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LEADER'S GUIDE:

Building a Foundation by Pamela Hughes
I'm giving my kids the love I never had.

TODAY WE'RE GOING TO TALK ABOUT:

Recognizing your triggers

INTRODUCTION

“Triggers” are feelings, experiences, people and places that make us feel like we want to get high. Common triggers are feelings of loneliness, rejection, anxiety, or boredom. Recovering addicts can relapse because of experiences like losing a job, witnessing violence, or having a fight with a family member, or just being around people or places where they used to use.

We can avoid some triggers, but it's impossible to avoid stress. The stresses of poverty, living in unsafe neighborhoods, or even dealing with the child welfare system can make you feel powerless and alone. To cope with stress so that it does not trigger you to relapse, you can learn new ways of soothing yourself and build stronger support networks. You also can set up services to support you. Counseling, medication, family therapy, in-home supports to help you handle your children, or respite care to give yourself a break can all make it easier to handle your triggers and avoid relapse.

READ AND DISCUSS STORY

Let's take turns reading the story out loud. Who wants to start?

LET'S TALK ABOUT THE STORY:

- What triggered Pamela to use drugs?
- After Pamela was clean for four years, what led her to relapse?
- How did Pamela come to understand her own cycle of depression and drug use? What new steps did she take to strengthen her recovery?
- What do you think makes Pamela more likely to be able to maintain her sobriety when she faces hard times in the future?

JOURNAL TIME

Let's turn to the worksheet called "My Reflections." Take 5 or 10 minutes to write down your answers on the worksheet and then we'll share. (*Wait until most people are finished.*)

- Who wants to share some responses?

ENDING THE GROUP

Now turn to the "Recovery Journal" worksheet. Take a few minutes to write down your goal for this week. You can answer the "reflection" questions at the end of the week before our group meets again.

We'll begin our next group by talking about your goals. I look forward to hearing from everyone about how you tried to meet your goals!

STARTING NEXT WEEK'S LESSON

Let's talk about your goals for the week:

- What were some of your goals?
- Reflect on some of your past goals. Why do you think that you were successful in meeting some goals, but not others?

Thank you for sharing.

NAME:

DATE:

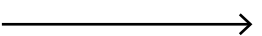
MY REFLECTIONS: Building a Foundation by Pamela Hughes

1. What feelings do you think trigger your drug use?

2. What people or places are triggers for you?

3. Do you have any other ways of handling painful moments or feelings? Describe using specific examples.

4. What supports might help you when you are faced with triggers in the future?

OVER 

NAME:

DATE:

My Recovery Journal – Building a Foundation

GOAL: Write down one trigger that you're worried about and then write down the name of one person you can speak to this week about this trigger. What are you going to say to this person?

REFLECTION: Did you follow through on your goal of talking to one person this week about how to handle your trigger? If so, how did it go? If not, what kept you from sharing your feelings?

Describe one positive development about yourself that happened this week.