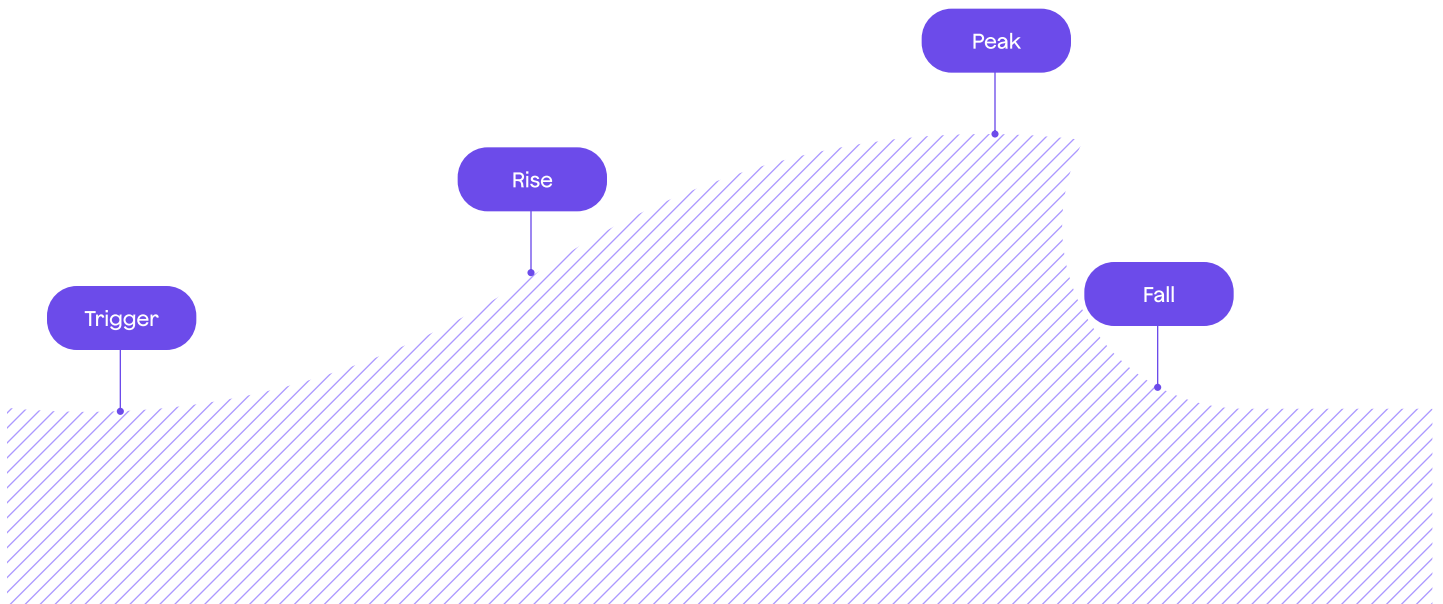


# Urge surfing: Riding the wave of impulse

An urge is like a wave in the ocean: it builds in intensity, reaches a peak, and then naturally subsides. You don't have to fight the wave or give in to it; you simply need to “surf” it until it reaches the shore. This skill helps you observe impulses without acting on them, giving your brain time to return to a state of balance.



## 1 Step one: Catch the Wave (Awareness)

When you feel a sudden impulse (to spend, to reach out to an ex, to start a massive project), stop and acknowledge it.

### Observation Questions:

- Where in my body do I feel this urge right now? (e.g., tight chest, racing heart, restless hands).

## 2 Step two: Mindful observation (the surf)

### The Mantra

Remind yourself: This is just a feeling, not a 'must'. I can have this feeling and choose not to act. Like a wave, it is temporary and will pass on its own.

### Focus Point

Instead of fighting the urge, shift your attention to your breath. Imagine your breath is the surfboard keeping you steady as the wave rises and passes beneath you.

### Grounding Actions

Commit to waiting just 15 minutes before acting on your urge. Most urges lose their peak intensity within this window.

#### The "3-2-1" Grounding Technique

Name 3 things you can see right now.



Name 2 things you can physically touch



Name 1 sound you can hear.

Alternative Grounding techniques

### Impulses are physical sensations rather than emergencies

1

#### Locate & observe

Identify one place in your body where the urge feels strongest. Is it tight, warm, or heavy? Notice its exact borders – are they firm or fuzzy?

2

#### Stay curious

Instead of wishing the feeling away, investigate it. Notice how the sensation shifts or moves slightly with every deep breath you take.

3

#### Ride the wave

Imagine the urge as a wave cresting and subsiding. Watch this process for five full breaths. Focus your breath on the sensation and imagine your breath is touching the place in your body where the sensation exists.

4

#### Gently return

If your mind wanders to worried thoughts, simply acknowledge them and bring your focus back to the physical sensation in your body

5

#### Let it pass

Continue breathing until you notice the intensity or size of the "wave" begin to subside.

### Post-Urge Check

After the wave has passed, how does your body feel now?

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What helped you ride the wave today? (e.g., deep breathing, calling a friend, or just observing the sensation)

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