

humantold

Urge Surfing Guided Meditation

Urge surfing is a technique for managing your unwanted behaviors. While practicing, you will ride out an urge, like a surfer riding a wave. It might be helpful to record this meditation on a phone and then play it back to yourself.

Sit back or lie down in a comfortable position. Close your eyes or let your gaze soften.

Much like an ocean wave, an urge will gradually gain strength, peak, and then fade away.

When an urge is growing or at its peak, it often feels as if it will never go away. You might feel discomfort or like you have to act on the urge. Remember, these are just feelings.

Notice where you are on the wave of your urge. Is the urge gaining strength, peaking, or beginning to fade?

Remind yourself that urges are temporary. No matter how intense your urge, it will eventually weaken and disappear, even if you don't act upon it.

The goal of urge surfing isn't to change your thoughts and feelings. Instead, you will try to accept whatever you are experiencing.

Take a moment to notice your thoughts. Simply observe the words or images in your mind.

Shift your attention to your feelings. You might have uncomfortable feelings, such as anger, temptation, or guilt. Even uncomfortable feelings are okay.

Now we will practice a relaxation technique called visualization. This will help you continue to ride out your urge.

Use all your senses to imagine the following scene.

Imagine you're standing on a beautiful, sandy beach. You feel the warmth of the sun on your face and a gentle breeze on your skin.

You begin to walk slowly down the shore. With each step, the sand crunches beneath your feet.

humantold

Birds sing in the distance, and ocean waves rumble steadily along the shore.

You take a step toward the ocean and stand at the edge of the surf. Cool water rushes over the top of your feet.

The air is warm, and smells salty.

You look out toward the ocean and notice the water contains every shade of blue and green. When the waves peak, they shimmer in the sunlight, before disappearing onto the shore.

You continue standing on the shore, taking in the sensations of the beach, the ocean, and the waves.

The waves in the ocean are just like your urge. They are powerful for a short time, but before long they peak, and then fade away. You don't have to suppress your urge or try to change it. It will simply fade away on its own.

Now, begin to focus on your breathing. For the next few minutes, you'll practice taking slow, deep breaths, which will help reduce stress and anxiety.

You'll inhale for 4 seconds, hold the air in your lungs for 4 seconds, then slowly exhale for 6 seconds.

When inhaling, focus on completely filling your lungs with air.

To start, follow along as I walk you through the breathing cycle. Let's begin:

Inhale, 2, 3, 4

Hold, 2, 3, 4

Exhale, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Inhale, 2, 3, 4

Hold, 2, 3, 4

Exhale, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Continue practicing on your own for a few minutes.

During deep breathing, it's normal for your mind to wander. When you notice this happening,

humantold

simply return your attention to your breathing, noticing how it feels to take slow, deep breaths.

This exercise is nearly complete. Before continuing your day, take one more moment to observe your thoughts and feelings. Notice if your urge has changed.

When you feel ready to do so, open your eyes and stretch.

This concludes the urge surfing exercise. If you'd like to continue practicing, you can start the exercise again, as many times as you need.

Adapted from: [TherapistAid.com](https://www.therapistaid.com)