



HANDOUT 3: SESSION 02

Meditation techniques

Coping with urges and cravings in a different way: urge surfing

When you feel an urge to gamble, imagine that it is like riding a surfboard on a wave with the urge to gamble being like the wave. The wave rises and falls and eventually dissipates, as it is impermanent, like everything else. The surfboard could be like your breath, you can use it to help you to ride the wave of the urge. The point here is that urges come and go. They can be challenging when they occur and throw you off balance, but with practice, you can learn to ride the wave of the urge until it subsides and you can feel like you are on solid ground again.

Reconnecting with our inner steadfastness: mountain meditation

Sometimes stress, family problems, and the worries and responsibilities of life can become difficult to tolerate. An urge to gamble can at times seem overwhelming; like an avalanche about to crush you.

Mountain meditation involves imagining yourself like a mountain. A mountain is steadfast, strong and unmoving, despite what is happening around it, such as the weather and changing seasons. There can be snowstorms, hailstorms, wind, rain, fire, cold, extreme heat and landslides, but the mountain perseveres and remains steadfast. The mountain is like the awareness of the breath and present moment, unmoving and still, like the blue sky that is always above the clouds or the stillness that is always at the depths of the ocean. Practicing this meditation can help to cultivate mountain-like qualities of perseverance, steadfastness and stillness.

Urge surfing is based on Bowen, Chawla and Marlat (2011) and Lloyd (2003).

Mountain meditation is based on Bowen, Chawla and Marlat (2011) and Kabat-Zinn (1990).



Imagine being this mountain. Calm, steadfast and serene. To a mountain, the wind, the weather, storms, or an avalanche are insignificant. In the middle of this photo are two small avalanche paths. From the perspective of the mountain, they are tiny and insignificant disturbances.