

Worksheet 9: Dopamine replacement Therapy and Coping Strategies

People who quit smoking temporarily replace the nicotine to dampen the cravings and ease the withdrawal. People who quit porn should have strategies to lessen and cope with the cravings while the habits associated with porn use fade. What will be your “dopamine replacement therapy?” How will you cope with urges? Several examples of replacement behaviors are given, but you can add more. Pick several. Examples of coping strategies are given. Form a strong intention to do these when a craving hits. These are called “implementation intentions”¹ which are a behavioral technique to break automatic associations and bad habits. They take the form of “when I (experience the first hint of a craving), I will (alternative coping behavior).”

Ideas for dopamine replacement

- Replace the “hunt-chase-find” dynamic by looking for things for my hobbies, interesting new recipes, new restaurants to try, the perfect movie to watch this weekend on Netflix, the perfect workout song, etc.
- Feed the epicurian inside; candy, carbs, the perfect sous vide steak, etc. Savor the flavor. Luxuriate in the aromas and the balance of tastes.
- Love letters: compose some email or snail mail expressing gratitude and encouragement to the people that are dear to me. Roomates, wife, coworkers, personal trainer, etc.
- Problem solving: become engrossed in constructing the perfect laptop stand over the treadmill, replacing bad light fixtures, finally unclogging the plumbing, rewiring the car stereo, etc.
- Workout warrior: running, lifting, treadmill, etc.
- Gaming campaign: fire up the videogame console for a quick melee, a new quest, or creating a new character.
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

Ideas for coping strategies:

- Mindfulness
- Urge Surfing
- Other: _____
- Acceptance and commitment
- Delay and decide

Key phrase: “When I (experience a craving), I will (coping strategy)!”