

CAB Wanting to Use and Get High

Primary Goals:

1. To inform clients that they may often want to get high and this is a big factor as to why clients may relapse.
2. Wanting to use is “normal” for addicts.
3. Despite wanting to use, clients can still choose not to use.
4. Assist clients in creating alternatives to using when they want to get high.

Participant Goals:

1. To raise consciousness about being an addict and that wanting to get high is “normal”.
2. To develop an ability to not use despite wanting to use.
3. To identify one or two alternatives to using that allows an experience of craving or wanting to use to pass.

Teaching Points:

1. Wanting to use and get high is “normal” and to be expected.
2. Wanting to use and get high is a big reason why many clients relapse.
3. Despite wanting to use, you can choose not to use, as these feelings will pass.
4. There is a big difference between thought and action.

Format:

1-2 minutes: Introduction to the group. The purpose of the group is to ensure that clients know there will be times that they will want to use and that wanting to use is a big factor in many relapses. Despite wanting to use, clients don’t have to use and they must learn other ways to cope with this feeling.

30-40 minutes - interactive discussion (use the blackboard frequently to list important responses)

Leader’s questions	Points Needed to Be Made	Overcoming Pitfalls
<p>Does anyone in the room feel like they want to use now?</p> <p>Does anyone in the room not feel like using right now?</p>	<p>It is ‘normal” to sometimes want to use and this feeling can fluctuate throughout the day.</p> <p>Even if you don’t want to use now, this can change.</p> <p>Addicts, at times, will want to use drugs! This is what drug addiction is about!</p>	<p>If no one acknowledges that they want to use, express surprise and shock! Ask: Has anyone ever left treatment and once discharged, at some point they wanted to use?</p>
<p>Has anyone ever felt like using, didn’t use, and the</p>	<p>There is a big difference between thought and action.</p>	<p>Other examples of differences between thought</p>

<p>feeling passed? Is there is difference between thought and action?</p> <p>Has anyone wanted to use and did use? If so, what happened? How did you convince yourself to use?</p> <p>What makes it hard to say "no" to yourself? What do you think would happen to the feeling if you said "no"? What can people do to not use despite wanting to use? When you have resisted these desires to use in the past, what has been most effective for you in helping you resist? (Get a range of responses – list on a blackboard.) What gets in the way of doing those things that help you resist the desire to use (e.g. the feeling feels too powerful, you want some immediate relief or pleasure, you are not fully committed to staying sober)? What would help you to use your coping skills more often (e.g. reminding self of negative consequences, reminding self of personal or family goals, thinking about family/friends/job)?</p> <p>Are there certain situations or times when you want to</p>	<p>Wanting to use can pass even without using. Despite wanting to use, you don't have to use.</p> <p>Using will again cause you major problems, including re-addiction. Ways to convince yourself to use include: "I deserve it" or "I really want to use" or "I'll just get high this one time".</p> <p>Think through using and remember the consequences that will occur if they use. Don't dwell on "wanting to use". Call someone, call your sponsor, remember the urge will go away, immerse yourself in a fun activity, run, walk, exercise, read something, take a shower, relaxation training, meditation, etc.). Practice the following: " Of course I want to use! But I can choose not to use to avoid the harmful consequences".</p> <p>Clients should identify those situations and ensure</p>	<p>and action: a person might want to hurt someone, but he or she doesn't do this.</p> <p>If necessary, help clients with the teaching points and ways to deal with wanting to use.</p>
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<p>use more than other times? How can you avoid those situations? Are there times when you simply want to use for no apparent reason?</p>	<p>that they don't place themselves in them. Clients can focus on the times they may want to use more strongly and develop an action plan to avoid using. If they find themselves in a high-risk situation, develop a plan of action. There will be times when clients simply want to use for no apparent reason.</p>	
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Review and Summary

Ask what, if anything, have clients learned?

Ensure that the following points are made:

1. Feeling like wanting to use and get high is normal and expected for people in early (and sometimes later) recovery. Chemical use may help in the moment, but it almost always backfires! It is a short-term fix but a long-term problem.
2. Feelings cannot kill you or compel you to do anything, though we may tell ourselves that they can harm us. There is a big difference between wanting to use and actually using.
3. Despite wanting to use, you don't have to use. Think it through!
4. Feelings about wanting to use will pass even if you don't use.
5. Don't dwell on the feeling of wanting to use!
6. Sitting with feelings simply means to ride out the feeling until it decreases on its own or it decreases as a result of something you do (immersing self in some other activity, exercise, using slogans or simple advice statements, calling and talking to someone, etc.).

Bottom Line: Using is not the answer if you ever want to consistently feel better.