly others—tomorrow.

## Moving from “Take-it-or-Leave-it” to “Anticipation”

Some of these brain changes set us up to increasingly value THC/weed. In the Yellow Phase, we begin to value high-risk choices more and the attitude shifts from “take-it-or-leave-it” to “anticipation.” People begin to look forward to high-risk use of THC about as much as the event. High-risk choices are now an important part of social life. Doing things without using might not seem as much fun.



## Social Dependence May Begin

As alcohol or drug use becomes more central to our social lives, we may begin to seek out people whose use of THC is similar to our own. Over time, these relationships become increasingly important. Because most of our friends use in similar patterns, that level of use begins to seem normal. The use may begin to define our relationships, which can lead to something called social dependence. Social dependence means a group relies on use for its normal functioning. This does not necessarily mean people in the group actively pressure others to make high-risk choices. However, to be an active member of that group, it is almost necessary in order to fit in and feel comfortable with the group. Other people who do not use may seem boring.



### Here are some other ways to know if I am in a socially dependent group:

- What would it be like to be in that group and not use?
- Would I truly fit in if I did not use THC?

Try to imagine what it would be like for that group to regularly get together for socializing without anyone engaging in use. Would the people in the group be comfortable? Would they have much fun? Would they stay together?

Social dependence makes the use, and all that goes along with the Yellow Phase, seem normal. For that group, it is normal. It starts to seem like people who do not use THC are the unusual ones. This confuses group members about how dangerous the high-risk choices are. It seems like “everybody does it.” In reality, most people do not make high-risk choices.

### People in the Yellow Phase might experience:

- Increased tolerance
- State dependent restriction
- Muddy thinking
- Social dependence
- Greater risk of being harmed by others
- Impairment problems
- Impaired memory
- Short-term and long-term memory impairment
- Anticipation of THC use

### Response to the Yellow Phase

We can return to the Green Phase by making low-risk choices. However, we are likely to progress to the Orange Phase if we continue making high-risk choices.



#### Reflection Question

What risks do you see beginning in the Yellow Phase?

---

---

**YELLOW PHASE SELF-REFLECTION**

- Y  N 1. When I drink, I often drink more than the 0 1 2 3 guidelines.
- Y  N 2. When I drink, I sometimes get impaired.
- Y  N 3. Sometimes I use THC, other drugs, or medication to get high.
- Y  N 4. My tolerance to alcohol, THC other or drugs has increased.
- Y  N 5. I often find myself looking forward to the next time I will make high-risk choices with alcohol, THC, or other drugs.

**THE ORANGE PHASE**

In the Orange Phase, high-risk choices are becoming much more important in our lives. This phase is characterized by the emergence of psychological dependence.

Psychological dependence on THC is a direct outcome of high-risk choices and once present, it becomes a powerful influence on choices. Psychological dependence incorporates four separate but related experiences.

**1. Integration and Preoccupation Into Life**

As we move into the Orange Phase, high-risk use often becomes an important part of life rituals.

Early in the Orange Phase, we continue to anticipate high-risk use, but slowly we begin to miss the THC if it is not present when we expect it. In those situations, our brain increasingly responds to the sights, sounds, smells, and people associated with use by firing in sections associated with desire, motivation, and action. At this point, the anticipation we felt about using in the Yellow Phase is moving to preoccupation.

High-risk THC use is now a central part of life. For some people, it becomes part of their identity; it may take on hobby status. More time, energy, and focus are invested in our use.



integration/  
preoccupation

## 2. State Dependent Restriction Increases



In the Yellow Phase, social skills began to be tied up in state dependent restriction. Any time we want to use that skill comfortably, we have to use enough to get us back in that state. By the Orange Phase, state dependent restriction may occur in so many skill areas we become increasingly dependent on high-risk choices to feel competent and confident.

One of the unfortunate outcomes of state dependent restriction is starting to see ourselves as inadequate and unable to function unless we are using. State dependent restriction may cause low self-esteem because we begin to believe, “I’m not very good in social settings or at school or some work settings, but THC lets me do it.” In this way, state dependent restriction is a loss of freedom to use our skills. In reality, we own the skills.

## 3. Sense of Relationship

sense of relationship



Another aspect of increasing importance is we develop a sense of relationship with our favorite substance. It might sound odd to think of forming a relationship with THC, but that is how the experience is beginning to look and feel. The integration into our lives and the state dependent restriction create a sense of relationship. High-risk choices might become as important as other relationships in our lives. When something good or bad happens to us, most of us want to share that with someone we care about for celebration or support. However, for people in the Orange Phase, our first thought might be to use to celebrate or feel better.

## 4. Defense of Choices

Whether or not we see use as a relationship, it has become important to life in the Orange Phase. People defend high-risk choices against criticism, just as we might defend someone we love. We often see the benefits as similar to a relationship, a job, our religious beliefs, or anything else important in our lives. When we do experience problems, we might defend them as minor or a small price to pay for the pleasure of high-risk use. We tend to place the blame on things other than our high-risk choices. We are not likely to go places where our THC choices are criticized or unwelcome, just as we would not go somewhere a person we loved was not welcome. We are more likely to choose settings where people accept our THC use.



### Brain Changes in the Orange Phase

As we move through the Orange Phase, high-risk choices are changing our brains in ways that both strengthen the psychological dependence and move us closer to the Red Phase.



### More Stress...Less Reward

An important shift happens as we move further the Orange Phase. Our brain changes in how it responds to both pleasure and stress. Over time, we experience even more stress and less reward.

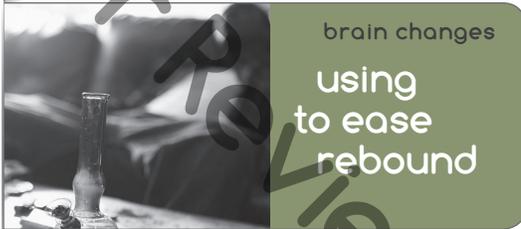


### Emotions Influence Choices

In the Orange Phase, emotions often trigger a desire to make high-risk choices. Our emotions begin to influence our choices and high-risk decisions become less about thinking and more of an automatic response. In this way, the emotions within us, as well as the people around us, can influence high-risk choices.

## Rebound Effects

Sometimes people with a hangover learn that a morning drink or drug “bump” eases some of the symptoms. This is a rebound effect of the central nervous system.



For example, one of the effects of THC is we become more focused when high. When the THC wears off, there can be a rebound effect and we have trouble focusing. It then becomes hard to make decisions or to pay attention. Another effect of THC is relaxation.

But when the effect wears off, people report it is harder to relax. They feel irritable, more aggressive and anxious, and can't sleep. They also report a loss of appetite.

What is important about these rebounds? First, they signal we are changing our brain. Second, our response to the rebounds can influence us to make more high-risk choices. People quickly learn a little more of the same substance takes away the rebound.

## More Frequent Muddy Thinking

The technical name for muddy thinking is “impaired executive function.” The executive function of the brain coordinates flexibility and speed of thought, information processing, problem-solving, and other abstract thinking skills. These impairments occur during and for a period of time after the high-risk use of THC.



Impairment in executive functioning also affects our reaction time and our ability to pay attention to more than one thing at a time. Our ability to plan, set goals, prioritize work, keep the big picture in mind, and weigh risks and benefits are impaired and we may not be operating mentally at our best. This “muddy thinking” can make us miss opportunities or make decisions for our lives that are less than ideal.

## Outcomes of the Orange Phase

People have greater risk for experiencing health or impairment problems as they make more high-risk choices in more settings. Problems might include a DUI arrest, a relationship problem, financial problems, injury to self or others, less focus at work or school or even missed days. In fact, compared to the Green or Yellow Phases, a significant number of people die in the Orange Phase due to DUI crashes, drownings, or falls. For alcohol, health problems such as stomach problems, pancreatitis, or high blood pressure can occur. Health problems related to THC use can include uncontrolled vomiting, paranoia and other psychosis symptoms, and psychotic disorders. We can also experience emotional, social, and financial problems.



## People in the Orange Phase:

- Are psychologically dependent on THC
- Have increases in tolerance
- May use to calm rebound effects
- Integrate THC into lifestyle
- Experience muddy thinking
- Seek people whose use is similar and might experience social dependence that normalizes the experiences of the Orange Phase

## Response to the Orange Phase

The Orange Phase is a critical time. Lives, relationships, and careers are often damaged in the Orange Phase. Sometimes people will put off making change, thinking “there is plenty of time.” But, in many ways, the Orange Phase is like coming to a fork in the road. Once at this fork, we have a choice to make. We can choose to go back to the Green Phase or progress into the Red Phase. People in the Orange Phase clearly face a lifesaving choice.

can stay in green phase for life

low-risk guidelines

0 1 2 3

Encouraging research shows many people in the Orange Phase do return to the Green Phase. Some decide to abstain from alcohol for one reason or another, while others drink low-risk quantities. For those using THC, a return to the Green Phase means abstaining. Sometimes people wonder if it is possible

to go back to the Yellow Phase. While it may be possible to go back for a time, research indicates it is unlikely a person will stay there without returning to the Orange or even the Red Phase.

A return to the Green Phase may be especially likely for those people who attend a group like this and now know what to do. Many people in the Orange Phase, even with the advantage of the information learned in this program, need some type of counseling or support as they try to reverse the central place THC has taken in their lives.

Returning to low-risk choices brings several benefits. Those in the Orange Phase who return to low-risk choices will find their tolerance dropping and muddy thinking clearing. As high-risk choices become less important, other relationships often improve. Most health problems are reversible in the early stages. Depression, impaired executive function, and other physical problems can be reversed if we consistently make low-risk choices. For those who have not progressed beyond the Orange Phase, it is possible to continue to use alcohol in low-risk amounts.



**Reflection Question**

The most important thing to me about the Orange Phase is...

---



---

**ORANGE PHASE SELF-REFLECTION**

- Y  N 1. Feeling good and having fun by getting high is an important part of my life.
- Y  N 2. I need to cut down on my THC, alcohol, or drug use.
- Y  N 3. When something good or bad happens to me, I usually want to drink, use THC, or other drugs.
- Y  N 4. I would feel like I lost something important if I never got a buzz or high again.
- Y  N 5. I have integrated THC, alcohol, or other drugs into my life; it is like a hobby for me.
- Y  N 6. THC, alcohol, or other drugs help me function at my best.
- Y  N 7. For me, games, concerts, or other events are opportunities to drink or use THC, alcohol, or other drugs.
- Y  N 8. I only find parties interesting if there is THC, alcohol, or other drugs there.
- Y  N 9. If people express concern about my choices, I feel defensive or actively defend the choices.
- Y  N 10. To avoid future problems, I would be willing to change something in my lifestyle to protect my use instead of changing my THC, alcohol, or drug use. Examples:
- Switched jobs because my drug testing requirements.
  - Taking afternoon or night classes instead of morning classes because my high-risk choices make getting up in the morning difficult.

## THE RED PHASE

The Red Phase has all of the characteristics of the Orange Phase. Psychological dependence and social dependence are typically both an important part of the Red Phase and are often more intense.

Addiction separates the Orange Phase from the Red Phase. After we reach the trigger point, we have addiction.

### Brain Changes in the Red Phase

#### Compulsion to Use

In the Yellow Phase, changes in the brain increase our motivation to use, which we experience as anticipation. In the Orange Phase, continued changes contribute to preoccupation and a drive to use even more. In the Red Phase, additional changes lead to a sense of compulsion. The desire to use might be so compelling we might feel we are no longer making a choice to use. Instead, we feel we are using because we must. As a result of the compulsion, we might find ourselves using at times we never would have in the past. We might also do things that threaten things we value or our very life.

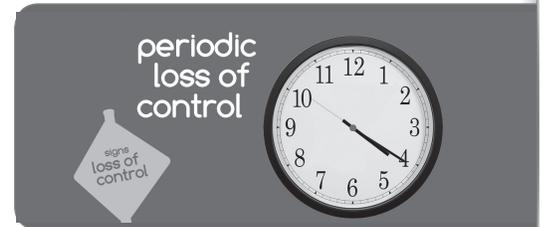
#### PHYSICAL ADDICTION

- My body and brain have now come to depend on THC for normal functioning.
- THC cues can now create a strong craving to use.
- I sometimes experience loss of control. For example, using only on the weekends because I can't trust myself to use during the week and also get important things accomplished.
- If I do not have THC, I might experience some degree of withdrawal.



## Periodic Loss of Control

In the Red Phase, once we begin to use, we experience a sense of not being in charge of how much or how long we will use. This is called loss of control. Along with compulsion, it is a primary indicator of addiction.



One way people experience loss of control is once they start using, they might not stop until some outside force stops them—the drugs run out, the money is gone, or the person is simply too tired, wired, or sick to continue. It is as if there is no internal mechanism to take over and say “enough.”

Another sign would be to use external measures to control use such as:

- Only using on weekends because I cannot trust myself to use during the week. I might not make it to work or class the next day.
- Only buying a limited amount to control the amount I use.
- Hanging out with people who use less than I do in hopes that I will use less as well.
- Never using until after 5 p.m., because if I start at lunch, I might not stop and might not make it back to work or class.

Loss of control with THC looks very similar to loss of control with nicotine. It is common for people who have quit smoking to decide to have just one cigarette, and they do. They know they are flirting with danger, but they convince themselves it is okay. Later, they decide to have just one more. Three weeks later, they are back to smoking a pack a day. Their intention was to be an occasional user, but they have lost control of their intended quantity and frequency of use. This pattern is seen more with tobacco, opiates, and THC.

### How can I tell if my use is out of control?

A desire to stop but repeatedly returning to use would indicate loss of control. With prescription medications, the inability to use them in the prescribed amounts indicates loss of control.

For alcohol, when some people hear the guidelines for the first time they have a reaction like, “I could not do this.” They know through experience they cannot consistently follow the low-risk guidelines. This is an indication of loss of control.

### Craving



People who are experiencing loss of control may also experience an intense craving due to changes taking place in the brain. This craving can begin with subtle reminders of the use—certain people, places, times of day, some pictures of the drug, and so forth. The desire to use can be quite strong, driving a person to

use despite thinking to themselves this is not the best idea. Because of loss of control, once people in the Red Phase do begin to use, they are often unable to control the amount.

### Varying degrees of withdrawal

People often believe withdrawal is necessary in order to be addicted. Different degrees of withdrawal can occur with many substances, including THC. However, withdrawal is not necessary for addiction to be present. Many people in the Red Phase do not experience withdrawal. Even when people do, it is often mild and not recognized as withdrawal. People often experience craving, irritability, nervousness, anxiety, restlessness, anger, sleeplessness, decreased appetite, or vivid dream states.

### People in the Red Phase:

- Have reached the trigger point and have addiction
- Experience periodic loss of control
- Might have withdrawal
- Are likely to experience craving

### Response to the Red Phase



0 Drugs  
0 Drinking

If people who are addicted continue, they typically die younger and experience a lot of pain and problems along the way. By this point, they have jeopardized things they value for a long time and may have already lost some of the things they value most in life. It does not have to end this way. We can choose another path.

Just like other lifestyle-related health problems, every day many people begin a lifestyle of recovery and protect the things they value most in life. As you can see, the move from the Red Phase to the low-risk lifestyle of abstinence is farther away, but we can do it. Have you heard the phrase, “It’s simple but not easy”? Making changes in our choices is hard work, but if we see a need for change and are committed to change, we can do it. We may find additional support through a support group, counselor, or treatment program beneficial. We can put our lives back together. Millions of people have done it.



#### Reflection Question

The most significant thing to me about the Red Phase is...

---

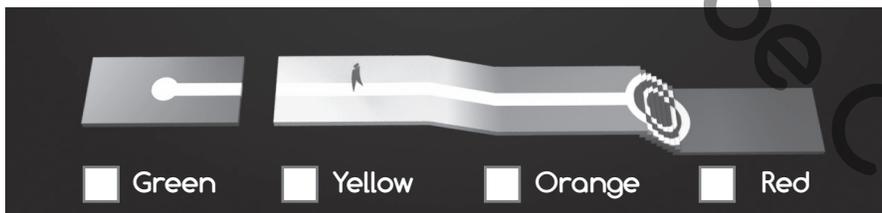
---

**RED PHASE SELF-REFLECTION**

- Y  N 1. I have tried to cut back on my THC, alcohol, or other drug use, but could not always do it.
- Y  N 2. Sometimes when I start using THC, alcohol, or other drugs, it is like something inside me takes over and I end up using more than I want to.
- Y  N 3. I sometimes have such an overwhelming desire to use THC, alcohol, or other drugs, that I can't think of anything else for a time or until I use.
- Y  N 4. I sometimes have an irresistible urge to continue using THC, alcohol, or other drugs once I start.
- Y  N 5. I sometimes use THC, alcohol, or other drugs at times and places I know it could cause me problems.
- Y  N 6. I do not think it is possible for me to make low-risk 1-2-3 drinking choices consistently over an extended period of time.
- Y  N 7. I do not think it is possible for me to use THC occasionally over an extended period of time.

**WHERE I AM IN THE PHASES**

Mark an "X" in the box by the Phase you think your choices have most likely placed you in.



**Reflection Questions**

1. I think my choices have placed me in the \_\_\_\_\_ Phase.

2. As I think about this, I feel...

\_\_\_\_\_



## SOMETHING TO CONSIDER

Given what you have learned about the phases, what concerns you as you reflect on where you are in the phases at this moment?

---

---

## THE TWO SIDES OF OUR CHOICES

There is a story about a young girl walking with her dad in a parking lot. She saw a penny on the ground, tails side up. Her dad asked her to pick up the penny and she said, “No, it’s on tails and that is bad luck.” Her dad said, “If you pick it up, you get both sides.” This is very much like our choices in life. Choices are never onesided. There is always an “upside” to a choice we make or we would not make it. But, often choices carry a “downside” to which we are either blind or choose to think won’t happen to us. For example, I might buy a particular car because of the price, style, or features. These factors are the obvious, positive side of the choice. I might be blind to the poor safety record, poor mileage rate, or some design flaw of the car because I did not investigate, but I persuade myself I will work it out somehow.

## WHAT MY ARREST COST ME

When problems do occur, defense mechanisms often kick in telling us it was someone else’s fault, everybody experiences similar things, or the problem is not a big deal. Sometimes we fail to see how big a price we have paid for one of these problems because we do not stop to add it all up. For example, everyone is aware their arrest was costly. But, experience tells us most of us are not aware of how much it actually cost. Sometimes these costs get so spread out we lose track of the total cost. This activity allows us to pull it all together.

## WHAT AN ARREST COSTS

1. TIME LOST	HOURS	2. MONEY LOST	AMOUNT
Hours in court	_____	Fines	_____
Hours meeting with attorney	_____	Court costs	_____
Hours in jail	_____	Criminal or civil lawsuit	_____
Hours lost using alternative transportation	_____	Cost of using alternative transportation	_____
Hours in community service	_____	Attorney fees	_____
Hours in class	_____	Towing fees	_____
Hours in hospital, ER, and physical therapy	_____	Hospital, ER, and other medical bills	_____
Other hours lost	_____	Repair bills or restitution	_____
<b>TOTAL TIME LOST = \$</b>	_____	Increases in insurance premiums	_____
<b>HOURLY WAGE x \$</b>	_____	Lost wages at work	_____
<b>VALUE OF TIME LOST = \$</b>	_____	Probation fees	_____
		Clinical evaluation or assessment fee	_____
		Course fee	_____
		License reinstatement	_____
		Other costs you can identify	_____
		<b>TOTAL MONEY LOST =</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>

$$\begin{array}{|c|} \hline \text{VALUE OF TIME LOST} \\ \hline \$ \text{ _____} \\ \hline \end{array} + \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \text{TOTAL MONEY LOST} \\ \hline \$ \text{ _____} \\ \hline \end{array} = \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \text{TOTAL COST} \\ \hline \$ \text{ _____} \\ \hline \end{array}$$

### 3. COST PER DOSE:

$$\begin{array}{|c|} \hline \text{TOTAL COST} \\ \hline \$ \text{ _____} \\ \hline \end{array} \div \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \text{NUMBER OF DOSES} \\ \text{BEFORE ARREST} \\ \hline \text{_____} \\ \hline \end{array} = \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \text{COST PER} \\ \text{DOSE} \\ \hline \$ \text{ _____} \\ \hline \end{array}$$

**4. EMOTIONAL COST TO ME:**

List some of the feelings you would have if you had an arrest.

---



---

Imagine someone was willing to pay you to experience the embarrassment and hassle of an arrest. Is there an amount of money that would make it worthwhile? If so, how much? \_\_\_\_\_

In what ways would an arrest affect the relationships in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

---

**TREASURES LOST—MAKING THE RISK REAL**

During the video we heard from people who experienced the “down side” of high-risk choices. They lost someone they love in an impaired-driving crash, or others drove impaired and injured or killed someone. In all situations, the risks were real, and both sides experienced great losses.

**Key Points**

- Choices come with both positive and negative outcomes. Sometimes we are aware of the outcomes, and sometimes they are hidden.
- Drivers are not the only people who suffer in impaired-driving crashes. Passengers, other drivers, pedestrians, and families also suffer.

 **Reflection Questions**

What I want to remember about the Treasures Lost video and discussion is...

---



---



---

How will this help me prevent future problems?

---



---



---

 **AT THIS MOMENT**

This is a good time to check in with how you feel about making changes right now. Which statement is closest to where you are at this moment?

- I am not ready to make low-risk choices.
- I am still thinking about making low-risk choices. I need something else to tip the balance.
- I am ready to start making low-risk choices. I need to put together a plan.
- I am already making low-risk choices. I need to keep momentum going.



## WHAT CAN TRICK ME?

In *Treasures Lost*, people share tragic life experiences. Sometimes we might think tragedy only happens to people who have progressed into the Red Phase. Some of the people whose choices led to tragedy were in the Red Phase, but some were in the Yellow or Orange Phases. Our Phase does not determine the likelihood or severity of any specific alcohol- or drug-related impairment problem. Fortunately, no matter what our Phase, we can learn to see through the experiences that trick us and to protect the things we have not already lost in our lives. We can also learn to see how to gain back or replace things we have lost.

When you think back to the stories, some of these people had prior impaired-driving arrests and even crashes, but none thought such devastation was going to happen. It was unthinkable to them these outcomes would happen. But, the unthinkable did occur.

What keeps people from seeing the risks? In reality, there were many clues in their lives that problems were likely. If we are in the Orange or Red Phase, it is difficult to see what is happening to us, but it does not have to continue this way. Friends or family members of someone in the Orange or Red Phase often see clearly the drinking or drug use is causing problems, but it might not be clear to the person having the problems.

We viewed an example of a person who was arrested for impaired driving, and the outcome was very different. It took seeing himself in the impaired state to find motivation for change. Fortunately, we do not have to see ourselves on the evening news to begin to see clearly what is happening to us.

 **HOW MY EXPERIENCES CAN TRICK ME**

Earlier, we brainstormed experiences in the high-risk phases that may trick us about how serious our high-risk choices may be. Place a (✓) checkmark in the circle next to any experiences you have had. Then write how you think the experience might have tricked you. For example, social dependence could have made it hard for me to see my choices were high risk, because everyone around me smoked the same, and when I was arrested others in my group had been arrested too, so it really didn't seem like a problem.

<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Social Dependence</b> Makes high-risk choices and problems seem normal.</p>	<hr/> <hr/>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>State Dependent Restriction</b> Seems I am at my best when making high-risk choices.</p>	<hr/> <hr/>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Changes in Tolerance</b> As my tolerance increases, I see it as a good thing.</p>	<hr/> <hr/>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Periodic Loss of Control</b> If it happened every time it might be easier to see.</p>	<hr/> <hr/>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Withdrawal Learning</b> Tricks me into believing alcohol or drugs is the solution, not the problem.</p>	<hr/> <hr/>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Psychological Defenses</b> Tricks me about how serious my use is.</p>	<hr/> <hr/>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Integration Into Life</b> It is a normal part of my life; it just seems routine.</p>	<hr/> <hr/>

 **HOW IT COULD HAVE BEEN**

**What age did you begin making high-risk choices?** \_\_\_\_\_

Imagine you had been making low-risk choices instead. Write how your life could have been different. How you do this is up to you. You could do it as a list, or you could write a narrative. If you prefer to draw rather than write, draw simple pictures to show how your life could have been different.



 **REFLECTING ON WHAT I VALUE**

Write each of the top four values you have listed from the What Is Important to Me activity on page 7 to the right of the 4 circles below. Then think about what makes these four values so important to you and write those reasons in the space provided.



**My Top Values**

**Why This Is Important to Me**

<p><b>1</b></p> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p><b>2</b></p> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p><b>3</b></p> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p><b>4</b></p> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

## PROTECTING WHAT I VALUE

A story may help set the tone for the Protecting Unit. Variations of this story exist in a number of cultures. As the story goes, one evening an elderly man was talking with his grandson about the nature of life and how he could become the person he wants to be.

He said, "Son, it's like there is a battle inside of us between two wolves. One has the power to destroy us. The other has the power to protect us and all we love."



The grandson thought about it for a moment, and then asked, "Grandpa, which wolf wins?"

The grandfather replied simply, "It depends on the one you feed."

If we choose to make high-risk choices, it is like feeding the wolf that can destroy us and all we value. If we choose to make low-risk choices, it is like feeding the wolf that can protect us and all we value.

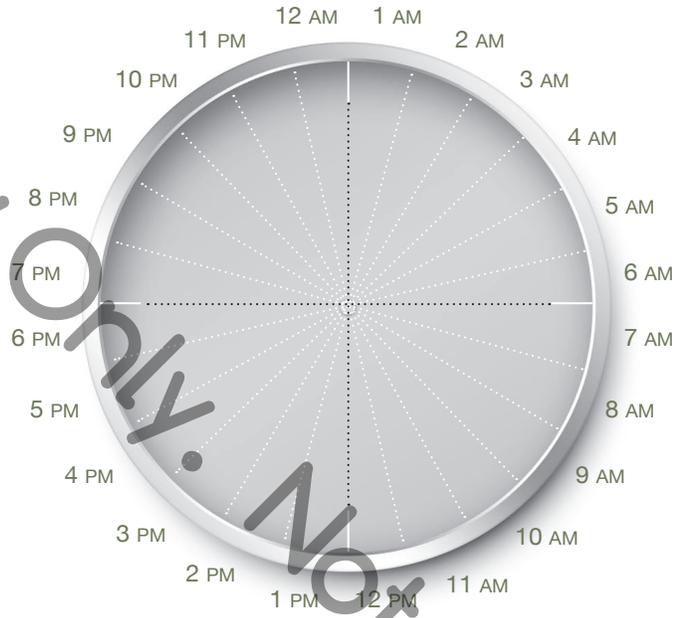
We have explored and reflected how our choices may fit with what we want most in life. For the rest of the program, we will build a plan to help us protect what we value.

We make choices every day about many things. Some of our choices protect things important to us. Other choices risk them. With every decision we are always feeding one of the two wolves. Sometimes change feels overwhelming because it feels like we need to tackle the whole day. It may not be as much time as we think when we break the day down to see where we will want to focus for additional planning.

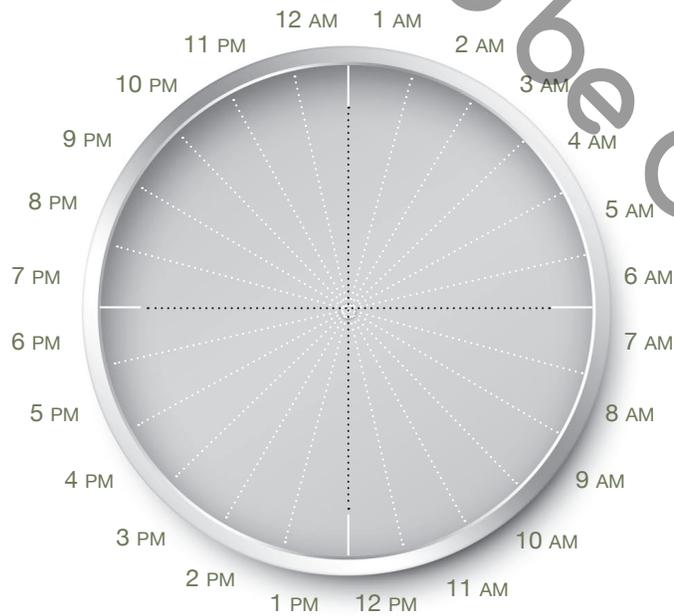
 **MY 24-HOUR CLOCK**

Fill in and label the hours you would normally spend at work, sleeping, eating, and other major activities where you are not likely to be making high-risk choices.

**Work Days**



**Other Days**



FOR REVIEW ONLY. Not to be Copied.

Take a look at these two clocks and see what patterns you observe. Then answer the following questions.

**Which hours of the days are you protecting your values and how?**

---

---

---

---

**Which hours of the days might require additional planning?**

---

---

---

---

**Based on the patterns you observe, what do you think might need to happen?**

---

---

---

 **MOVING TOWARD MY FUTURE** .....



 **Reflection Question** .....

How would I feel if I made my future goals a reality?

---

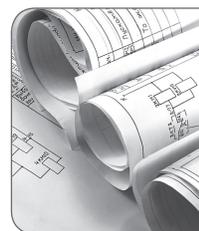
---

The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old but on building the new.

~ Socrates ~

## PLANNING

Planning involves many elements. Research indicates the first 90 days are the most challenging for sustaining a new behavior or choice. Planning for the next three months is a critical step for success. Every time we succeed with small changes, we are more motivated to continue. It will still take focus and attention after 90 days, but it does get easier with time. Focusing on elements of the planning process can help us attain our goals.



### planning for success

1. set a date
2. tell someone
3. identify support
4. find alternatives
5. plan for obstacles

**Set a date** – once we set a date we become more committed. It becomes real!

**Tell someone** – We are more likely to follow through if we have told someone about that decision.



For people in the Orange Phase or the Red Phase, additional support is often needed to succeed in making the changes we want. This is especially true for the Red Phase.

The good news is help is available. Scan the QR code with your smart phone to view a short video on how other people have used either professional counseling or a support group such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA), or SMART Recovery.

 **IDENTIFY SUPPORT**

- planning for success
1. set a date
  2. tell someone
  3. identify support
  4. find alternatives
  5. plan for obstacles



When we are making a change, it helps to have support from the important people in our lives. For some of us, these important people might be family or friends. For others it might be co-workers, teammates on a sports team, a spouse or love interest, or people at church.

We can also find support inside of ourselves. You are—or can become—the expert on what works for you. Reflect on successful changes (or accomplishments) you made in the past. Identifying the elements that contributed to your success can help you in the future.

**Identifying Support Activity**

What concerns you about finding social support for changes in your use?

---



---

Which strategy will be most helpful for you and why?

---



---

**FINDING SUPPORT**

If I decide to make a change in my THC choices, who is there to support me? Try to identify three people.

---

---

What can these people do to support me?

---

---

The most useful thing I have learned about social support is...

---

---

The most surprising thing to me about social support is...

---

---

The one thing that will help me the most is...

---

---

The types of support that will be most useful to me are...

---

---



FOR REVIEW ONLY. Not to be Copied.

 **MY STRENGTHS**

We are often very aware of our failings, but might be less attuned to our successes. Research suggests when we are aware of our strengths, we are more able to bounce back from hard times and more likely to make changes in our lives. It helps build our confidence that change is possible.

Think back to a time when you were successful at something or made a change in your life. This could be related to school, career, family, hobbies, or other interests, and is something important to you or makes you feel at your best. Tell your partners about this situation.

As you're listening to each partner's story, ask the questions below:

- What helped you make this change or be successful?
- How did you know it was working? How did you measure the success?
- What obstacles did you encounter and what helped you overcome them?
- Why didn't you quit when faced with an obstacle?
- Describe the cost and the sacrifices you made along the way.
- What support was available? Did you utilize the available support?

As you listen to each partner's story, write down three strengths you hear. These should be things this person displays in this story (e.g., determination to succeed, a sense of humor, resourcefulness).

Partner's Strengths	Partner's Strengths	My Strengths
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

 **Reflection Question**

**How can I use my strengths to achieve the goals I want for my future?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

 **LEARNING ABOUT ME**

**Brief Sensation Seeking Scale**

For each statement, describe yourself by picking a number from 1 to 5, and add up your answers as directed:

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all like me	Not like me	Unsure or both like and not like me	Like me	Very much like me

	My Score (1 to 5)	
1. I would like to explore strange places.		
2. I would like to take off on a trip with no pre-planned routes or timetables.		<b>E SCORE</b>
<b>Add your scores from statements 1 and 2 and write the total in the box on the right.</b>		
3. I get restless when I spend too much time alone.		
4. I prefer friends who are excitingly unpredictable.		<b>B SCORE</b>
<b>Add your scores from statements 3 and 4 and write the total in the box on the right.</b>		
5. I like wild parties.		
6. I would love to have new and exciting experiences, even if they are illegal.		<b>D SCORE</b>
<b>Add your scores from statements 5 and 6 and write the total in the box on the right.</b>		
7. I would like to try bungee jumping.		
8. I would like to do frightening things.		<b>A SCORE</b>
<b>Add your scores from statements 7 and 8 and write the total in the box on the right.</b>		
<b>Add E + B + D + A and write the total in the box on the right.</b>		
<b>Total Sensation Seeking Score (SS)</b>		

Adapted from: Hoyle, R.H., Stephenson, M.T., Palmgreen, P., Lorch, E.P., & Donohew, R.L. (2002). Reliability and validity of a brief measure of sensation seeking. *Personality & Individual Differences*, 32, 401–414.

## Understanding Your Sensation Seeking Scores

Circle the number that matches your score from the previous page. If you fall on a boundary, you may have some of the qualities of the scores in the higher range as well as the one you fall within.

### Total Sensation Seeking (SS)

8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36
<b>Low</b>			<b>Medium</b>			<b>High</b>	
You might prefer things that are more familiar and calming. Keep this in mind as you plan for fun. Small changes will likely feel the most comfortable as you explore new options.			You enjoy some new things but don't want to be too stimulated. Try for a mix of the new and the familiar.			You are more likely to feel a need for new experiences or stimulation. You might also find yourself more easily bored. Think about trying some new things. You may find group activities with lots of interaction more enjoyable.	

### Subscales

These scores provide a clearer picture of how your sensation seeking is expressed.

#### Experience Seeking (E)

2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b>Low</b>		<b>Medium</b>			<b>High</b>		
You are more comfortable with familiar things.		You like a balance of the tried and true, as well as something new and different.			You crave new experiences.		

#### Boredom Susceptibility (B)

2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b>Low</b>		<b>Medium</b>			<b>High</b>		
When you enjoy something, you can stay with it for a long time.		While you may like traditions, you also need to try some variations or new directions occasionally.			You get easily bored and want to move on to something new for fun.		

#### Disinhibition (D)

2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b>Low</b>		<b>Medium</b>			<b>High</b>		
While you may like to have fun, there are clear limits for you. You are keeping your clothes on at parties!		You like to let your hair down occasionally, but you're not game for anything at anytime.			You really let loose to have fun. You probably don't stop to ask what people will think before you do something that sounds like fun.		

#### Adventure or Thrill Seeking (A)

2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b>Low</b>		<b>Medium</b>			<b>High</b>		
You enjoy calmer activities. Jumping out of a perfectly good airplane doesn't appeal to you.		You like to do some things that get your blood pumping, but you're not indiscriminate in what risks you'll take.			You like the adrenaline rush of exciting activities. You would probably enjoy jumping out of planes, rock climbing, or bungee jumping.		

If we are low in sensation seeking we might see change as an opportunity to build stability in our lives because we are comfortable finding what we like and sticking with it. Once we find something that meets the needs high-risk alcohol and drug choices had been meeting, we may find it easier to stick with it if we value stability.

If we are high in sensation seeking, we enjoy the challenge of doing new things and might even see making change as a challenge.



**Reflection Question**

**What I have learned about my personality that will help me achieve the goals I want for my future is...**

---

---

---

## FIND ALTERNATIVES

### planning for success

1. set a date
2. tell someone
3. identify support
4. find alternatives
5. plan for obstacles



Successful planning often involves finding alternatives. One alternative to high-risk choices we will explore is finding other ways to have fun.

We have learned more about sensation seeking traits and how they influence our choices. Let's explore how we can add fun, relaxation, and excitement to our lives in a way that will protect what we value and satisfy our personality traits.

If we have been using THC as a major way to relax it can be helpful to imagine new ways to unwind without high-risk choices. For a while, things may not seem as exciting while our brains are in the process of changing back to a more normal state. In time, our brain chemistry will begin to respond and we will find pleasure in life without THC.

View a video of how others found ways to have fun.



Not to be Copied.

**FINDING FUN, RELAXATION, AND EXCITEMENT!**

1. Something I enjoyed in the past and will begin doing again is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



2. Something I would like to do that I have not done before is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. I think it would be fun to \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Next week, I will \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Next month, I will \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Next year, I will \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

FOR REVIEW ONLY. Not to be Copied.

## REWARDING MYSELF



Change—even change we welcome—can be difficult, especially when we think of the work needed to maintain it. Fortunately, the human brain is wired to respond to rewards, which we can use to help us commit to our new choices. The first step is to decide what success is. Is success always sticking to a new choice? Is it never using? Is it using less? Is it going through a day maintaining my new choice, or a week?

Once we decide what success is, we need to figure out what would feel like a reward. This can be a challenge if we have been accustomed to using THC as our reward in the past. Now it is helpful to think of low-risk rewards. We can identify two kinds of rewards—immediate and long term. Some people use small things for the immediate rewards. They do not have to be big.

Research indicates when shaping a new behavior, small but immediate rewards can be helpful.

“ Good times are a reminder and a reward for dealing with the difficult and challenging times we all go through. The trick is to celebrate the good times in advance of the difficult times. Always remember, good times await you after the difficult times pass... ”

~ James A. Murphy

 **REWARDING MYSELF**

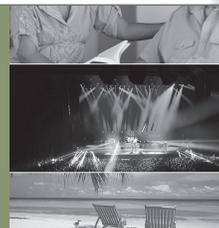
1. I will define success with my new choice by

---

---

---

rewarding myself



2. Something I can do to reward myself for free or under \$5.00 is

---

---

---

3. A short-term reward for me would be

---

---

4. A long-term reward for me would be

---

---

5. Immediate rewards can be anywhere! Our feelings are one kind of reward. How will I feel when I succeed in following my new choice?

---

---

For Review Only. Not to be Copied.

6. Helping others feel good about us is another kind of reward. How will the person who means the most to me feel when I succeed in making my new choice?

---

---

7. Think about the next time you have a chance to make high-risk choices but choose to make low-risk choices. What would you like to do the next day that you may not have been able to if you had been making high-risk choices?

I will \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

8. How much money will I save each week by making my new choice instead of high-risk choices? Set aside that amount of money each week and put it in a savings account. Use this money to reward yourself with something special.

I will be able to save \$\_\_\_\_\_ each week.

9. How will I reward myself or someone special to me with this money?

---

---

---

Rewards for change are exciting. Change itself can be rewarding. It's exciting to envision how things can be different and how rich our lives will be with low-risk choices.

## PLAN FOR OBSTACLES

We have now set a date, told someone about our decision, identified support, found alternatives, and the last step for success is planning for obstacles. Regardless of whether we are ready to make low-risk choices or are still thinking about making changes, we can imagine circumstances where we feel pulled to make high-risk choices. Although it is obvious support is available and necessary, we also need to be aware of potential obstacles to making low-risk choices. We cannot anticipate all possible obstacles, but it is important to plan for those we can. This will make it even more likely we are successful in following through with our decision.

### planning for success

1. set a date
2. tell someone
3. identify support
4. find alternatives
5. plan for obstacles



FOR REVIEW ONLY. Not to be Copied.



## CUES TO USE

Cues that created temptation or craving can become another obstacle to our new choices. Temptation and craving might feel the same way. In reality, temptation and craving are a result of high-risk choices rewiring my brain.



managing  
cues  
to use

These feelings and sensations such as anxiety, temptation, and craving are signals to us of the need to rewire our brains and to change them back to normal. What is most important is how we respond to the feeling or sensation. Our response will either feed the wolf that protects our values or the wolf that has the potential to harm them. When feeling this anxiety of temptation or craving, instead of seeing it as failure, know it is a sign of progress. Think of it as quieting the wolf that wants to jeopardize values and a signal to put a plan into action!

## DELAY, DISTRACT TOOL

When craving hits, its intensity can seem overwhelming. It may feel like it will last forever. Craving is time limited and the brain is only capable of focusing intently on one thing at a time. We can take advantage of these realities by first delaying and then distracting ourselves. Being aware of craving can help us with our spur-of-the-moment alcohol and drug decisions. Once craving begins, the desire to use can be very powerful. One way to deal with that power is by learning to delay the choice and distract our minds. Delaying gives us time to let the craving die down. Sometimes people say, "I won't use for the next hour." Sometimes that is enough. Other times we need to distract our brains by doing something else. Distracting our brains by doing other activities allows time for the cravings to lose their power.



delay,  
distract

## SOCIAL PRESSURE

preparing for  
social  
pressure



Situations where we want to stay with our decision may be challenging when others may want us to go back to our old choices. People may do this for a variety of reasons. No matter what the motivation of other people, we can succeed with our decision by being prepared with some tools.

**Broken-record technique**—repeating our decision aloud to others—sometimes more than once. “No thanks”. “I’m not using any more. I quit.”

**Conversation switch**—having a topic in mind to take the conversation in a different direction. “Are you watching the game tonight?” “Did you see the new movie that’s playing in town?” “How about those Wildcats?”

## BE READY, BE QUICK

be ready,  
be quick



Another way to plan for obstacles is to plan for a difficult situation we are likely to encounter. By preparing for a situation we could face, we will have the opportunity to act on the choice we have made—even though it might seem challenging.

Athletes frequently use a technique helpful for achieving success. By picturing or seeing themselves making a big play or mentally rehearsing a routine, they prepare themselves for action. Other professions use this technique as well. It is common for pilots or actors to use mental rehearsal for preparation. Research has shown when we actively practice something in our minds, messages go from our brains to the muscle groups that are involved. We do not actually move, but as far as our brains and nervous systems are concerned, the practice has been real. Anytime we are going to change or reinforce a behavior, we can take advantage of the same techniques successful athletes and others use to practice ahead of time in our minds.

View the Be  
Ready, Be  
Quick video.



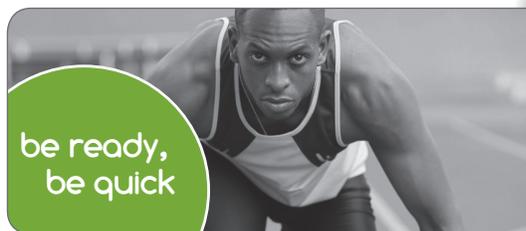
 **BE READY, BE QUICK**

1. Where will I be? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



2. Before the event, who will I tell about my decision to make a change?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What will I say to this person (these people)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Who will be there to support me? If no one will be there, who could I invite?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What will I ask them to do to support me? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What will be happening at this event? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Who else will be making low-risk choices I could talk with?

\_\_\_\_\_

8. How will I respond if someone asks me to make a choice that is inconsistent with my decision? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. What will I do if I feel the urge to make a choice that is inconsistent with my decision? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10. What will I do to make it more likely I will have a good time?

\_\_\_\_\_

 **MY VALUES, MY COMMITMENT**

Mark the level of your commitment to...

Protecting What I Value

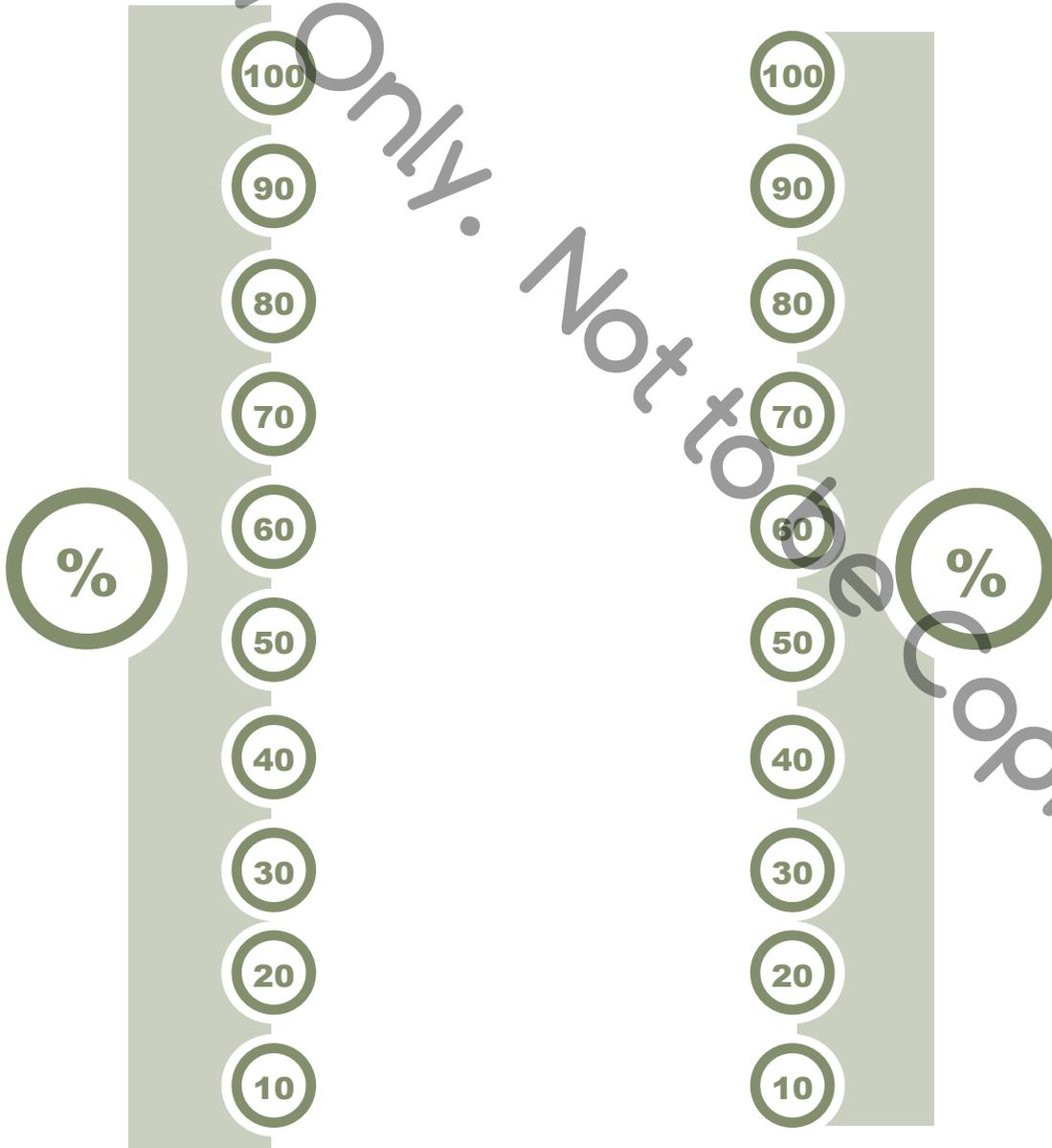
My Decision

---

---

---

---



 MY MESSAGE

For Review Only. Not to be Copied.





### DRAWING TO A CLOSE

Scan the QR codes with your smart phone to view 4 short videos we hope you will enjoy.



Powerful Beyond Measure Video



Long Road to Freedom Video



Serenity Prayer Video



Autobiography in Five Short Chapters Video

For Review Only. Not to be Copied.

FOR REVIEW ONLY

# my formula

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- impulsive
- gregarious
- rebellious
- sensation seeking

psychological influences

social influences

accept/encourage



family history

high tolerance

unusual reward or pleasure

my low-risk guidelines: \_\_\_\_\_

value \_\_\_\_\_

goal \_\_\_\_\_

=

- less body fluid
- medication
- tiredness/illness
- cancer risk: breast/colon

my decision: \_\_\_\_\_

my start date: \_\_\_\_\_

my phase: \_\_\_\_\_