Triggers, Vulnerabilities, and Urges

A worksheet for understanding the conditions that increase risk for unwanted behavior

Purpose: This worksheet separates background vulnerabilities from immediate triggers, explores what an urge is trying to accomplish, and helps build practical friction and alternatives.

1. Separate Vulnerabilities From Triggers

Vulnerabilities	Triggers
Background conditions that make an unwanted behavior more likely: fatigue, isolation, stress, conflict, shame, lack of structure, easy access.	The more immediate event, thought, emotion, cue, opportunity, or urge that begins the behavioral sequence.

4. Understand the Urge

When the urge appears, what am I usually hoping the behavior will give me?

What emotion or experience am I trying not to have?

Where do I notice the urge in my body?

What thoughts make acting on the urge seem reasonable in the moment?

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5. Build Friction and Build Alternatives

Risk area — Access / opportunity · Friction I can add

Alternative I can make easier

Risk area — Isolation / secrecy · Friction I can add

Alternative I can make easier

Risk area — Unstructured time · Friction I can add

Alternative I can make easier

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Risk area — Emotional distress · Friction I can add

Alternative I can make easier

6. My Plan for the First 15 Minutes

When I notice a high risk trigger, the first thing I will do is:

Person I can contact:

Place or activity I can move toward:

What I want to remember about the urge:

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2. My Vulnerability Map

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Entry 1 · Vulnerability

How I notice it

What reduces risk

Entry 2 · Vulnerability

How I notice it

What reduces risk

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3. My Trigger Map

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Entry 1 · Trigger

Typical urge / thought

Usual next step

Entry 2 · Trigger

Typical urge / thought

Usual next step