

Examples of Internal and External Triggers

Internal Triggers	External Triggers
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Come from within the person 2. Result from a memory, an emotional response or something physical 3. Are subjective and specific to the person 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Environmentally based 2. Come from a person, place, event, or may be situationally activated.
A concert that comes to town can be a powerful trigger for a user if associated with a pleasurable using experience.	A return to a physical location where substance use occurred in the past (i.e., a neighbor's yearly party, a favorite bar, a family event, etc.).
A weekend when using episodes typically occur.	A family member leaves on a trip and the user is left alone for the weekend.
An argument between family members. In the past this type of event has triggered using.	Watching a television show/movie depicting a using event or situation.
A family member is in a bad mood. Substances are how they coped in the past. Previously, they would use to avoid dealing with the other person.	A time of day (i.e., after work, happy hour, etc.).
Experiencing a strong emotion. In the past, substances would have compensated for this emotion. It does not have to be related to a using situation.	An object associated with the recovering person's substance use (i.e., the user drinks from a cup formerly used for drinking, a lighter, etc.)
Feeling bored	Running into a friend with whom they used in the past.