

# Dealing With Detox

When dealing with the detox of trauma-bonded or very toxic relationships, the desire to reach out or have some kind of contact can be extremely strong. People can inadvertently psyche themselves out by thinking of having to go the rest of their lives never speaking to this person and things like that. This is often overwhelming and it makes the struggle harder. Don't think of it like that. Just focus on getting through the day. Or the hour. Or however you need to do it to where it is manageable.

*“It's 12:00 noon. I just need to get to 5pm without calling him. I can do that.”*

*“It's 8am. I just need to get to 10am without looking at her social media.”*

Then keep extending the time. At 10, you get to 12 without looking at her social media. At 5, you get to 9 without calling him. In this way, you keep yourself from being overwhelmed. Your self-talk is very important here as well. You can say to yourself (out loud if you like), “I accept that I want to have contact and I understand why, but I am now making choices based on self-love and knowing my worth, rather than fear, toxicity or conditioning. Having toxic people in my life does not fit in with this.” Then, very purposefully, find something else to focus on. That could be some self-care, a project for work, a movie... anything that is healthy.

We don't want to avoid or deny our feelings. Feelings don't respond well to being treated like problems and they do not just go away. We need to turn and acknowledge them, address them and then turn our focus to something else. At times, this will be all it takes. If you get triggered, you can use the mood journal and trigger worksheet to explore them and gain a deeper understanding into what's really going on. The trick is to use the knowledge and tools that you have when you need them instead of getting overwhelmed by emotion. It's not easy, and there are times your strategies will not always be as successful as you'd like, but it's about winning the war, not each individual battle. Addiction is an attempt to self-regulate and we address this by learning healthier ways to do that. The key is giving yourself time and working on it a little bit every day.

This is about consciously choosing to act in your own best interest *despite* the fact that it feels uncomfortable and may not be what you desire to do at this very moment. It's a decision you have to make over and over again. The voice of addiction is sneaky and it's powerful. It tries to convince you that you *need* to use and it magnifies your suffering in an effort to try and make you. It helps to remember that *this isn't reality* so you can stay strong in your decision.