

# Urge Surfing

## guided meditation script

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Urge surfing is a technique for managing your unwanted behaviors. While practicing, you will ride out an urge, like a surfer riding a wave.

*brief pause* \_\_\_\_\_

Sit back or lie down in a comfortable position. Close your eyes, or let your gaze soften.

*brief pause* \_\_\_\_\_

Much like an ocean wave, an urge will gradually gain strength, peak, and then fade away.

*brief pause* \_\_\_\_\_

When an urge is growing or at its peak, it often feels as if it will never go away. You might feel discomfort, or like you *have to* act on the urge. Remember, these are just feelings.

*brief pause* \_\_\_\_\_

Notice where you are on the wave of your urge. Is the urge gaining strength, peaking, or beginning to fade?

*20-30 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

Remind yourself that urges are temporary. No matter how intense your urge, it will eventually weaken and disappear, even if you don't act upon it.

*10 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

The goal of urge surfing isn't to change your thoughts and feelings. Instead, you will try to accept whatever you are experiencing.

*brief pause* \_\_\_\_\_

Take a moment to notice your thoughts. Simply observe the words or images in your mind.

*30-45 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

Shift your attention to your feelings. You might have uncomfortable feelings, such as anger, temptation, or guilt. Even uncomfortable feelings are okay.

*30-45 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

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Now we will practice a relaxation technique called visualization. This will help you continue to ride out your urge.

*brief pause* \_\_\_\_\_

Use all your senses to imagine the following scene.

*brief pause* \_\_\_\_\_

Imagine you're standing on a beautiful, sandy beach. You feel the warmth of the sun on your face, and a gentle breeze on your skin.

*15-25 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

You begin to walk slowly down the shore. With each step, the sand crunches beneath your feet.

*15-25 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

Birds sing in the distance, and ocean waves rumble steadily along the shore.

*15-25 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

You take a step toward the ocean and stand at the edge of the surf. Cool water rushes over the top of your feet.

*15-25 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

The air is warm, and smells salty.

*15-25 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

You look out toward the ocean and notice the water contains every shade of blue and green. When the waves peak, they shimmer in the sunlight, before disappearing onto the shore.

*30 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

You continue standing on the shore, taking in the sensations of the beach, the ocean, and the waves.

*60-90 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

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The waves in the ocean are just like your urge. They are powerful for a short time, but before long they peak, and then fade away. You don't have to suppress your urge or try to change it. It will simply fade away on its own.

*brief pause* \_\_\_\_\_

Now, begin to focus on your breathing. For the next few minutes, you'll practice taking slow, deep breaths, which will help reduce stress and anxiety.

*brief pause* \_\_\_\_\_

You'll inhale for 4 seconds, hold the air in your lungs for 4 seconds, then slowly exhale for 6 seconds.

When inhaling, focus on completely filling your lungs with air.

*brief pause* \_\_\_\_\_

To start, follow along as I walk you through the breathing cycle. Let's begin:

*brief pause* \_\_\_\_\_

Inhale, 2, 3, 4

Hold, 2, 3, 4

Exhale, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Inhale, 2, 3, 4

Hold, 2, 3, 4

Exhale, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Inhale

*3 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

Hold

*3 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

Exhale

*5 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

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Inhale

*3 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

Hold

*3 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

Exhale

*5 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

Continue practicing on your own for a few minutes.

*60-90 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

During deep breathing, it's normal for your mind to wander. When you notice this happening, simply return your attention to your breathing, noticing how it feels to take slow, deep breaths.

*120-180 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

This exercise is nearly complete. Before continuing your day, take one more moment to observe your thoughts and feelings. Notice if your urge has changed.

*30-45 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

When you feel ready to do so, open your eyes and stretch.

*15 second pause* \_\_\_\_\_

This concludes the urge surfing exercise. If you'd like to continue practicing, you can start the exercise again, as many times as you need.