

# Relapse Prevention Plan Companion Guide

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This guide is designed to accompany the 20-part Relapse Prevention Plan. Each section is explained in detail to help participants, facilitators, and sponsors understand its purpose, how to complete it, and why it matters. The guide includes definitions, examples, and therapeutic insights where appropriate.

## 1. How Do You Define Recovery?

Purpose: This personal definition becomes the compass for your journey.

Instructions: Encourage authenticity—there's no right answer. Definitions can be spiritual, practical, emotional, or all three.

Example: "Recovery is waking up without shame and choosing to stay awake."

## 2. Why Do You Want Recovery?

Purpose: Tap into the "why" behind the work—this is your anchor.

Instructions: Use full sentences, avoid generic answers. Prompt with: "Why today? What are you fighting for?"

Example: "I want to be present for my kids and stop lying to myself."

## 3. Motivation to Change – 4 Core Reasons

Purpose: Break the abstract into specific, emotion-connected motivations.

Instructions: This is about digging. Ask: "What would change in your life if you stayed sober?"

Tip: Avoid vague goals—use sensory and emotional language.

## 4. Sober Supports

Purpose: Build the village before the storm hits.

Instructions: Must be real, reachable people who support sobriety—friends, sponsors, therapists.

Bonus Tip: Encourage role clarity: one may be an emotional rock, another accountability-based.

## 5. Coping Skills

Purpose: Identify what already works to manage stress.

Instructions: These should be real-time, healthy tools (e.g., journaling, walking, calling a

friend).

Encourage: Try-tested over idealized. It's okay if it's simple.

## **6. Triggers (9 Total)**

Purpose: Increase awareness of external and internal risks.

Types: Situational, Sensory, Emotional.

Encouragement: Being triggered is not failure—what we do next is what matters.

## **7. Early Warning Signs**

Purpose: Catch the spiral before the slide.

Instructions: Use personal history. Common signs: isolation, mood swings, skipping meetings.

## **8. Consequences of Using**

a. Negative Consequences – What you'd experience after relapse

b. Likely Losses – What you'd lose (job, trust, custody)

Why it Matters: Fear isn't the only motivator, but honest cost analysis is sobering.

## **9. Positive Aspects of Sobriety**

Purpose: Shift focus from loss to gain.

Instructions: Get personal—think about laughter, mental clarity, freedom.

## **10. Support Groups**

Purpose: Encourage engagement with ongoing, structured support.

Instructions: Suggest options (AA, NA, Smart Recovery, Celebrate Recovery, men's groups, therapy).

## **11. Sober Hobbies**

Purpose: Fill the time that addiction used to consume.

Instructions: Can include art, exercise, gardening, motorcycles, etc.

## **12. Inspirational Quote**

Purpose: Lock in a phrase that lifts.

Instructions: Choose one that brings peace, courage, or clarity.

Follow-Up: Ask why it matters to them.

### **13. Core Life Values (Top 5)**

Purpose: Reconnect with the moral and emotional compass.

Instructions: Examples: honesty, family, compassion, freedom, legacy.

### **14. Short-Term Rewards**

Purpose: Reinforce that good comes quickly in recovery.

Examples: Clear thinking, waking up on time, emotional stability.

### **15. Long-Term Rewards**

Purpose: Create a recovery vision.

Examples: Repaired relationships, owning a business, parenting sober.

### **16. Sober Relaxation Techniques**

Purpose: Offer healthy alternatives to emotional numbing.

Examples: Deep breathing, meditation or prayer, nature walks.

### **17. Emotional Relapse (Gorski's Model)**

Definition: You're not thinking about using, but you're setting yourself up through poor self-care.

Signs: Anxiety, anger, defensiveness, mood swings, bottling up feelings.

Example: "I stop answering texts. I'm snapping at my kids."

### **18. Mental Relapse**

Definition: The war starts in your head. You're debating using.

Signs: Fantasizing about past use, lying, bargaining, justifying.

Example: "I start thinking I can use just once or manage it differently this time."

### **19. Positive Affirmations**

Purpose: Rewire the inner voice.

Instructions: Keep it present-tense and self-directed.

Examples: "I am worthy of love." "I am stronger than my cravings."

### **20. Gratitude List (Top 10)**

Purpose: Anchor the spirit in what's real, not what's missing.

Why It Works: Gratitude shifts brain chemistry—reduces stress and increases optimism.

Encouragement: Be specific. "Coffee on my porch this morning" is better than "life."

## Relapse Prevention Plan

“Recovery is about progression, not perfection.” ~ Bill W (AA)

1. How do you define recovery? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Why do you want recovery?

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3. What is your motivation to change? Please write down 3 reasons for each, be specific.

a. Reason 1: \_\_\_\_\_

i. 3 motivations:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

b. Reason 2: \_\_\_\_\_

i. 3 motivations:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

c. Reason 3: \_\_\_\_\_

i. 3 motivations:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Reason 4: \_\_\_\_\_

i. 3 motivations:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Sober Supports

a. Person #1: \_\_\_\_\_

i. Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

ii. Why are they a positive support? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. Person #2: \_\_\_\_\_

i. Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

ii. Why are they a positive support? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

c. Person #3: \_\_\_\_\_

i. Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

ii. Why are they a positive support? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Name 3 coping skills that help you, or have helped you manage stress and strengthen recovery.

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

6. List 9 triggers that could jeopardize your sobriety. Consider situations (people, places, or things), sensory (sight, sound, touch, smell, taste), and emotions (happiness, sadness, anger, etc).

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_

6) \_\_\_\_\_

7) \_\_\_\_\_

8) \_\_\_\_\_

9) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Early Warning Signs: List 10 signs that your recovery may be in jeopardy. For example: behavioral changes, emotional state or mental signs.

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_

6) \_\_\_\_\_

7) \_\_\_\_\_

8) \_\_\_\_\_

9) \_\_\_\_\_

10) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Consequences of Using

a. List 3 negative consequences that would emerge in your life following use.

i. \_\_\_\_\_

ii. \_\_\_\_\_

iii. \_\_\_\_\_

b. List 3 things you would likely lose as a result of using.

i. \_\_\_\_\_

ii. \_\_\_\_\_

iii. \_\_\_\_\_

9. List 3 positive aspects of your life that will emerge due to your ongoing sobriety/recovery?

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

“Daring to set boundaries is about having the courage to love ourselves, even when we risk disappointing others.” ~ Brene Brown

10. Name self-help or support groups you are willing to participate in to aide in your recovery. (i.e. AA, NA, church groups, community support groups)

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

11. What are 3 sober hobbies that you enjoy that promote recovery?

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

12. Identify and list an inspirational quote that positively impacts your sobriety that you'd like to remember.

a. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Why was this quote an inspiration to you?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

13. Please list your top 5 life values.

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

d. \_\_\_\_\_



e.

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14. List 3 short-term rewards of sobriety.

a. 

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b. 

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c. 

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15. List 3 long-term rewards of sobriety.

a. 

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b. 

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c. 

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16. List 3 sober relaxation techniques and why they work.

a. 

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b. 

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c. 

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17. Describe what emotional relapse might look like in you.

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18. Describe what mental relapse might look like in you. \_\_\_\_\_

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19. List 10 positive affirmations.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) \_\_\_\_\_
- 10) \_\_\_\_\_

20. List 10 things you are GRATEFUL for.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_
- f. \_\_\_\_\_
- g. \_\_\_\_\_
- h. \_\_\_\_\_

- i. \_\_\_\_\_
- j. \_\_\_\_\_

“When I focus on what’s good today, I have a good day. When I focus on what’s bad, I have a bad day. If I focus on the problem, the problem increases. If I focus on the answer, the answer increases.” ~ Alcoholics Anonymous

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Recovery with Patrick