

## Mood and Substance Use Diary

### Why

A mood and substance use diary is a tool that can be introduced once a young person is established in treatment and interested in the links between their emotions and substance use. It can be helpful to increase insight and build motivation to make changes to substance use and use new skills. The young person needs to be reasonably engaged, motivated to make changes and happy to complete homework tasks. Elicit the below information using motivational interviewing techniques.

### How

- Reflect triggers for and consequences of use e.g. *'It sounds like there are times when you're more likely to use, like when you're hanging out with your mates, or you're feeling bored. And it sounds like often when you smoke you feel really good for a bit and there are also downsides to it like when you got busted for smoking at school.'*
- Reflect on any links the young person has identified between their substance use and their mood e.g. *'Sometimes you drink when you're feeling down, and you feel better for a bit because you can forget about things, but you often feel even worse the next day.'*
- If you like, you can also identify triggers for negative emotions e.g. *'There are times when you're more likely to feel down or angry, like after a fight with your Dad. Sometimes you respond to those situations in ways that make you feel better or improve things like when you were able to walk away from that fight and other times what you do makes things worse like when you shouted back at dad and everything just blew up.'*
- Try to get them to come up with the idea of monitoring. *'How could we go about keeping track of when you use and what situations affect your mood? An important first step in changing your substance use or improving your mood is to keep track of when and how much you're using and the different ways you cope with feeling angry or down and how helpful they are.'*
- Complete an example in session and then ask them to complete it each day for homework, planning when they will complete it and what might get in the way.
- If the person is experiencing depression or low mood, it can be helpful to start with them recording times when their mood is a bit better to identify situations/responses that are helpful.

| Day             | Situation or trigger  | Feelings                       | Response   | Consequences  |
|-----------------|---|--------------------------------|--|---|
|                 | <i>Where was I?<br/>Who was I with?<br/>What was happening?</i> | <i>(How strong out of 10?)</i> | <i>What did I do?<br/>What did I drink or use?<br/>How much?</i> | <i>What happened? How did it affect me and other people?<br/>How did I feel the next day?</i> |
| <b>Thursday</b> | Got home, not sure what to do                                   | Bored<br>6/10                  | Watched a movie with mum   | The movie was kind of funny. Felt pretty good so managed to sleep ok.                         |
| <b>Friday</b>   | Went to friend's place before school                            | OK<br>6/10                     | Had a smoke (1 cone)   | It was fun but then had to go to school. Got in trouble for not concentrating in class.       |

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