

Dashboard

Take a few minutes to think about any questions you may have already answered regarding what seems to put you at risk for self-defeating behaviors. This can be anything from time of day, hunger level, worries, or being with family.

Identifying between three and five gauges to regularly check is a helpful behavior management tool. 12 Step literature often contains the acronym HALT (hungry, angry, lonely, tired) as a quick reminder of what may predict addictive behaviors and it also signals a person to stop (halt) and take action. STOP can also be used, stop, take a step back, observe, and prepare, or The 4 I's - Inhibit initial impulses and inventory what is important (Gauges, Compass, & Course) before behaving.

You are going to construct your own personal dashboard to watch and to use as a tool to know help determine when/whether it is wise to refuel, rest, find an escape route to prevent self-defeating behavior. Just like a driver who needs to monitor his dashboard to see his fuel, engine temperature, & radiator water level, before deciding whether a drive into the desert is a good idea or if he should stop at a gas station first.

When thinking about what puts you at risk for self-defeating behavior, it may also be useful to include some things that when present (lots of sleep,) reduces the chance of doing something that works really well in the moment, but sabotages your longer term goals.

List all of the factors that could be useful gauges /thermometers to watch, put down a temperature at which you think doing something about it is a good idea or just pick two, e.g., Fuel (Coping Resources) and Engine Temp (Stressors & Stress). You can use words to describe the threshold if a temperature number doesn't seem to fit. Then decide if putting all of them on your dashboard is a good idea, or if you want to try only a few to start, with the knowledge you can always add/remove gauges to make it more effective. Put a check next to the ones you'll use to start.

<u>Example</u>		<u>Yours</u>	
Gauge	Red Line	Gauge	Red Line
Angry	60	_____	_____
Lonely	80	_____	_____
Financial Stressed	30	_____	_____
Exhausted	50	_____	_____
Hot & Sweaty	65	_____	_____

It is a good idea to check your gauges any time you are approaching a potential stressor In addition, beginning to check them regularly is useful. How often and what cues could you use to remind you to check your dashboard?

What can you do to "refuel, cool off, or slow things down?" Would creating a coping card help?
