

Worksheet 9.2  
Emotion Regulation  
Acceptance-Urge Surfing Worksheet

1. Describe the situation in which you currently are experiencing an urge to gamble.
  
2. Rate its intensity level (0 very low; 9 extreme).
  
3. Resisting the idea creates “The White Bear Effect.” The novelist Leo Tolstoy’s older brother told Leo when he was a child that they could play together as soon as Leo would go in a corner and truthfully say he was not thinking about white bears. Naturally, his brother’s suggestion meant Leo could never get the idea out of his, so his brother was never bothered by Leo.
  
4. Instead of fighting the thought/urge, consider urge surfing it or accepting it.
  
5. Process:
  - A. Observe, describe, but do not evaluate the goodness or badness of the urge/craving. Be aware that it simply *is*.
  
  - B. You will note, perhaps, that the urge/craving fades somewhat at times, increases at other times, and may altogether disappear.
  
  - C. Can you think of yourself surfing the urge the way a swimmer surfs a wave?
  
  - D. Or, perhaps, observing the urge is like watching a fish in a large aquarium. It moves around, sometimes stopping in the middle to stare back at the spectator, sometimes moving left or right, sometimes disappearing altogether behind the sea plants.
  
  - E. Every so often write down the intensity of the urge.

Observation	Intensity Level
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6. Continue the process until you notice you are feeling much more in control-not of the urge(after all, the urge *is* not-you) but in control of yourself existing side by side with the urge or craving.
  
7. Conclusions you have drawn from this experience?