

BACKWARD STEPS TO ADDICTIVE BEHAVIORS

TRIGGERS – External, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Which areas are the riskiest for you? Which do you have the most difficulty combating? Rate each category from 0-10 (where 10 is the riskiest or most difficult).

- a. Conditioned responses in certain settings
- b. Unpleasant emotions
- c. Unpleasant physical sensations
- d. Pleasant emotions
- e. Pressure from others
- f. Conflict with others
- g. Socializing
- h. Testing personal control

IMAGINING/FANTASIZING – Start to imagine what it would be like to
you would feel, how you would think and act

how
then.

“STINKING THINKING” – Irrational beliefs, cognitive distortions, and rationalizations that you used to convince yourself to take the backward step.

- a. Negative exaggeration; awfulizing; catastrophizing.
- b. Rationalizations:

“It won’t really matter.”

“I deserve it.”

“I will only have one.”

“It’s been a long time.”

- d. ___ Low frustration tolerance:

“I can’t stand it.”

“It’s awful.”

- e. ___ The tyranny of the should:

“It shouldn’t be so hard.”

“I shouldn’t have this problem.”

“S/he shouldn’t speak to me that way.”

“The world stinks, and it shouldn’t!”

PLANNING

- “I’ll just go down to the store and buy a bottle.”
- “I’ll finish this project and then go to the bar.”
- “I’ll take some money out of my other account.”
- Others:

ACTING – Behaviors that led to UNDESIRABLE OUTCOMES (list them)

Teach yourself how to respond at *each step*. Even though it gets *harder* to intervene at each step along the way, it *can* be done. Practice rehearsing relapse preventive self-talk in SMART Recovery group meetings (role-playing is an excellent exercise), out loud at home, into a tape recorder, or in writing.