#5 in a series. Look for others...

SUPPORT

Making a Decision to Change

One of the first steps towards successfully changing your crystal use is to reach a clear decision that you want to change. Other users have found it helpful to think about the good and not so good things about changing versus not changing their Tina use.

Getting Started

If you want to make a change but you're not sure where to start, breaking down the impacts of Tina use on different aspects of your life can help you identify more clearly how you may be able to make change. Think about how using Tina affects each of the following:

• Health • Finances • Friendships • Partner
• Work/School/Volunteer • Sex • Safety

The next step is to envision the alternatives. What would you like to experience in each of these areas? Pick one area to start and think about what you can do now to start moving towards your vision of this aspect of your life.

The Toronto Gay/Bisexual Men's Crystal Meth Task Force, 2007

Reducing Use Tips

What have other guys tried that have been helpful for them?

1. Identify and reinforce the benefits.
2. Prepare – stop buying and get rid of your drug stuff.
3. Become more aware of your triggers.
4. Structure your time and keep busy.
5. Change the behaviour associated with your strongest cravings.
6. Use less, and less often by extending the time between hits.
7. Brush and floss regularly. Get regular check ups and dental cleaning.
8. Try alternative therapies to help reduce cravings, balance energy and moods, and regulate sleep.
9. Be patient and if you don't achieve your goal, don't give up.
10. Reward yourself in healthy ways when you achieve your goals.

Coping with Cravings

Learning to manage cravings – urges and temptations to use – is an important part of reaching goals of reducing use or abstinence. Think about a high-risk situation and develop a coping plan for how you will deal with cravings.

Here are some suggested strategies that you may want to try:

- Distract yourself. Do something unrelated to Tina and/or sex if the two are related for you.
- Call someone. Having to engage in a conversation with a friend, lover or family member can help us shift our focus away from ourselves and our desire to use.
- Delay the response. Put off the decision to use for 15 minutes.
- Normalize the craving: 'I am experiencing an urge to use and that's ok.'
- Think of the benefits of not using. Make a list or refer to one you have already made for that as well.

RESOURCES

For information about resources available in Toronto and to get support from others, please visit **www.himynameistina.com**