

S.O.B.E.R.:

EMBRACING MINDFULNESS AND MANAGING CRAVINGS

Struggling with addiction is not a moral failing. Addiction is a disease of the brain where the reward, motivation, memory, and other related functions are rewired despite the varying degrees of harm it causes to ourselves or others. This worksheet is designed to bring you through the **SOBER** mindfulness-based practice* developed by Sarah Bowen and Alan Marlatt. It can be used on its own, or in tandem with the video "Recovery From Addiction is Possible" led by Denny Kolsch, LMHC.

STEP 1: S - STOP

Pause and take a deep breath. Acknowledge the state you're in which can include your thoughts, feelings, and sensations without judgment. Allow yourself to become fully present in this moment, embracing it with openness and curiosity.

STEP 2: O - OBSERVE

Gently observe your surroundings, your thoughts, and your cravings as they arise, like the tree out your window or the clouds passing through the sky. Notice the sensations in your body without trying to change them.

STEP 3: B - BREATHE

Use the breath as an anchor to the present moment. Take slow, deep breaths, and allow your mind to start noticing the sensation of breathing in and slowly breathing out. Creating this space to not compulsively act as it calms your mind and nervous system.

STEP 4: E - EXPAND

Expand your awareness beyond the present moment. Take another step in being aware of your surroundings, yourself, and your body top to bottom. Use this time to connect with your intentions and goals. Gently ask yourself, "What truly matters to me? What kind of life do I want to create for myself?" Let these reflections guide your next actions.

STEP 3: R - RESPOND

Responding over reacting. Reacting comes out of compulsivity driven by cravings and triggers. Instead of reacting impulsively, pause and consider the potential outcomes of your actions. Choose behaviors that are in alignment with nurturing your well-being and healing.

Remember: Recovery is a journey and not a destination. Continue to practice this coping skill whenever you feel cravings or impulses to use.

*"Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention for Addictive Behaviors: A Clinician's Guide Second Edition" by Sarah Bowen (Author), Neha Chawla (Author), Joel Grow (Author), G. Alan Marlatt (Author)