



Developing Health
& Independence



**CANNABIS SELF
HELP WORKBOOK**

About this Workbook

This workbook is designed to help you stop or cut down your cannabis use. It does this by looking at the following areas:

- What type of a cannabis user you are
- How cannabis is affecting your life
- The short and long term positives and negatives of your cannabis use
- Why use cannabis
- Why change your cannabis use
- Alternative enjoyable activities
- Cannabis and your emotions
- How much you are spending on cannabis
- Recognising your personal triggers
- Dealing with cravings
- Goal Setting

If you would like 1:1 and group support around your cannabis use and are living in South Gloucestershire, you are entitled to free and confidential support from DHI. You can self refer by calling 0800 073 3011.

Stages of Drug Use

Experimental drug use

Some people, particularly young people, often try a drug to see what it's like. They don't necessarily become regular users of the drug nor plan on using it again, they simply try it as an experiment, often because their friends are. Some people will experiment more than once and go on to become recreational users, whilst others will stop once they have satisfied their curiosity.

Recreational drug use

Some people continue to use drugs for fun or a desired feeling. This is a regular thing, such as every weekend and often as part of someone's social life. Recreational drug users often feel as though they have control over their drug use and that it is not impacting on other areas of their life. Most people who use drugs recreationally see it as 'normal' within their social circle.

Dependent drug use

When people use drugs heavily for a sustained period of time, they may no longer be able to control their use. This is called dependence or addiction, and it can be physical, psychological or both. Physical dependence is where your body craves the drugs, whereas psychological dependence is when you feel you can't cope without it. Dependent drug use affects someone's psychological and/or physical health, as well as often leading to social and emotional problems.

Abstainer

An abstainer is someone who does not take any drugs, or who has not used any drugs for a long period of time and does not want to use again.

Having read the different stages of drug use, what type of a user do you think you are? (please circle)

Experimental

Recreational

Dependent

Abstainer

Why do you identify yourself as that type of user?

.....

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Recognising the type of user you are can help you to identify changes you wish to make.

How Cannabis is Affecting You

Using cannabis can affect people in many different ways. Below is a list of some of the possible ways it can affect people, please circle all that apply to you.

depression

spontaneous laughter

paranoia

poor performance at work

sleepiness

bloodshot eyes

poor memory

sore throat

drug-induced psychosis

low motivation

lowered sex drive

low mood

arguments with loved ones

debts

relaxation

increased appetite

increased heart rate

anxiety

reflective mood

agitated without it

mood swings

Of the symptoms you have circled, which 3 do you feel have the biggest impact on your life?

1..... 2..... 3.....

Reflecting on how your cannabis use affects your life can help you to make decisions about your drug use.

Short and long term negatives and positives

Please fill in the grid below listing as many reasons as possible for negatives and positives of long and short term cannabis use. Keep asking yourself 'What else?' to ensure you get as much as possible in each section.

	NEGATIVES	POSITIVES
SHORT TERM		
LONG TERM		

Based on the above, in a few words, how does it make you feel?

.....
.....
.....

Why use Cannabis?

List all the good things about using cannabis, giving each a score from 1 (not very important) to 10 (very important).

Good things about using cannabis.	Score
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
Total	

Now list all the not-so-good things about using cannabis, giving each a score from 1 (not very important) to 10 (very important).

Not-so-good things about using cannabis.	Score
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
Total	

Why Change?

Thinking about change can help with your motivation.

List all the not-so-good things about changing your cannabis use, giving each a score from 1 (not very important) to 10 (very important).

Not-so-good things about changing your cannabis use.	Score
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
Total	

Now list all the good things about changing your cannabis use, giving each a score from 1 (not very important) to 10 (very important).

Good things about changing your cannabis use.	Score
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
Total	

You will notice the lists are not necessarily the same, for example the not-so-good things about using cannabis are not necessarily the same as the good things about change. Look closely at your reasons for using and wanting to change, these will help to develop your action plan later on.

Alternative enjoyable activities

For some people, even when they wish to stop cannabis, there is an element of using they still enjoy. If this is the case for you it is really important that you find other enjoyable activities to fill your time with, otherwise cannabis will always seem the more attractive option.

For those people who no longer 'enjoy' smoking cannabis, it still takes up an amount of time out of their lives, therefore it is equally important they find alternative things to do with their time. Why not make it fun so you can move towards a happier, healthier life style?!

If you are no longer buying cannabis you will have more money to spend on other things you enjoy, or work towards goals such as learning to drive, moving out etc.

Here are some suggestions:

Go to the gym	listen to music	watch movies	go for a walk	
see mates	play the guitar	cook	go out for food	shop
go to the cinema	go bowling	skate	read	cycle
play football	draw/paint	driving lessons	decorate your room	
play basketball	meditate	write a book	read magazines	
play computer games	play golf	play tennis	swim	dance lessons

Write you own list below:

My list of enjoyable activities:

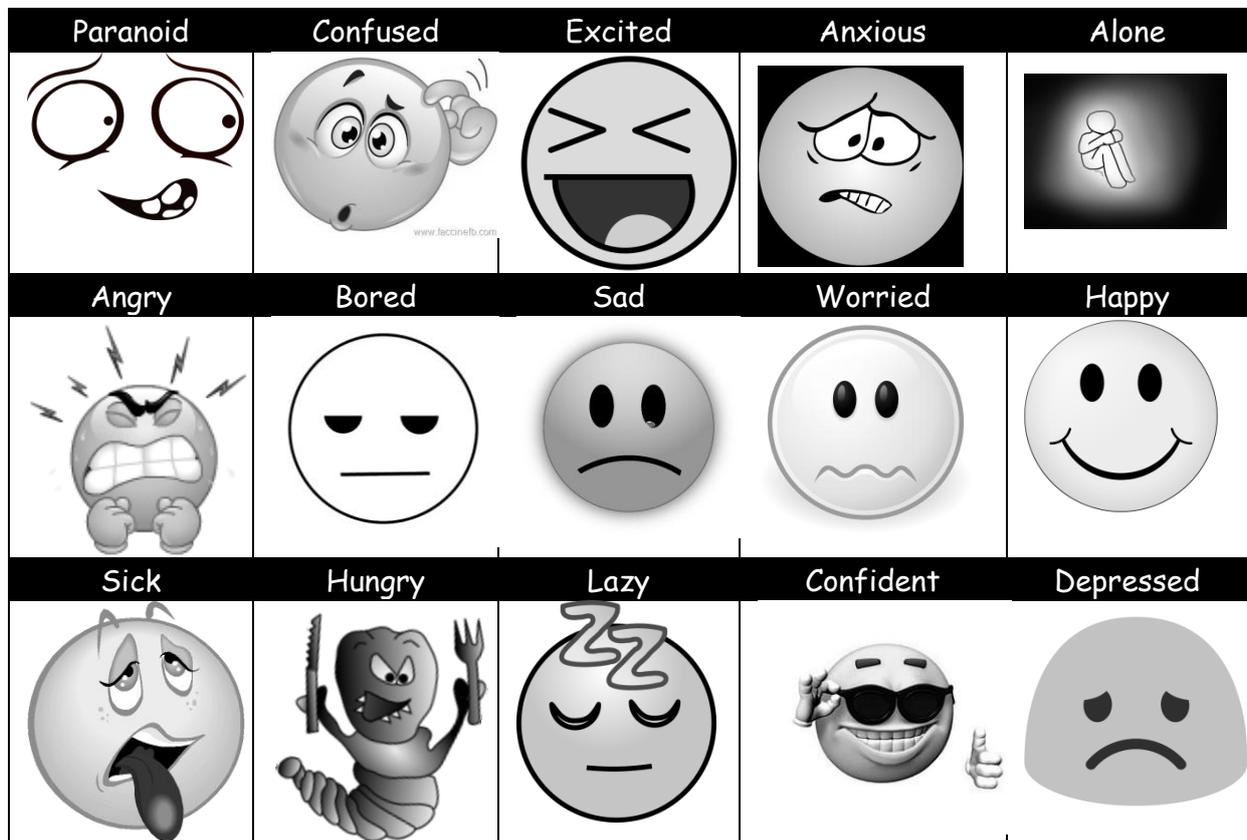
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Having a range of enjoyable activities are helpful because:

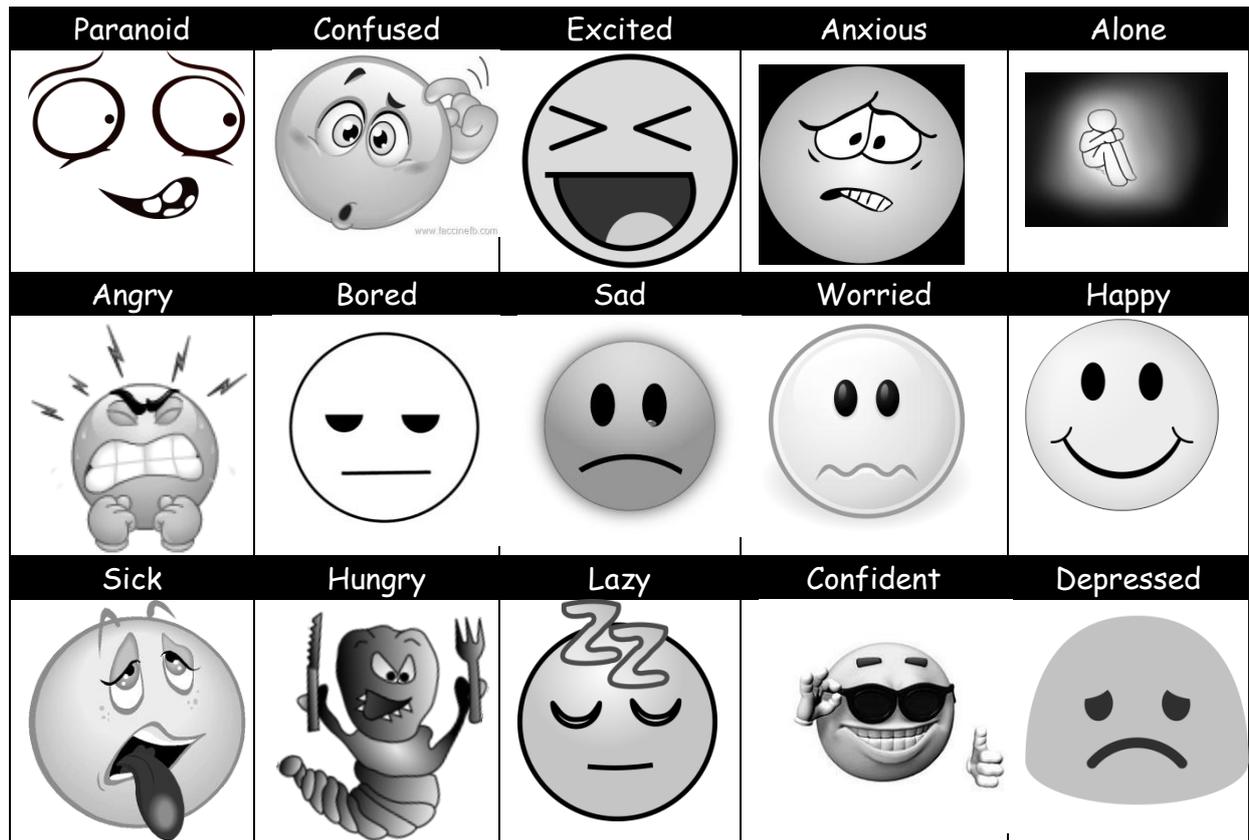
- They provide you with enjoyable alternatives to using cannabis. You can refer to your list and choose something to help overcome a craving.
- They will keep you enjoying life and stop you feeling bored.
- You can use them as rewards for your success.

Cannabis and Emotions

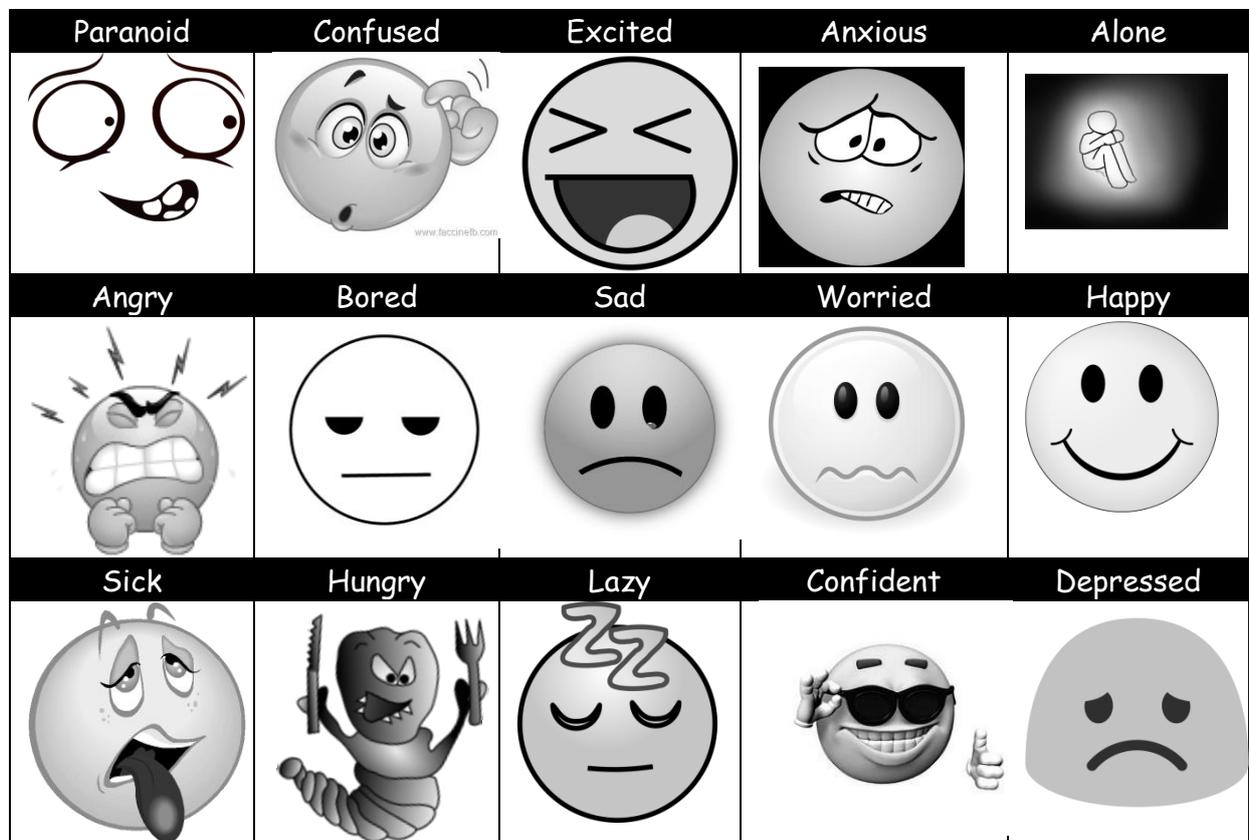
How do you feel **BEFORE** you use cannabis?



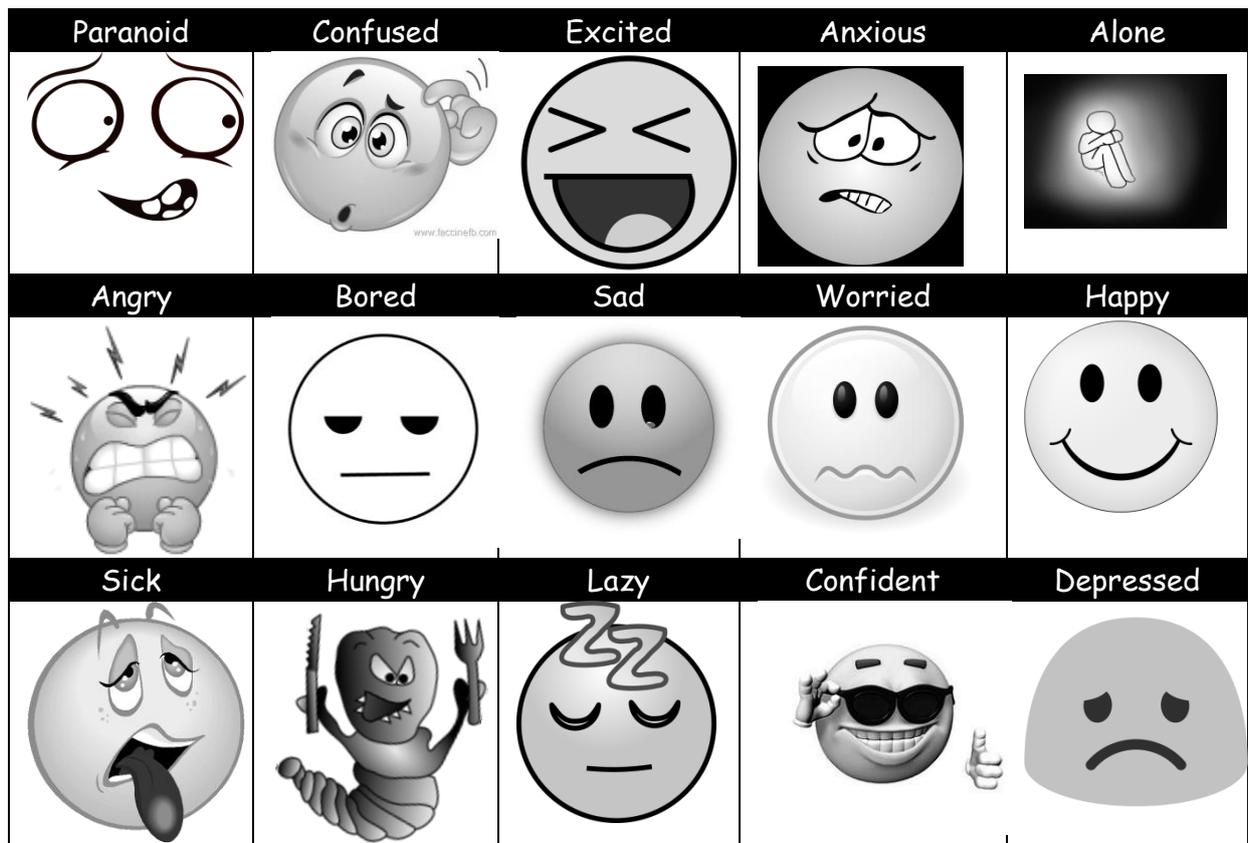
How do you feel **WHEN** you use cannabis?



How do you feel **AFTER** you use cannabis?



How do you **WANT** to feel most of the time?



Looking at the emotions you have identified, what have you learnt about yourself?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

How much is your cannabis use costing you?

How much do you spend on cannabis per week? £ X 52 = £ Amount spent per year.

£ (Amount spent per year) X (The number of years you have been using for)

= £



This is the amount of money you have spent on cannabis so far in your life.

Thinking about the amount you have spent on cannabis so far, how does this make you feel?

.....
.....
.....
.....

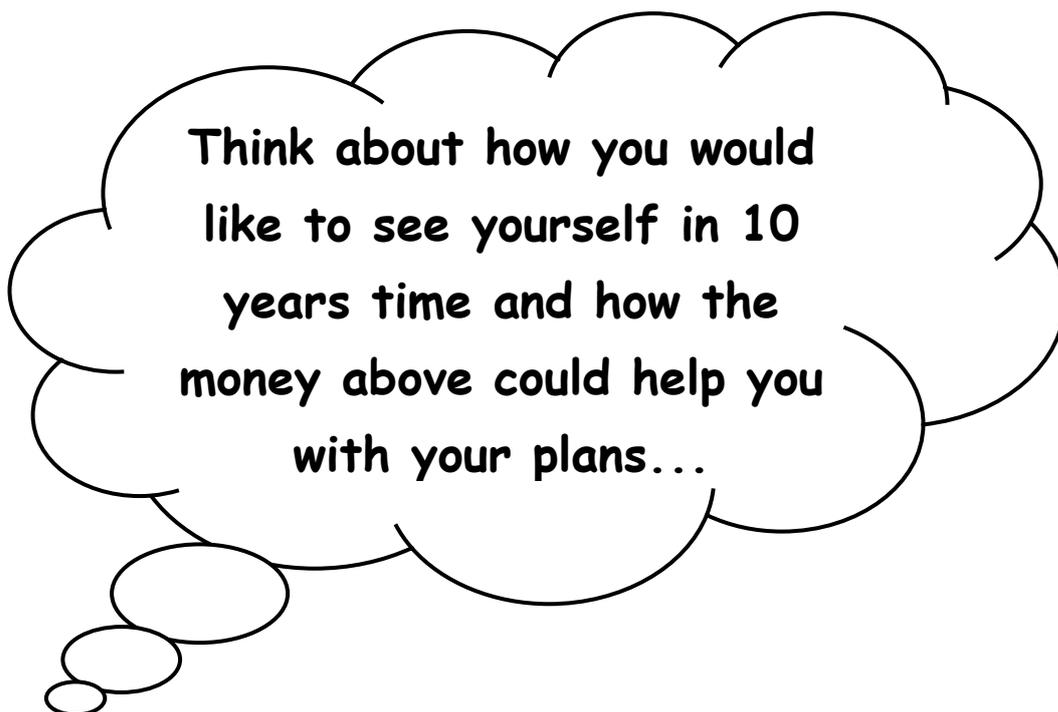
List below some other things you could've spent that money on?

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....

$$\boxed{\pounds} \text{ (Amount spent per year)} \times 10 = \boxed{\pounds}$$

You can't change the amount you have spent on cannabis but you can change what you spend your money on in the future.

The amount above shows how much you will spend if you continue to use as you have been for the next 10 years.



Recognising Your Personal Triggers

A trigger can be thought of as anything that brings back memories, thoughts and feelings of addiction (like a pub reminding an alcohol addict of alcohol).

Triggers can be physical, such as a certain place or emotional, such as the feeling of anger after an argument.

Being able to identify your own triggers can help you deal with them.

In the table below identify your personal triggers and then come up with ideas of how you could deal with each trigger to prevent you from using.

Your Personal Triggers	Coping strategy.
<i>Example. The feeling of anger after an argument with my partner.</i>	<i>Go for a 15 minute walk outside to calm down.</i>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	

Dealing with Cravings

Although cravings can be unpleasant, the good thing is they don't last forever! Most cravings only last between 15 and 30 minutes and the longer you abstain from cannabis the less frequent, shorter lasting and lower intensity they become.

In the boxes below write some ideas to help you deal with your cravings.

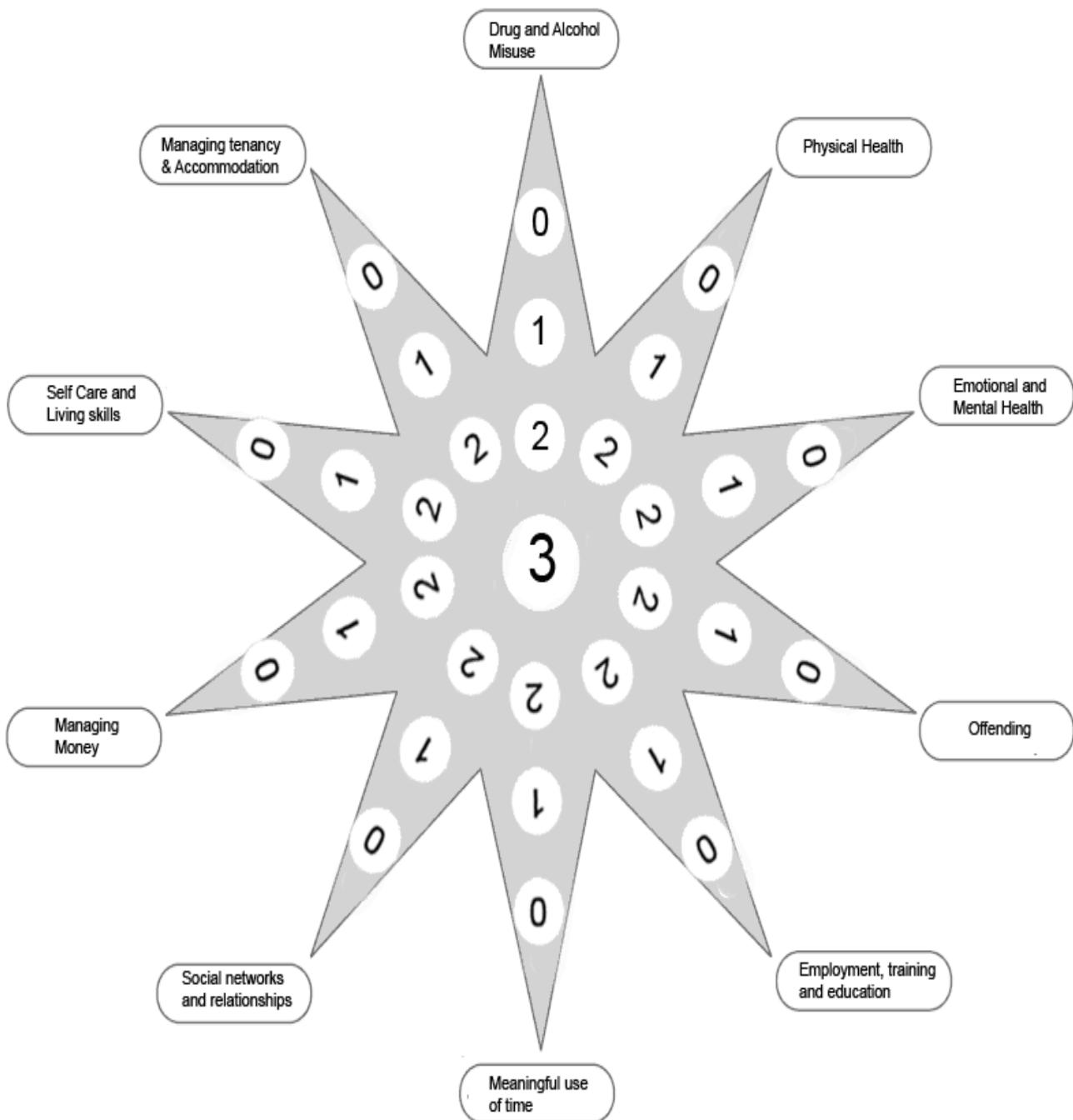
Things I can tell myself...

Ways of distracting myself...

Ways of relaxing myself...

Keeping a 'Craving Log' can help you see your progress. Please fill in the craving log on the next page each time you experience a craving for cannabis.

Goal Setting



Please complete the map to reflect your **current** situation.

- 0 = excellent/good
- 1 = satisfactory
- 2 = unsatisfactory
- 3 = poor

Looking at your star on the previous page look at the areas you rated the poorest, think about what you would like to improve about these areas, how you can do this and who can help you.

Now based on the above, identify what you would like to achieve in the next three months (aim for 4 goals and make one of them about your cannabis use):

What would I like to achieve?	How will I do this and who needs to help?	By when?

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