

**A Relapse Prevention Tool –
The Emotional Cues For Cravings in Relapse Worksheet
By Peggy L. Ferguson, Ph.D.**

We experience sensory, emotional/psychological, cognitive, environmental, and physical cues on a daily basis in early recovery. These cues or triggers, if left unchecked can turn into powerful cravings for the chemical. Cravings can lead to relapse. In order to avoid relapse it is crucial that you identify your cues, take action, and not let them turn into cravings.

One powerful set of cues that can set off cravings are emotions or feelings. Uncomfortable feelings, usually negative emotions, have probably been among the cues or triggers associated with your drinking and using in the past. Identify how these feelings have been linked in the past to your drinking or drugging behavior and the how they may be serving as cues for triggers today using the Emotional Cues For Cravings in Relapse Worksheet.

**Emotional Cues for Cravings in Relapse Worksheet
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Use This Worksheet to help identify feelings connected to your drinking or using drugs.

First, put a check by each emotion that you believe is associated with drinking and/or using. Check the emotion if you believe that it has led to drinking or using, or the emotion has been altered by your drinking or using drugs.

Then give three examples of how that has happened in the past.

Then give three examples of how these emotions are currently connected to your thinking about drinking or using.

___ 1. Fear. Other descriptors connected to fear might include afraid, anxious, nervous, scared, apprehensive, insecure.

- a. Past examples of how this feeling was linked to your drinking drugging behavior:
- b. Recent examples of how this feeling was linked to thinking about drinking/using. Give the current circumstance or context of this feeling and drinking/using thoughts.

___ 2. Anger. Other descriptors connected to anger might include mad, frustrated, annoyed, miffed, resentful, aggravated.

- a. Past examples of how this feeling was linked to your drinking drugging behavior:
- b. Recent examples of how this feeling was linked to thinking about drinking/using. Give the current circumstance or context of this feeling and drinking/using thoughts.

___ 3. Guilt. Other descriptors connected to guilt might be remorseful, sorry, responsible, bad.

- a. Past examples of how this feeling was linked to your drinking drugging behavior:

b. Recent examples of how this feeling was linked to thinking about drinking/using. Give the current circumstance or context of this feeling and drinking/using thoughts.

___ 4. Shame. Other descriptors connected to shame might include embarrassed, less than, inadequate, humiliated.

a. Past examples of how this feeling was linked to your drinking drugging behavior:

b. Recent examples of how this feeling was linked to thinking about drinking/using. Give the current circumstance or context of this feeling and drinking/using thoughts:

___ 5. Hurt. Other descriptors connected to hurt might include abused, crushed, disappointed, pain, taken for granted, taken advantage of, bruised.

a. Past examples of how this feeling was linked to your drinking drugging behavior:

b. Recent examples of how this feeling was linked to thinking about drinking/using. Give the current circumstance or context of this feeling and drinking/using thoughts.

___ 6. Sadness. Other descriptors connected to sadness might include grief, melancholy, sorrowful, somber, solemn.

a. Past examples of how this feeling was linked to your drinking drugging behavior:

b. Recent examples of how this feeling was linked to thinking about drinking/using. Give the current circumstance or context of this feeling and drinking/using thoughts.

___ 7. Loneliness. Other descriptors connected to loneliness might include left out, neglected, abandoned, alienated, dejected.

a. Past examples of how this feeling was linked to your drinking drugging behavior:

b. Recent examples of how this feeling was linked to thinking about drinking/using. Give the current circumstance or context of this feeling and drinking/using thoughts.

___ 8. Helplessness. Other descriptors connected to helpless might be paralyzed, despair, defeated, shaken, stuck.

a. Past examples of how this feeling was linked to your drinking drugging behavior:

b. Recent examples of how this feeling was linked to thinking about drinking/using. Give the current circumstance or context of this feeling and drinking/using thoughts.

___ 9. Overconfident. Other descriptors connected to "overconfident" might be ungrateful, reckless, prideful, imposing, in control, dominating.

a. Past examples of how this feeling was linked to your drinking drugging behavior:

b. Recent examples of how this feeling was linked to thinking about drinking/using. Give the current circumstance or context of this feeling and drinking/using thoughts.

___ 10. Boredom. Other descriptors connected to bored might be disconnected, disinterested, withdrawn, not caring, subdued.

a. Past examples of how this feeling was linked to your drinking drugging behavior:

b. Recent examples of how this feeling was linked to thinking about drinking/using. Give the current circumstance or context of this feeling and drinking/using thoughts.

___ 11. Stressed. Other descriptors connected to stressed might be overwhelmed, exhausted, worried.

- a. Past examples of how this feeling was linked to your drinking/drugging behavior:
- b. Recent examples of how this feeling was linked to thinking about drinking/using. Give the current circumstance or context of this feeling and drinking/using thoughts.

___ 12. Joy. Other descriptors connected to joy might be happy, elated, excited, confident, cheerful, adored, affectionate, delighted.

- a. Past examples of how this feeling was linked to your drinking/drugging behavior:
- b. Recent examples of how this feeling was linked to thinking about drinking/using. Give the current circumstance or context of this feeling and drinking/using thoughts.

You have identified feelings or emotions that have served as triggers for cravings and/or relapse in the past. You have identified current feelings or emotions that are connected to thoughts about drinking and/using.

In recovery, you must learn to replace the chemical with healthy living skills. Learning to deal with feelings appropriately is a very important healthy living skill. Make a list of things that you can do to deal with feelings or emotions in a healthy way. (Hint: Pouring alcohol or other chemicals on them is not a healthy way). Make your own list.

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