

## Burning Bridges and Building New Ones

### BURNING BRIDGES

**Accept at the most radical level that you are not going to engage in addictive behavior again, and then move actively to cut off all addictive behavior options.**

- 1. Make an absolute commitment to abstinence from the addictive behavior, which is \_\_\_\_\_ (describe addictive behavior). Then walk into the garage of abstinence and **slam the garage door shut**. (Remember that the tiniest slit of space can let an entire elephant in.)
- 2. List everything in your life that makes addiction possible.
- 3. Get rid of these things:
  - Throw out contact information of people who collude with you.
  - Get rid of all possible cues and temptations.
- 4. List and do everything you can that will make it hard or impossible to continue your addictive behavior.
  - Ruthlessly and at every moment, tell the truth about your behavior.
  - Tell all your friends and family that you have **quit**.

### BUILDING NEW BRIDGES

**Create visual images and smells that will compete with the information loaded into your visual and olfactory brain systems when cravings occur.**

Cravings and urges are strongly related to vivid images and smells of what is craved. The stronger the imagery or smell, the stronger the craving.

- Build different images or smells to think about. Try to keep these images or smells in memory when you have an unwanted craving. For example, whenever you crave a cigarette, imagine being on the beach; see and smell it in your mind to reduce the craving.
- When you have unwanted cravings, look at moving images or surround yourself with smells unrelated to the addiction. Moving images and new smells will compete with your cravings.
- “Urge-surf” by imagining yourself on a surfboard riding the waves of your urges. Notice them coming and going, rising high, going low, and finally going away.