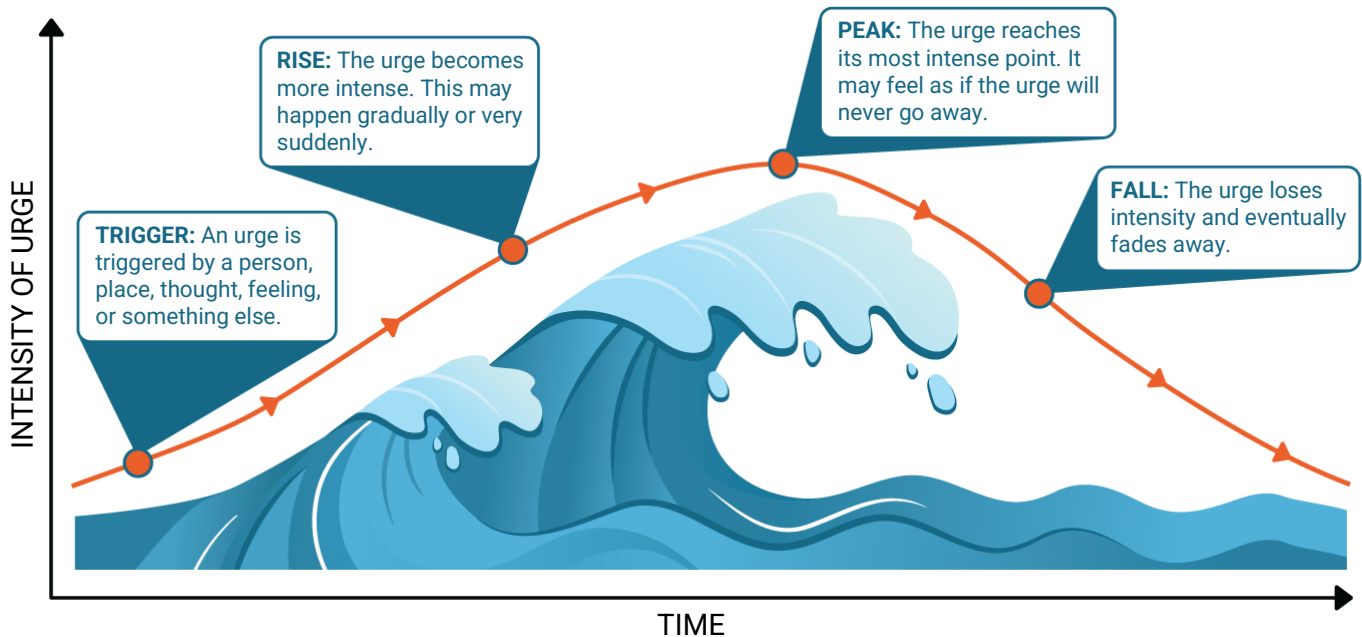


# Urge Surfing

**Urge surfing** is a technique for managing your unwanted behaviors. Rather than giving in to an urge, you will ride it out, like a surfer riding a wave. After a short time, the urge will pass on its own. This technique can be used to stop or reduce drug and alcohol use, emotional reactions such as “blowing up” when angry, gambling, and other unwanted behaviors.



## How to Practice Urge Surfing

1. Acknowledge you are having an urge.
2. Notice your thoughts and feelings without trying to change or suppress them.  
*Note: It is normal to feel some discomfort during an urge.*
3. Remind yourself...
  - It is okay to have urges. They are natural reactions to addictions and habits.
  - An urge is a feeling, not a “must.” I can have this feeling and choose not to act.
  - Some discomfort is okay. I don’t have to change it.
  - An urge is temporary. Like any other feeling, it will pass on its own.

## Other Skills

### Managing Triggers

Use coping skills to reduce the power of triggers. Know your triggers ahead of time, and have a strategy or skill prepared for each one.

*Examples: deep breathing if stressed, eating if hungry, leaving a location if it is high risk*

### Delay & Distraction

Do something to take your mind off the urge. Every minute you delay increases the chance of the urge weakening on its own.

*Examples: go for a walk, listen to music, call a friend, read a book, practice a hobby*