

## Community Reinforcement

**Community reinforcement means replacing addiction reinforcers with abstinence reinforcers.**

### REINFORCING ABSTINENCE IS CRITICAL

Reinforcers in your environment play a powerful role in encouraging or discouraging addictive behaviors.

To stop addictive behavior, you have to figure out how to make a lifestyle *without* your addictive behaviors more rewarding than a lifestyle *with* your addictive behaviors.

You have to find a way to get behaviors incompatible with addictions to pay off and be rewarded by those around you.

Willpower is *not* sufficient. If it were, we would all be perfect!

### REPLACE ADDICTION REINFORCERS WITH ABSTINENCE REINFORCERS

Begin a series of action steps that will increase your chances of accumulating positive events to replace addictive behavior.

- Search for people to spend time with who aren't addicted.
- Increase the number of enjoyable activities you engage in that do not involve your addiction.
- If you cannot decide what people or activities you like, sample a lot of different groups of people and a lot of different activities.

### ABSTINENCE SAMPLING

- Commit to \_\_\_\_ days off your addiction, and observe the benefits that naturally occur.
- Temporarily avoid high-risk addiction triggers, and replace these with competing behaviors to get you through the sampling period.
- Observe all the extra positive events occurring when you are not engaging in addictive behaviors.

Note. Adapted from Meyers, R. J., & Squires, D. D. (2001, September). *The community reinforcement approach*. Retrieved from [www.bhm.org/guidelines/CRAmanual.pdf](http://www.bhm.org/guidelines/CRAmanual.pdf). Adapted by permission of the authors.

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