

Reasons Not to Use

Objective

To keep focused on your main reasons for wanting to stop using substances by creating a handy visual reminder.

You Should Know

Now that you're beginning to take charge of your life in a healthier way, it can sometimes feel overwhelming to make so many changes at once. One simple activity that helps people in early recovery is to identify their specific reasons for not using and to keep that list (or another visual reminder) front and center at all times.

What to Do

First, make a list of all the reasons why you are choosing to work on your substance use right now.

Examples:

- *"My kids need me around."*
- *"I don't want to lose my marriage."*
- *"I want to regain my parents' trust."*
- *"I want to feel better about myself."*
- *"I don't want to die."*

Here are a few general categories to start you thinking:

- Better physical health
- Better mental health (less depression, anxiety, and so on)
- Saving money
- Improving job or school performance
- Better relationship with spouse or significant other
- Better relationship with your children
- Better relationship with your parents and other family members
- Better relationships with friends and colleagues

Reflections on This Exercise

How helpful was this exercise? _____

(1 = not very helpful, 5 = moderately helpful, 10 = extremely helpful)

Is there anything in particular you learned from this exercise?
