



Powering through to build a stronger you



During difficult and stressful times, you may feel even more inclined to look for outlets to relieve stress or reduce your anxiety. And while unwinding with a cocktail or two with colleagues may sound like a good idea, it's important to understand the difference between a harmless virtual happy hour and an evolving substance use disorder.

Anytime we feel a loss of control over some aspect of our lives, it exacerbates the struggle to maintain a happy outlook. We may end up using negative coping methods such as alcohol and drug use when trying to relieve stress, anxiety and depression.

Prepare for substance use recovery and prevention

Try out these healthy habits to support you on your journey to recovery:



Maintain a treatment plan: Every person is unique in their personal battle with substance use or addiction. Therefore, a personalized treatment plan outlined by a health professional provides the best chance for long-term recovery. Try your best to stay on track with a treatment plan and consult your provider with any concerns.



Avoid high-risk situations: Most relapses are brought on because of the environmental opportunity. They occur when the substance is readily available, others are partaking, or when a person feels they won't get caught. A strong treatment plan should include strategies for avoiding these high-risk situations.



Seek support if you start using again: Often, when facing a relapse, the sinking feeling of guilt makes the decision to recover even harder. The event of a relapse does not infer a character flaw or morality issue; it's a setback you can overcome. If you or someone you love finds themselves in the event of a relapse, seek help immediately.

Recognize when you're struggling with substance use

Common substance use symptoms or behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Feeling that you have to use the substance regularly — daily or even several times per day
- Having intense urges for the substance that blocks out any other thoughts
- Over time, requiring a larger dose of the substance to feel the same effect
- Making certain that you maintain a supply
- Spending money on the substance, even if you can't afford it
- Not meeting obligations, work responsibilities, or attending social gatherings due to substance use
- Failing in your attempts to stop using the substance

For additional more information and support with substance use, check out the free, confidential, 24/7 treatment referral and information services from the Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration:

<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>

Tool Box Talk:

Suicide, Addiction, Mental Health

Date:

Printed Name	Employee #	Company	Signature

