

# Facilitator Guide: Personify and Disarm

## Introduction: Why Personifying Urges Helps

### You Say:

"Urges can feel powerful, but they are not you. They are temporary reactions and impulses that come and go. One way to weaken their grip is by **personifying them**—giving them a name or identity. This helps you see them as separate from yourself, making them easier to challenge and dismiss.

Today, we'll explore how to **Personify and disarm urges**, a tool that helps take power away from destructive self-talk and cravings."

### Key points to highlight:

- **Urges are not commands**—they do not control you.
- Personifying urges **creates emotional distance**, making them easier to manage.
- This tool is useful for **reducing negative self-talk and self-sabotage**.

## Step 1: Group Brainstorming – What Do Urges Feel Like?

**You Say:** "Before we practice using this tool, let's talk about what urges feel like. When you experience an urge, how would you describe it? Does it feel like a voice? A push? A temptation? Something else?"

**Encourage participants to share descriptions.** Examples might include:

- "It's like a smooth talker convincing me I deserve a drink."
- "It's like a little gremlin pressuring me to smoke."
- "It feels like a spoiled child screaming, 'I want it now!'"

### Facilitator's Role:

- Normalize the experience. ("Many people feel like urges have a 'voice' or presence.")
- Reflect & summarize without offering solutions. ("So for some, it feels like persuasion, and for others, it's pressure.")
- Encourage **self-exploration** rather than "fixing."

## Step 2: Introducing the Personify and Disarm Tool

### You Say:

"Now that we've described how urges feel, let's talk about how to **personify and disarm them**. By giving an urge a name or identity, we can take away its power and respond to it as an outside force—not as part of who we are."

**Step 1: Name Your Urge** – Choose a name or character for the urge.

*If your urge had a name, what would it be? Examples: 'The Negotiator,' 'The Whiner,' 'The Smooth Talker.'*

**Step 2: Describe How It Talks to You** – Identify what it says to convince you.

*What does your urge typically say? Examples: 'You deserve this', "One won't hurt,' 'This is too hard.'*

**Step 3: Talk Back & Disarm It** – Respond to the urge as if it were an annoying salesperson or a pushy friend.

*What can you say to your urge? Examples: 'I hear you, but I'm in control now,' 'You're lying to me again, and I'm not listening.'*

## Step 3: Participant Practice – Challenging an Urge

**You Say:** "Now, let's apply this to real situations. Think of a time when you experienced an urge. We'll go through the three steps together. Naming it, describing what it says, and talking back."

### Instructions:

1. **One participant shares** a recent urge they experienced (or you can provide a scenario if no one volunteers).
2. The group **brainstorms ideas for naming the urge voice and considers one that might** work for them
3. The participant **practices responding to their urge aloud** using the 'talk back' method.

### Facilitator's Role:

Guide participants to use **clear, confident responses** to their urges.

Redirect if responses **sound passive or accepting** (e.g., "I just ignore it" → "How can you actively challenge it?").

Keep the focus on **skill-building**, not judgment.

## Closing the Exercise

**You Say:** "Urges can feel persuasive, but they are not in control—you are. The more you practice **personifying and disarming them**, the weaker they become. Try using this strategy when an urge comes up this week and see how it changes your response."

## Optional Reflection Questions:

- How did it feel to name and talk back to an urge?
- What challenges might you face when using this strategy?
- What's one small way you can practice this technique this week?

## Facilitator Quick Tips:

- Keep it **participant-driven**—let them brainstorm their own urge names and responses.
- Gently **redirect unhelpful patterns** (e.g., "I just wait for the urge to pass" → "What if you actively challenged it instead?").
- Encourage **realistic, small steps** toward better urge management.

## Summary

The **Personify and disarm** tool helps participants **see urges as separate from themselves**, reducing their emotional power. By **naming the urge, identifying its message, and talking back assertively**, participants can gain confidence in resisting cravings.

**Encourage ongoing practice**—every time participants disarm an urge, they strengthen their ability to handle future ones!