

Seemingly Irrelevant Decisions

Awareness of Seemingly Irrelevant Decisions or SIDs is very important in maintaining any sort of difficult changes. A huge risk to recovery is ignoring what is really going on – the thoughts feelings - and the risks posed by these and by the environment. To keep moving forward in recovery, it is essential, to be honest with ourselves about our vulnerabilities, so that we don't make poor decisions.

How do Seemingly Irrelevant Decisions contribute to lapse and relapse?

SIDs are those decisions which directly contribute to making lapse and relapse a more likely outcome and can be anticipated and acted on to prevent or reduce the risk of lapse and relapse. These decisions can directly contribute to a lapse or indirectly contribute, by contributing to the general situation, which results in a person feeling or being less able to manage a high-risk situation.

Seemingly Irrelevant Decisions could include going to an environment which is high-risk but with legitimate reasons for doing this. For example: Going to the local supermarket for food. However, not deciding what to buy until you get there, so you are carrying too much money. Then, walking past the aisle where the alcohol is sold, being triggered, developing an urge and making a purchase.

Good weather and good moods can contribute to poor decisions

Another example could be going to visit a friend on a sunny day, and having to pass your dealer's house, only to be encouraged to sit in the garden with people you used to use with, who are all sat outside. This is directly contributing, as you have put yourself in a dangerous and predictable situation.

Be kind to yourself by being honest

To manage these situations, you need to be honest about how dangerous a situation is and adopt a safer response so that you are not triggered and if you are, then you have a plan to deal with the situation.

Plan the amount of money you need to carry

Indirectly contributing Seemingly Irrelevant Decisions could include taking more money than you need out with you. If you don't carry enough money, you are less in a position to act on an urge in a high risk situation and are able to take yourself away from the situation, by which time the urge would most likely be over.

SIDs may seem irrelevant but they stem from the part of you which has a deep-seated desire to break the new lifestyle choice.

SIDs can and do undermine change, so plan for those decisions, plan for the worst and hope for the best and you will make your change plans more successful and enjoyable.