Urges aren't the problem—Control is the problem

Your child likely does many things to try and control his/her urges to pull. These can include actually pulling, avoiding situations that make him/her want to pull, avoiding stress, wearing gloves, etc.

It is not that these things are wrong or bad, in fact, they are probably helpful sometimes, especially in the short-term. But when the main goal becomes getting rid of urges, we are fighting a losing battle with long-term costs.

Fighting the urges is usually our natural reaction, but it is counterproductive. It actually makes them worse!

Willingness

Instead of trying to control urges, what if we tried something different? What if we practiced getting to know these urges and making space for them? We call this willingness.

Like the picture above, what if instead of fighting and trying to control this "urge monster" we learned to make space for it and stopped letting it tell us what to do.

This does NOT mean giving into the urge and letting it run our lives. In fact, it is the opposite—it is noticing the urge for what it is (simply a thought, a sensation, etc.) and realizing that it does not have any real power to tell us how to live our life.

Homework

Keep using those exercises!

These make for great opportunities to practice willingness.

Keep using your stimulus control plan

How you can help:

- Remember that urges are not something to be frightened of, instead they are something that your child can learn to make space for and get better at having. Urges are not the enemy—pulling is—and that is something that we have control of.
- Stay positive and praise or reward your child when they practice willingness.