




A Workbook for People Rebuilding Their Lives

Practical tools to build routines, manage emotions, and move forward with confidence



Created by Community Partners For Journey of Hope, Inc.

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Welcome

This workbook was created to support you during a time of change. You may be adjusting to new experiences, responsibilities, or emotions—and that can feel overwhelming.

You are not alone. Change takes time, and small steps can make a meaningful difference. This workbook is here to support you as you move forward at your own pace.

How to Use This Workbook

- Go at your own pace
- You do not have to complete every section
- Skip around and come back to activities
- Write as much or as little as feels right for you
- There are not “right” or “wrong” answers

You are in control
of your process.
Take what feels
helpful and leave
what doesn't

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Understanding & Moving Through Emotions

*Learn how your emotions work, why they feel
intense at times, and how to move through them in
healthy, manageable ways.*

What Are Emotions & Where Do They Come From?

Emotions are your body's way of protecting you. They happen quickly—often before you have time to think.

They are messages from your brain, sent through chemicals in your body, that move you toward or away from something that matters to you (3). These reactions can happen automatically, sometimes without you even noticing.

Feelings are what you become aware of after these emotional reactions begin.

"Emotions come first, then feelings come after as the chemicals go to work in our bodies."(16)

How the Brain Processes Emotions

Different parts of your brain work together to create emotional experiences:

- **Alarm System (Amygdala):** detects danger in your environment
- **Thinking Brain (Prefrontal Cortex):** helps make decisions & solve problems
- **Memory System (Hippocampus):** Connects past experiences to the present

How Do Emotions Work Together in the Body?

When danger is detected, the body activates a **fear response**, releasing stress hormones like adrenaline and cortisol. For example:

event happens ■ body tenses ■ heart races ■ threat is sensed ■ reaction occurs

This is helpful in real danger, but the brain can also react this way when you are actually safe—especially after trauma.

Anger

Anger works in a similar way by signaling threat or stress. When anger is high, decision-making and memory can be affected, leading to impulsive reactions or conflict.

Connection & Stress

Connection and stress systems in the brain can overlap, making 'nervous excitement' and anxiety feel similar. As trust builds, calming chemicals support connection and emotional safety.⁽¹⁵⁾

Happiness & Balance

The brain also supports happiness by helping with memory, identity, and focus. Positive memories can help bring emotional balance.

Why is Emotional Awareness Important?

Understanding what is happening in your body is the first step in building emotional awareness and gaining control over your reactions.

When you can notice and name emotions, you move from overwhelm toward clarity and problem-solving. This is where tools like the emotion wheel and charts can help.

When Emotions Feel Intense

When emotions are intense (racing heart, fast thoughts), it is not the time for decisions—it is a time to slow your body using coping skills.

Coping skills help activate parts of the brain that support regulation, focus, and emotional balance.

With practice, it becomes easier to:

- pause instead of react
- avoid harmful situations
- handle conflict more effectively

How Trauma Impacts Emotions

Trauma can affect emotional processing by causing:

- emotional numbing or avoidance
- feeling overwhelmed by emotions
- hypervigilance (constant alertness)
- difficulty distinguishing past from present
- challenges in relationships and attachment(2)

Moving Forward

Emotions can be broken into understandable parts when given space to be processed safely.

Practicing emotional intelligence is a lifelong process that is linked to:

- better mental health
- stronger decision-making
- healthier relationships
- reduced impulsive or self-destructive behaviors (13)

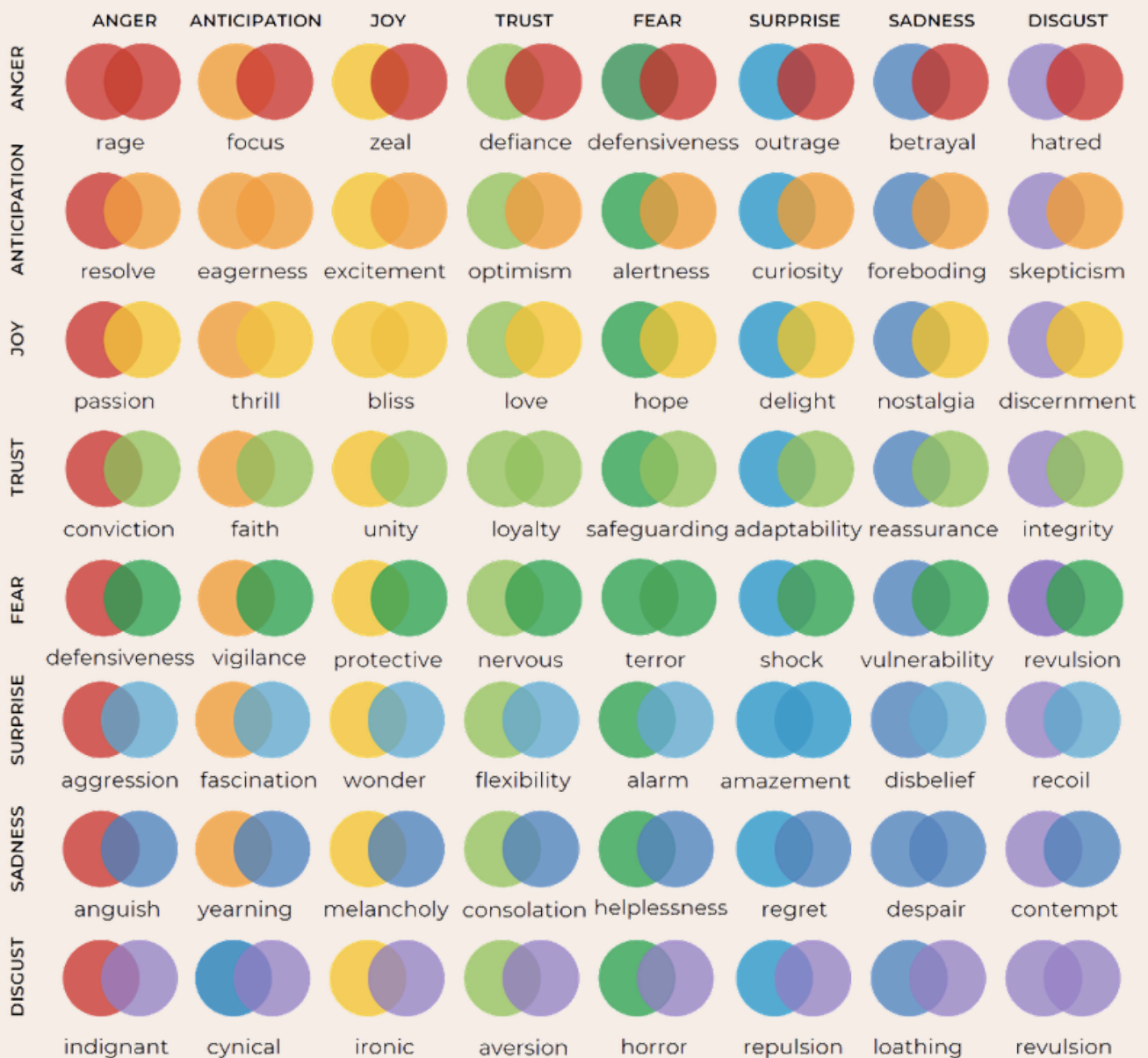
Emotions are meant to be experienced, not held onto--acknowledge them, allow them to pass, and refocus on the present.

Mixed Emotions Chart⁽¹⁶⁾

It's common to feel several emotions at once--This chart shows how emotions can combine & overlap. Understanding mixed emotions can help you feel less confused & more important.

How to Use:

- Notice if more than one emotion is present
- Use the chart to describe what you're feeling
- Remember: it's okay for emotions to be mixed or unclear



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Coping Skills for Post-Transition Success

*Learn how to manage stress and strong emotions,
recognize triggers, build support systems, and take
meaningful steps toward your goals.*

What Are Coping Skills?

Support is a big factor in doing well after release. Safe relationships provide stability, encouragement, and accountability.^(18,4)

Why are Coping Skills Important?

Coping skills help you stay mentally, emotionally, and physically balanced; especially during stressful life transitions like reentry, change, or recovery. ^(8,4)

- Manage stress and anxiety in healthy ways
- Improve emotional control and awareness
- Build resilience during hard situations
- Strengthen decision-making skills

Types of Coping Skills

Emotional: Helps to handle feelings like anger, sadness, or anxiety and prevents emotions from building up and becoming overwhelming.

- Ex. *Deep breathing, journaling, talking to someone you trust*

Cognitive: Helps change how you think about stressful situations, improves problem-solving, and reduces negative thinking patterns.

- Ex. *Positive self-talk, breaking problems into small parts, shifting negative thoughts*

Physical: Helps release stress through the body, reduces physical tension, and calms the nervous system.^(17,11)

- Ex. *Walking or exercise, stretching or yoga, grounding exercises (5-4-3-2-1)*

Social: Helps you connect with others for support, reduces feelings of loneliness, and builds a sense of safety and belonging.

- Ex. *Talking to supportive people, joining support groups, asking for help when needed*

What Happens Without Coping Skills?

Without coping skills, stress can build up and lead to emotional overwhelm, impulsive decisions, increased anxiety or anger, and difficulty handling daily responsibilities.^(17,5)

REMINDER: *Coping skills don't make problems disappear; they help you handle problems in a healthier, more manageable way. The more you practice them, the easier they become to use when you need them most.*

Core Coping Skills

Reentry can trigger strong emotions. Staying in control of your emotions helps you respond calmly, build emotional awareness, and prevents reacting impulsively.

When You Feel: Overwhelmed

- **Pause** → **breathe** → **choose next step**
- Use **cold water** on face or hands
- Grounding technique **5-4-3-2-1** (*notice 5 things you see, 4 hear, 3 feel, 2 smell, 1 taste*)

When You Feel: Discouraged

- **Leave** the situation if possible
- **Call or text** a safe person (friend, family member, mentor)
- **Wait** 24 hours before big decisions

When You Feel: Triggered

- **Focus on effort**, not outcome
- **Shrink the task**
 - Break it into one small step (e.g., “just make the call”)
 - Focus on what you can do right now—not everything at once

TIP: Practice grounding (5-4-3-2-1) or breathing daily, even when calm

How to Know if Your Coping Skills are Working

It's working well if:

- Pause before reacting
- Use coping tools
- Emotions feel manageable

You may need to try something different if:

- React quickly or impulsively
- Feel overwhelmed often
- Emotions feel uncontrollable

Rebuild Safe Support Systems

How this can help:

Support is a big factor in doing well after release. Safe relationships provide stability, encouragement, and accountability.^(18,4)

- Reduces feelings of loneliness
- Provides emotional support
- Encourages positive choices
- Helps you stay steady over time

TIP: Focus on a few safe & consistent people – not many

It's working well if:

- At least 1–3 safe supports
- Regular healthy contact
- Support feels safe

You may need to try something different if:

- Feel isolated or alone
- Avoid connection
- Relationships feel stressful

Identify Triggers & Plan Ahead

How this can help:

Knowing triggers helps prevent falling back into old habits or risky situations and supports better decision-making under stress.^(5,9)

- Reduces risky choices
- Builds confidence in handling stress
- Improves self-awareness
- Creates structure in difficult moments

TIP: Create a plan:
"If I feel _____,
I will _____."

It's working well if:

- Recognize triggers
- Use a plan when stressed
- Avoid unsafe situations

You may need to try something different if:

- Feel "blindsided"
- Act without thinking
- Return to risky environments

Breaking Goals into Small Wins

How this can help:

Big life changes can feel overwhelming. Small goals build momentum and confidence.

- Builds motivation through progress
- Reduces overwhelm
- Encourages consistency
- Strengthens confidence

TIP: Make goals so small they feel “too easy” at first.

It's working well if:

- Completing small goals
- Seeing steady progress
- Feeling encouraged

You may need to try something different if:

- Feeling stuck or unmotivated
- Goals feel too big
- Feeling discouraged

Skill Building & Healthy Outlets

How this can help:

Practical skills support independence, while healthy outlets help manage stress safely.

- Builds job readiness and independence
- Improves financial stability
- Provides healthy emotional release
- Supports long-term growth

TIP: Combine learning with something enjoyable (music, walking, etc.).

It's working well if:

- Learn new skills
- Use healthy outlets
- Feel more capable

You may need to try something different if:

- Feel unproductive
- Use unhealthy coping methods
- Feel stuck or frustrated

Activity 1: Your Mindset for Building a New Life

Starting over means building a new life and not going back to old patterns. You don't have to fix everything at once. You just need to take the next step.

Think about it:

What kind of life do I want to build (Not go back to — build new)?

What are 3 things I want to do differently this time?

1)

2)

3)



Activity 2: Your First 30 Days Plan

Focus on your basic needs first

Top Priorities

- ID (driver's license or ID card)
- Social Security card
- Birth certificate
- Safe place to stay
- Food
- Phone / contact method
- Understand probation or parole rules

Next Steps:

- Apply for healthcare (Medicaid)
- Apply for food help (SNAP)
- Look for a job / job training
- Find a safe person and/or support group

My First Week Plan:

Day 1-3 Goals:

Day 4-7 Goals:

Activity 3: Coping Skills You Can Use Anywhere

Everyone has hard moments. These tools can help.

Potential Coping Skills

- Take 5 slow breaths (in through nose, out through mouth)
- Step away or pause if I can
- Look around and name 5 things I see
- Ground my body (feet on floor, notice support under me)

When I feel angry:

- Pause before reacting or speaking
- Walk away or create space if possible
- Talk to someone safe or wait until I feel calmer
- Release energy in a safe way (walk, stretch, push a wall)

When I feel discouraged:

- Tell myself: "I am making progress"
- Do one small, manageable task
- Avoid thinking in extremes ("all or nothing")
- Remind myself: "Small steps still count"



My Triggers (things that upset me):

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

My Plan:

- 1) If I feel _____, I will _____
- 2) If I feel _____, I will _____
- 3) If I feel _____, I will _____

Activity 4: Support System

You don't have to do this alone.

Safe People I Can Contact:

1) Name: _____

Phone: _____

2) Name: _____

Phone: _____

3) Name: _____

Phone: _____

Support Options:

- Family
- Friends
- Support groups
- Sponsor or mentor
- Counselor

Activity 5: Boundaries & Safety

Some people or situations can set you back. It's okay to protect yourself.

People or Situations to Avoid:

My Boundary Plan:

Practice Saying No:

- *"I can't right now"*
- *"I'm working on staying on track."*
- *"No, thank you."*

Activity 6: Goals (small steps)

Keep your goals simple and realistic.

This Week (choose 1-3):

This Month:

Activity 7: Self-Compassion

You will have hard days. That is normal. It does not mean you failed.

Change your thoughts:

I messed up → I'm learning

I can't do it → I can try again

This is too hard → I'll take one step

What I did well today:



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Re-Establishing Daily Routines

*Learn how to build simple daily routines that
bring structure, reduce stress, and help you feel
more in control of your day.*

Why Routines Matter⁽¹²⁾

Adjusting to life after a major change can feel overwhelming. You may be balancing new responsibilities, emotions, and changes in your environment. Without structure, it can be hard to know where to start.

Creating simple daily routines can help bring a sense of stability, predictability, and control. Routines can support your energy, mental health, and confidence as you move forward.

Routines can help by:

- Reducing stress and decision fatigue
- Supporting daily roles (parent, worker, self-care)
- Creating structure in your day

You are in control of what routines you choose to build--Go at your own pace.

How to Know if Your Routine is Working

Signs your routine may be helping:

- Your day feels more predictable
- You feel less overwhelmed
- Tasks feel easier over time ⁽⁶⁾

Signs your routine may need adjusting:

- You feel stressed or avoid parts of your routine
- It doesn't fit your schedule
- It feels forced or not meaningful ⁽¹⁴⁾

Adjusting your routine is part of the process--not a failure.

Activity 1: Anchor Activities ⁽⁶⁾

Anchor activities are small, consistent actions that help start or end your day. They create structure and make routines easier to follow.

Doing the same small steps each day can help your day feel more steady.

Morning Anchor

Time I want to start: _____

My Routine:

_____ _____ _____

- Shower
- Medication
- Eat breakfast
- Stretch
- Other: _____

Evening Anchor

Time I want to start: _____

My Routine:

_____ _____ _____

- Skincare
- Journaling
- Prayer/Meditation
- Limit phone use
- Other: _____

Activity 2: Habit Stacking ⁽⁷⁾

It can be easier to build a new habit by adding it to something you already do.

Keep any routine from your past that helped you--build on what already works.

Step 1: Choose a habit you already do daily

My current habit:

Step 2: Add a new habit right after

After I

I will

Current Habits:

- *brushing teeth*
- *eating a meal*
- *drinking coffee*
- *getting in the car*
- *showering*
- *washing dishes*
- *checking phone*
- *folding laundry*
- *Other...*

Activity 3: Role-Based Routine Planning (10)

Routines feel more meaningful when they support who you are and who you want to be.

Your routines should support who you are--not just what you have to do

Step 1: Identify your roles

Write 1-2 roles that are important to you right now:

Examples: parent, job-seeker, friend, person in recovery, student

1. _____

2. _____

Step 2: Set a goal

Role 1: _____

Role 1: _____

Daily Action: _____

Daily Action: _____

Activity 4: Planning for Barriers (14)

Life can be unpredictable. Planning ahead can help you stay on track.

Flexible routines are stronger than perfect routines

What might get in the way of your routine?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Appointments (therapy, probation, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work Schedule | <input type="checkbox"/> Low energy or mood |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

My plan if something gets in the way:



Post-Transition Support Resources

After a major life transition, it can take time to rebuild stability. Support resources can help you meet basic needs, access services, and connect with your community.

You do not have to figure everything out alone. These resources are here to support housing, food, healthcare, education, employment, and emotional well-being.

General Resource Finder: <https://211utah.org>

Important Documents & Identification

Utah Driver License / State ID

Cost: ~\$25

[Schedule an appointment](#)

(888) 353-4224

What you may need:

- If you previously had a Utah ID or driver license, your identity is already on file
- You will need **2 forms of proof of address**

If you do not have a permanent address:

- You may qualify for a **homelessness fee waiver voucher**
- Find participating providers [here](#)

If you do not have proof of identity:

- Call to request an appointment with a **hearing officer**
- They can help you obtain documentation through court or legal records

Birth Certificate

Cost: ~\$28

*Fee waiver available through DWS

[Submit an order](#)

Social Security Card

No cost to replace

[Start application & schedule an appointment](#)

- See required documents [here](#)
- Documentation must be presented at the appointment and **within 45 days** of the application date.

Housing & Shelter

If you are experiencing housing instability, emergency shelter and transitional housing may be available.

- **Lantern House / St Anne's Center**
<https://www.stannescenter.org>
269 W 33rd St Ogden
(801) 621-5036
- **Ogden Rescue Mission**
<https://rescuesaltlake.org>
2775 Wall Ave Ogden
(801) 621-4360
- **Rescue Mission Women's Center**
<https://rescuesaltlake.org>
1165 S State St Salt Lake City
(801) 521-5925

Services may include:

- Emergency shelter
- Meals and clothing
- Hygiene supplies
- Addiction recovery
- Life skills Training

Clothing & Essentials

- **Crossroads Thrift Store**
<https://www.crossroadsurbancenter.org>
1385 W Indiana Avenue Salt Lake City
(801) 359-8837
Hours: Tu-Sat, 10AM-6PM
**vouchers available*
- **Deseret Industries**
[Find a store near you](#)
Call (801) 593-5337 for voucher info
- **Food & Care Coalition**
www.foodandcare.org
299 E 900 S Provo
(801) 373-1825
- **Magna FACT**
<http://freefood.org>
9113 W Magna Main St Magna
(801) 250-4811
- **St Vincent de Paul, Weigand Homeless Day Center, Catholic Charities**
<https://www.ccsutah.org>
437 W 200 S Salt Lake City
(801) 363-7710

Food Resources

Find Food Assistance: [Utah Food Bank](#)

Local Food Pantries

- **Bountiful Food Pantry***
<https://bountifulfoodpantry.org>
480E150 N Bountiful
(801) 299-8464
Hours: M-F, 11AM-1PM
Mon-Thu, 6PM-8PM
Sat, 10AM-12PM
- **Open Doors Food Bank***
<https://www.opendoorsutah.org>
Northern Davis County
Hours: (see website)
- **Shiloh Food Pantry**
<https://rhutah.church/food-pantry/>
9469 N Mnt Airey Dr, Eagle Mountain
Hours: 2x/month (see website)
- **Downtown Food Pantry**
<https://www.crossroadsurbancenter.org>
347 S 400 E Salt Lake City
(801) 364-7765
Hours: M-F, 9AM-5PM
- **UT Food for Families**
<https://www.utahfoodforfamilies.com>
460 Century Dr W Murray
(801) 264-9999
Hours: Th, 3PM-7PM
- **Mosaic Inter-Faith Ministries**
<http://www.lssu.org/calendar>
20 W 2700 S South Salt Lake
(801) 588-0139
Hours: M-Th, 8AM-3PM
- **Westside Food Pantry**
<https://www.crossroadsurbancenter.org>
1385 W Indiana Ave Salt Lake City
(801) 935-4079
Hours: M-F, 9AM-5PM
- **Murray Children's Pantry***
<https://www.murraychildrenspantry.org>
170 E 5770 S Murray
(801) 263-1521
Hours: 3rd Sat, 10AM-12PM
- **Woods Cross Mobile Pantry**
<https://sites.vivory.org>
2060 S 800 W Woods Cross
(801) 978-2452
Hours: 2x/month (see website)

** Also offer hygiene items, baby supplies, transportation passes, prescription help, utility assistance, and clothing vouchers.*

Department of Workforce Services

<https://jobs.utah.gov/assistance>

(801) 526-9675

Apply for temporary assistance:

- Food (SNAP) benefits
- Utilities (HEAT)
- Childcare
- Employment
- Job training
- Financial assistance
- Healthcare & insurance
- Public transit

Locations

Clearfield Center

1290E 1450 SClearfield
801-526-0950
Hours: M-F, 8AM-5PM

Heber Center

69N600W SteC Heber City
801-526-0950
Hours: M-F, 8AM-5PM

Lehi Center

557W State StLehi
801-526-0950
Hours: M-F, 8AM-5PM

Metro (Salt Lake City) Center

720S 200E SaltLakeCity
801-526-0950
Hours: M-F, 8AM-5PM

Nephi Center

625N Main Nephi
801-526-0950
Hours: M-F 8AM-12PM & 1-5PM

Ogden Center

480 27th St Ogden
801-526-0950
Hours: M-F, 8AM-5PM

Price Center

475W Price River Dr #256 Price
801-526-0950
Hours: M-F, 8AM-5PM

Provo Center

1550N 200 WProvo
801-526-0950
Hours: M-F, 8AM-5PM

South Davis (Woods Cross) Center

763W 700 S WoodsCross
801-526-0950
Hours: M-F, 8AM-5PM

Tooele EC / USOR Center

305N Main StSte100Tooele
801-526-0950
Hours: M-F, 8AM-5PM

Reentry Support

Full statewide list of resources: <https://www.probationinfo.org>

Utah County Reentry Resource

<https://utahcountyreentry.org>

Services Include:

- Food, clothing, and housing support
- Help obtaining ID, birth certificate, and Social Security card
- Education support (GED, diploma completion)
- Job training and employment services
- Vocational rehabilitation
- Health care referrals

Jail Reentry Resource Program

<https://www.saltlakecounty.gov>

2001 S State St, Salt Lake City
(801) 414-2120

Support Includes:

- Mental health and substance use services
- Medicaid enrollment support
- Legal and supervision services
- Connection to community resources
- Basic supplies and referrals

Geo Reentry Services

<https://www.georeentry.com>

1585 W 2100 S, Salt Lake City
(801) 973-3800

Support includes:

- Supervision and accountability support
- Employment connections
- Assistance with community reintegration

The Other Side Academy

<https://www.theothersideacademy.com>

661 E 100 S, Salt Lake City, UT

A long-term residential program

Services Include:

- Education
- Vocational rehab
- Peer support & mentorship
- Leadership development
- Transitional life skills

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