



IDENTIFYING TRIGGERS and Healthy Coping Strategies



Instructions:

Sometimes, recognizing what leads us to use substances or feel stressed can help us find better ways to handle those situations.

Use this worksheet to identify some common triggers and explore healthier coping methods.

WHAT ARE TRIGGERS?

Triggers are things that make us feel anxious, stressed, or upset. They can be anything from certain situations, people, places, or even feelings that push us toward doing things like using substances. Here are some examples—highlight any that apply to you, or add your own.

- Stress from school or exams
- Fights with friends or family
- Feeling lonely or isolated
- Negative thoughts about yourself
- Boredom
- Anxiety or feeling overwhelmed
- Feeling down or depressed
- Other: _____

REFLECT ON YOUR TRIGGERS

Think about times when you felt like you wanted to turn to substances or just felt super stressed. What was happening around you? Write down one or two examples below:

Trigger Example #1:

What was happening? How did you feel?

Trigger Example #2:

What was happening? How did you feel?

FINDING HEALTHY COPING STRATEGIES

Now let's think about better ways to cope when you're feeling triggered. Here are some ideas—check off the ones you want to try, or add your own.

- Going for a walk or run
- Doing something creative (like drawing or painting)
- Talking to a friend, family member, or therapist
- Listening to music or watching your favorite show
- Trying a relaxation exercise (like deep breathing)
- Writing in a journal
- Trying out a new hobby or activity
- Other: _____

MAKING A COPING PLAN

Pick one trigger you wrote down earlier and come up with a plan for how you'll cope with it in a healthier way. Think of a good activity to try instead of turning to substances or feeling overwhelmed.

Trigger: _____

Healthy Activity to Try: _____

How This Might Help: _____

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Write down one thing you like about yourself or a strength that will help you cope better. You've got some amazing qualities that can help you get through tough times.

• My Strength: _____

