

Monitoring triggers & coping with urges and cravings

Identifying triggers to gaming.

A trigger means something that makes you consider gaming, or comes before a gaming episode. Individuals have their own set of specific situations or circumstances that are more likely to trigger gaming behaviour.

Triggers can seem overwhelming at first. Often people report that absolutely anything can be a trigger for them – they don't need much of an excuse to game. Others report that gaming is just a daily reality; they know they are going to game the moment they wake up.

But triggers can be very subtle, and can take some time and thought to uncover. A memory of winning a game, boredom, low mood and even happiness can all be triggers to game. None of these might be immediately obvious as triggers but they will be providing the circumstances under which you are more likely to game.

Understanding what makes gaming more likely for you and brainstorming some solutions for those triggers will make it less likely that you will game.

It is usually not one thing that triggers the thought or feeling that you wish to game but something of a collision of events coming together causing you to game. For example:

You've had a tense or bad day

You are anxious or worried

You feel you've been taken advantage of
 You are bored, or have spare time on your hands
 You are in a social situation
 You feel bad about yourself or guilty about something you have/have not done
 You are depressed
 You want to feel energized or "high"
 You feel a physical need or urge to game
 You are tired
 You feel like blowing up because of frustration
 You feel everything is going wrong for you
 You feel angry
 You are on holiday and want to relax and have fun
 You can see others gaming

If one of these triggers a gaming thought and you have access to gaming equipment then it is more likely that you will game.

Triggers to my gaming

There is a value in spending some time thinking about your particular triggers. Triggers can be about, people, places, times of day and thoughts/feelings. Use the sheets to establish which ones relate to you. Really spend some time thinking about, try thinking of a time when you last gamed or when you felt like gaming – what was it that set it off?

People	Places
E.g. Discord triggers Arguing with family/parents	E.g. Bedroom – see computer, easy access
Someone reminding you of gaming? Someone talking about it or asking you to join in? Someone who makes you feel stressed?	Particular rooms in the house? At certain people's houses
Thoughts/feelings	Times of day

