## **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.

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

## **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



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