

CRAVINGS: WHAT ACTUALLY WORKS

Cocaine cravings don't behave like drink or heroin cravings.

Most of the standard advice misses. This doesn't.

TWO DIFFERENT THINGS GET CALLED THE SAME WORD

Coming off cocaine after heavy use is a real withdrawal — flattening tiredness, wrecked sleep, ravenous appetite, a mood that can get very dark. Anyone who says it's all in your head is wrong. It isn't usually medically dangerous, so you don't normally need a supervised detox. Not dangerous isn't the same as not hard.

The craving that turns up weeks later is a different animal. That one runs on cues — a place, a time, a person, a payslip. Which means it can be moved.

01

MONEY IS THE BIGGEST TRIGGER NOBODY NAMES

WHAT HELPS

Decide what happens to the money BEFORE it lands. Standing order that moves it the same day. Card left at home. Someone else holding it for 48 hours.

Cocaine use tracks the wage cycle. Payday is the highest-risk moment of the month, and it catches people who'd been fine for weeks.

02

DRINK IS HOW MOST RELAPSES START

WHAT HELPS

If you're cutting down, the first few weeks are far easier without alcohol. If that's not realistic, decide before you go out — not at the bar.

Few people set out to use again. Most have a couple of pints first. Cocaine and alcohol are tied together chemically — your body learned they go as a pair.

03

THE CRAVING PASSES FASTER THAN YOU THINK

WHAT HELPS

Set a timer for twenty minutes. Decide at the end, not now. Change the room. Get outside.

Cravings spike hard and fade in about 15–20 minutes. In the middle it feels like it'll last forever. It won't. Most people never reach the end of the timer still wanting it.

04

MAP YOUR CUES, THEN MOVE THEM

WHAT HELPS

Write the list down — actually write it. Then change what you can. Mute the names. Take the other road. Put something in the diary for Friday at six.

It's usually a short, specific list: a particular pub, one or two names in the phone, Friday from 6pm, being alone after a bad shift.

If cravings are running your week, that's worth a conversation.

RCA Trust (Renfrewshire) 0141 887 0880 · Find support near you at aliss.org

Low mood is the symptom people are least prepared for — and it does lift. Samaritans 116 123, any time.

Let's Talk About Charlie · An RCA Trust service