

# Identifying Triggers

for People with Substance Use Disorder



**Be a  
Recovery  
Advocate!**

## Did You Know

Because of its prevalence in social and professional settings, along with how easy it is to obtain, alcohol use (and addiction) is more common than many other substance use disorders.



## Knowledge Domain

A trigger of addiction involves any high-risk situation or stressor that sparks a thought, feeling, or action to use drugs/alcohol. This spark, which is experienced as a temptation or desire to use, is called a craving or urge. There are two types of triggers: internal (occurs within us) and external (occurs outside of us). An internal trigger is something going on inside our mind or body that promotes the urge to relapse, such as hunger, anger, loneliness, or fatigue. External triggers include people, places, things, and situations that spark a desire to use after a period of abstinence.

## Recommended Group Activity

This activity's focus is to identify and discuss triggers for people with a substance use disorder. Ask:

- What types of triggers might our patients be experiencing?
- What kinds of coping strategies can you use to help your patients overcome triggers?
- Can you identify any patterns that might trigger a relapse?

## To Learn More

### How to Recognize Drug and Alcohol Triggers

<http://bit.ly/SUDstigma1>

### Common Triggers in Addiction

<http://bit.ly/SUDstigma2>

### Tips for Managing Triggers During Recovery

<http://bit.ly/SUDstigma3>