

Boredom During Recovery CBT Worksheet

Name: _____ Dates: ____/____/____
_____/____/____

Boredom

Understand that boredom poses a risk to the recovery.

Identify new activities and approaches that will help you through your boredom during recovery.

1) Boredom is a risk to the recovery

Boredom can cause a relapse. For many people, boredom is a trigger. When you're bored, you would use substances. Unless you take some action, the boredom and the relapse risk will not dissipate. To have a successful recovery, you need to take action to combat the problem of boredom.

2) Why people in recovery have the problem of boredom

When contrasted with the emotional highs and lows of substance use, an abstinent life can be boring. Often people who stop using drugs say life feels boring. Some reasons for this feeling include the following:

- ✓ A structured, routine life feels different from a lifestyle built around substance use.
- ✓ Brain chemical changes during recovery can make people feel listless (or bored).
- ✓ People who use substances often have huge emotional swings (high to low and back to high). Normal emotions can feel flat by comparison.

People may feel listless or bored when the brain heals to adjust it to the lack of substances. The period from 2 to 4 months into recovery (known as the Wall) is often characterized by emotional flatness and boredom. Meanwhile, it is important to know that, as your body and mind adjust to recovery, boredom will become less of an issue.

- Have you had trouble with boredom when you stopped using a drug before?
- When did you first notice it, and how did you feel? What actions did you take to counter the boredom at that time?

3) How to cope with boredom

The danger of boredom during recovery is that it encourages you to float along. Before you know it, you can drift from abstinence into relapse. The most important thing is to take an active role in your recovery to cope with boredom.

There are several ways you can reduce feelings of boredom. For example, scheduling every hour of every day helps you identify unplanned sections of time that can be used to explore interesting activities. Starting new hobbies or picking up interests that were abandoned while you were using substances is a good way to defeat boredom. It also may help you to discuss your feelings of boredom with your partner, loved one, or trusted friends. Starting new friendships with substance-free people at 12-Step or self-help groups also can help alleviate your boredom.



Here are some tips to reduce feelings of boredom during recovery from substance use.

- ✓ Recognize that a structured, routine life feels different from a lifestyle built around substance use.
- ✓ Make sure you're scheduling activities. Forcing yourself to write down daily activities helps you fit in more interesting experiences.
- ✓ Try not to become complacent in recovery. Do something that will further your growth. Sometimes boredom results from not challenging yourself enough in your daily living.

List five recreational activities you want to pursue after leaving the TRC.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

To reduce feelings of boredom, can you plan something to look forward to? What will you plan, when and with whom?

Which of the three tips listed above might work for you to reduce feelings of boredom?

Share and discuss your answers.

Try new things to help you through your boredom. They will also advance your personal growth and support your recovery.

Source: PATIENT'S WORKBOOK FOR COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY SESSIONS Intensive Treatment and Rehabilitation Program for Residential Treatment and Rehabilitation Centers for Drug Dependents (INTREPRET)