PART OF THE MILE MARKER LIBRARY

5

DAILY PRACTICE

CRAVINGS AND HARD HOURS WORKBOOK

A Companion to Tools You Can Use on Your Own

STEPHEN DEASON

Alder Creek EDITIONS

Cravings and Hard Hours Workbook

With Thanks

These books are offered at a low price in print and free online through the generous support of Matthew Marberry and the Michael Marberry Family Fund.

Thank you, Matthew, for helping put these books in the hands of the people who need them.

Stephen Deason

DON'T PANIC

If you are in danger, call 911.

If you are in crisis, or thinking about suicide, call or text 988.

For free help finding treatment, call 1-800-662-4357.

For the daily urge log, turn to page 35.

Part of

The Mile Marker Library

BOOK 5 · DAILY PRACTICE

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Stephen Deason

Melissa Deason

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Alder Creek
EDITIONS

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Recovery Books

The Mile Marker Library: standalone books and tools for people getting into recovery on their own. Each one is numbered and labeled by what it helps with. Start with any of them.

RIGHT NOW

1. *Don't Panic: The First Hours After You Stop*
What to Do When You Stop Drinking or Using

2. *Wallet Crisis Card* **Free Printable**
Numbers to Call, Ready to Print

3. *Free Help Directory*
Meetings, Helplines, and Low-Cost Care

4. *Medications for Addiction, Explained*
What They Are, How to Ask, and How to Pay

DAILY PRACTICE

5. *Tools You Can Use on Your Own*
A Guide to Self-Directed Recovery

6. *Cravings and Hard Hours Workbook* **This book**
A Companion to Tools You Can Use on Your Own

7. *One Day at a Time, Written Down*
A 90-Day Gratitude Journal, in General and Christian Editions

8. *Daily Reader, 365 Days* **Forthcoming**
For Any Recovery Path

9. *Worksheet Library* **Forthcoming**
Every Journal Page and Exercise, Ready to Print

REBUILDING

10. *Money in Early Recovery*

Budgets, Debts, Benefits, and Credit

11. *Work and Recovery*

Finding a Job, Keeping It, and What to Tell Employers

12. *Finding a Safe Place to Live*

Sober Housing and What to Check Before You Move In

13. *Court, Probation, and Recovery* **Forthcoming**

What to Ask a Lawyer and What Records to Keep

PEOPLE AROUND YOU

14. *For Families*

When Someone You Love Can't Get to Treatment

15. *Group Facilitator Guide*

Running Free Peer Support Groups with These Books

16. *Employer Guide* **Forthcoming**

Hiring and Keeping People in Recovery

Who This Workbook Is For and How to Use It

This workbook is for the hour of the day that keeps beating you.

This is a workbook. It is for writing in. Every page gives you a short instruction and room to write.

You can use it on its own. Each exercise explains itself in a few lines. If you have the book Tools You Can Use on Your Own from this library, the exercises here match its tools, and each page names the chapter to read for more.

What is in this workbook

- Part 1: exercises for the tools that get you through a craving.
- Part 2: exercises that build your personal plan: your reasons, your triggers, your warning signs, and your people.
- Part 3: a daily urge log for 30 days, with a weekly review every seventh day.
- Part 4: a written plan for your high-risk times and places, and a card for your wallet.

How to use it

- Start anywhere. Many people start with the daily urge log in Part 3.
- Write in pencil if you want to change things later.
- There are no right answers. Write what is true for you.

- If you run out of pages, the Worksheet Library in this library has every page ready to print.

This workbook is not medical advice, and the authors are not your doctor or counselor. If cravings or your mood are not easing, or you feel worse, talk with a qualified health care provider.

If you are in danger right now

Emergency: 911

Crisis or thoughts of suicide: call or text 988

Free treatment referrals: 1-800-662-4357

Part 1: Getting Through a Craving

These exercises go with the craving tools. Do each one at least once when you are calm, so it is familiar when a craving hits. Then use the pages when you need them.

1. The Ten-Minute Delay

When a craving hits, tell yourself: not now, maybe in ten minutes. Set a timer and do something with your hands until it rings. Then check in and decide again. Write down each time you use it.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 2.

Date and time	Start 0 to 10	What I did while I waited	After 10 minutes 0 to 10

What did I notice about how the craving changed?

2. Urge Surfing Record

Sit somewhere safe. Notice where the craving sits in your body. Rate it from 0 to 10, then rate it again every two minutes while you breathe slowly and watch it rise and fall.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 2.

Date and time:

Where I feel it in my body:

Minute	0	2	4	6	8	10	12	14
Rating								

When did the number start to drop?

What would I tell myself next time?

URGE SURFING RECORD

Use this page for your next two urge surfing practices.

Practice 1. Date and time:

Minute	0	2	4	6	8	10	12	14
Rating								

Practice 2. Date and time:

Minute	0	2	4	6	8	10	12	14
Rating								

What I am learning about my cravings:

3. HALT Check-Ins

When you feel off, ask: am I Hungry, Angry, Lonely, or Tired? Mark what fits, then write what you did about it.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 2.

Date and time	H, A, L, or T	What I did about it	Did it help?

4. Delay, Distract, Decide

Delay for ten minutes. Distract yourself with something that takes your full attention. When the time is up, decide your next step on purpose. Fill in your ready-made lists now, so you do not have to think of them later.

Things that take my full attention (games, puzzles, cooking, cleaning, a project):

Places I can go for ten minutes:

What I will say to myself when I decide:

5. Grounding: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

When your mind races, name what is around you. Practice it here once, writing each answer.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 4.

Five things I can see:

Four things I can touch:

Three things I can hear:

Two things I can smell:

One thing I can taste:

How do I feel now, from 0 to 10?

6. Play the Tape Forward

When using starts to sound like a good idea, picture the whole movie, not only the first five minutes. Write each part.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 5.

The first drink or use:

The next hour:

The next morning:

The next week:

Who else it would affect:

How it ends, in one sentence:

---

7. Costs and Benefits

This page weighs using against not using. Write what comes to mind in each box. Include what you get from using, such as relief, sleep, or fun. A list that leaves those out is easy to argue with later, when a craving hits. When you finish, circle the items in all four boxes that matter most to you.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 5.

Good things about using	Bad things about using

Good things about not using	Bad things about not using

What matters most to me on this page:

8. The ABC of a Craving

A is what happened. B is what you told yourself about it. C is how you felt and what you wanted to do. Question the B, write a new one, and notice how the C changes.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 5.

A: What happened:

B: What I told myself:

C: How I felt, and what I wanted to do:

New B: a fairer thing to tell myself, after asking whether B is true and helpful:

New C: how I feel now:

---

9. Catch It, Check It, Change It

Write a thought that is pulling you toward using or making you feel worse. Then check it and write a fairer one.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 5.

The thought, word for word	Is it true? What would I tell a friend?	A fairer thought

10. SOBER Breathing Space Log

Stop. Observe your body, feelings, and thoughts. Breathe. Expand your attention to the room. Respond on purpose. Log each practice.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 2.

Date and time	What I noticed	How I responded	Before and after 0 to 10

11. My Call List

Write five people you could call on a hard day, and when they are usually free. Add the helplines. Copy this list into your phone.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 8.

Name	Number	Usually free	What I can ask them for

Crisis or thoughts of suicide: call or text 988. Free treatment referrals: 1-800-662-4357. Emergency: 911.

Part 2: Building Your Personal Plan

These exercises gather what you know about yourself into a plan. Take your time. You can come back to any page and add to it.

12. My Reasons

Write every reason you want to change, big or small. Then circle the three that matter most.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 7.

My three biggest reasons:

13. Importance and Confidence

Circle a number on each scale. Then answer the questions under it.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 7.

How important is this change to me?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Why did I pick that number and not a lower one?

How confident am I that I can do it?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What would move my confidence up by one point?

14. My Values

Write five things that matter most to you, such as family, faith, honesty, health, or work. For each, write one small action this week that moves you toward it.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 7.

What matters to me	One small action this week	Done?

15. My Triggers Map

For one week, write down each craving: when it hit, where you were, who you were with, and how you felt. At the end of the week, circle the patterns.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 3.

Day and time	Where I was	Who I was with	How I felt

MY TRIGGERS MAP

Look back over the week. Write the three triggers that showed up most, and a plan for each.

Trigger 1, and my plan:

Trigger 2, and my plan:

Trigger 3, and my plan:

Things I can avoid, things I can change, and things I will have to accept:

16. My Early Warning Signs

Think about a past bad stretch or a time you went back to using. What changed first? These changes are your warning signs.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 3.

What I stopped doing:

Who I stopped talking to:

Places, people, or money habits that came back:

Thoughts that started showing up:

Two signs someone else could notice before I do:

The person I will tell to watch for these:

17. My If-Then Plans

For each trigger or warning sign, write what you will do. Keep each plan short and specific.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 10.

If this happens	Then I will

18. Clearing My Phone and My Space

Check off each step as you do it. Skip anything that is not safe or not possible for you right now.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 3.

- _____ Deleted or blocked numbers of people I used with or bought from.
- _____ Archived or deleted photos and messages that pull me back.
- _____ Removed delivery apps, betting apps, or other apps tied to using.
- _____ Changed map favorites and routes that pass old places.
- _____ Set my phone to go quiet at night and charge outside the bedroom.
- _____ Removed alcohol, drugs, and anything used with them from my home.
- _____ Asked the people I live with for help with our shared space.

Anything else I need to clear:

19. My Boredom List

Write twenty things you can do that cost little or nothing. Include things for your hands, your body, and your mind. When boredom hits, pick one without thinking too long.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 10.

For my hands	For my body	For my mind	With other people

20. Things I Enjoy

List things you enjoy or used to enjoy, and small tasks that make you feel capable. Put one of each on your calendar every day, and rate how you feel afterward.

More in Tools You Can Use on Your Own, Chapter 10.

Things I enjoy	Things that make me feel capable

Part 3: Daily Urge Log

Fill in one page a day for 30 days. Write down each craving: when it hit, how strong it was, what was going on, and what you did. At night, answer the three questions at the bottom.

Every seventh day, a weekly review helps you see what is working. There are no bad days in this log. A day with ten cravings and ten entries is a day you paid attention.

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 1

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 2

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 3

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 4

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 5

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 6

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 7

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

Highest craving this week, from 0 to 10, and when:

The times and places that were hardest:

The tools that helped most:

People I talked to this week:

What I will do differently next week:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 8

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 9

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 10

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 11

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 12

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 13

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 14

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

WEEKLY REVIEW · WEEK 2

Highest craving this week, from 0 to 10, and when:

The times and places that were hardest:

The tools that helped most:

People I talked to this week:

What I will do differently next week:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 15

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 16

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 17

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 18

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 19

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 20

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 21

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

Highest craving this week, from 0 to 10, and when:

The times and places that were hardest:

The tools that helped most:

People I talked to this week:

What I will do differently next week:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 22

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 23

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 24

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 25

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 26

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 27

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 28

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

Highest craving this week, from 0 to 10, and when:

The times and places that were hardest:

The tools that helped most:

People I talked to this week:

What I will do differently next week:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 29

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

DAILY URGE LOG • DAY 30

Date:

Time	0 to 10	What was going on	What I did, and did it help?

Hours of sleep last night:

What helped most today:

One thing I will do tomorrow:

Highest craving this week, from 0 to 10, and when:

The times and places that were hardest:

The tools that helped most:

People I talked to this week:

What I will do differently next week:

Part 4: My Plan for High-Risk Times and Places

Your urge log and triggers map show you when and where cravings hit hardest. These pages turn that into a written plan. Fill them in when you are calm, and keep a copy where you can find it.

21. My Hard Hours

Shade or mark the hours when cravings are strongest. Then write a plan for each hard hour.

Hour	Hard?	My plan for this hour
6 a.m.		
8 a.m.		
10 a.m.		
Noon		
2 p.m.		
4 p.m.		
6 p.m.		
8 p.m.		
10 p.m.		
Midnight		
2 a.m.		
4 a.m.		

22. My High-Risk Places

List the places where cravings hit hardest, or where alcohol or drugs will be around. For each, decide whether you will avoid it, change how you go, or accept it with a plan.

Place	Avoid, change, or accept	My plan

23. High-Risk People and Situations

List the people and situations that pull you toward using, such as certain friends, arguments, payday, or being alone at night. Write what you will say and do.

Person or situation	What I will say	What I will do

24. My Event Plan

Fill this in before a party, holiday, wedding, work event, or game day.

The event, date, and time:

Do I really need to go?:

How I will get there and home:

Who will go with me or check on me:

How long I will stay:

What I will drink and hold all night:

My line when someone offers:

My exit line:

---

25. My Hard Dates

Write birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, and dates tied to loss or old memories. Plan each one a week ahead.

Date	Why it is hard	Who I will tell	My plan for the day

26. My Payday Plan

If money in your pocket is a trigger, decide ahead of time where your pay goes.

When I get paid:

What I will pay first: rent, food, bills:

How much cash I will carry:

Who will check in with me on payday:

What I will do the evening I get paid:

---

27. My 3 a.m. Plan

Write what you will do when you wake in the night and the house is quiet.

Where I will sit, and what light I will turn on:

What I will eat or drink:

What I will do with my hands:

What I will listen to:

Who or what I can call at night:

When I will go back to bed:

28. My Written Plan

Pull your pages together into one plan. Copy the most important parts onto the wallet card on the next page.

My three biggest reasons:

My top triggers and my plan for each:

My early warning signs:

My go-to tools for a craving:

MY WRITTEN PLAN

People I will call:

My hardest hours and my plan:

My highest-risk places and my plan:

What I will do if I slip:

Professional care or groups I use or want to try:

29. My Wallet Card

Fill in this card, cut it out along the lines, and keep it in your wallet or phone case.

MY PLAN FOR A HARD HOUR
Three tools: 1. 2. 3. Two people: 1. 2. Crisis: call or text 988 Free help: 1-800-662-4357 Emergency: 911

30. What Comes Next

When you finish these pages, keep going. Many people keep an urge log for months, and fewer entries over time can show you how far you have come.

- Keep your written plan where you can see it, and update it every month.
- Use the Worksheet Library in this library to print more urge log pages.
- The journal One Day at a Time, Written Down in this library gives you ninety days of gratitude practice.
- If cravings or your mood are not easing, talk with a qualified health care provider, or call the SAMHSA National Helpline at 1-800-662-4357.

If I Use Again

If you use again, this book is still yours. Get safe first, then use this plan. Fill it in now, while you are steady.

If you return to opioids after a period of not using or using less, your tolerance may be lower than it was before. Do not use alone. Keep naloxone (Narcan) nearby, and make sure someone with you knows how to use it.

The first person I will call:

If they do not answer, I will call:

A safe place I can go:

What I will do in the next hour:

Who else needs to know (doctor, counselor, group):

What I will do tomorrow morning:

If you are in danger, call 911. For crisis support, call or text 988.

People and Resources

Name	Number
Name	Number
Name	Number
Name	Number
Name	Number
Name	Number
Name	Number
Name	Number
Name	Number
Name	Number

Crisis: call or text 988
988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, 24/7. Chat at 988lifeline.org.

Emergency: 911

Treatment referrals: 1-800-662-4357
SAMHSA National Helpline, free and confidential, 24/7, English and Spanish. Text your ZIP code to 435748 or search FindTreatment.gov.

Free Support Groups

These groups are free to attend. Most meet in person and online. Try more than one until you find a room that fits.

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) aa.org
12-step groups for people with a drinking problem.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) na.org
12-step groups for recovery from any drug.

SMART Recovery smartrecovery.org
Skills-based groups with no religious content, for any addiction.

LifeRing Secular Recovery lifering.org
Secular peer support, in person, online, and by email.

Recovery Dharma recoverydharma.org
Peer-led groups based on Buddhist practices.

Celebrate Recovery celebraterecovery.com
Christ-centered 12-step groups, usually hosted by churches.

Women for Sobriety womenforsobriety.org
Support groups for women.

For family and friends al-anon.org
Al-Anon, Nar-Anon, and SMART Recovery Family & Friends.

Online Meetings

Online meetings run at every hour of the day and night. You can use a first name only and keep your camera off. Many also have a phone number you can dial in to with no internet at all.

In The Rooms intherooms.com
Free live video meetings every week for many recovery paths, 12-step and others. A free account with a username is all you need.

AA Online Intergroup aa-intergroup.org
AA meetings by video, phone, chat, and email, around the clock.

Meeting Guide app aa.org
AA's free app lists in-person, online, and phone meetings.

Virtual NA virtual-na.org
Narcotics Anonymous meetings online and by phone.

SMART Recovery Online smartrecovery.org
Online meetings, chat, and message boards.

LifeRing Online lifering.org
Video meetings, chat, forums, and email groups.

Some recovery websites show phone numbers that connect to treatment centers selling their services. For free, neutral referrals, call the SAMHSA National Helpline:

1-800-662-4357

Alder Creek Editions is not connected to any group or website listed in this book. Websites change. If one stops working, the SAMHSA helpline can point you to current options.

About the Authors

Stephen Deason has been in Recovery for more than eleven years and still begins and ends each day with meditation and gratitude. He has spent more than thirty years building teams and companies in healthcare and technology, and writes from his own experience about recovery, economics, business, and social enterprise. You can find more about Stephen and his work at aldercreekeditions.com and stephendeason.com.

Melissa Deason is also in long-term recovery, is a CPS-AD CARES Certified Peer Support Specialist for Addictive Disease, has been an attorney, and now spends her days wrangling tiny humans and working with women entering Recovery. She is Stephen's wife and the co-author of this workbook.

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