

Relapse Prevention & Reflection Journal

A supportive, guided workbook to build resilience, deepen self-awareness, and bounce forward — not backward — in your recovery.

1. Introduction

Relapse is a risk — not a failure. It's part of many recovery stories and doesn't undo your progress. This journal is built to help you prevent relapse by understanding your triggers, reframing negative thinking, and preparing for setbacks with compassion and clarity. Work through the pages at your own pace. Return to them regularly. Growth is rarely linear, but each time you reflect honestly, you take another step forward.

2. Building Emotional Self-Awareness

Cravings often come from unresolved or overwhelming emotions. Use this space to explore your emotional world in more depth:

- What emotions do I avoid most often? Why?
- How do I usually react when I feel sad, angry, or anxious?
- What healthier responses would I like to try?

****Prompt:**** Describe a recent emotional trigger and how it felt in your body. Where did the tension show up?

****Tool:**** Keep a 'Mood + Thought + Behaviour' diary for 7 days. Example:

Mood: Anxious → Thought: "I can't cope" → Behaviour: Urge to gamble.

3. Relapse Myths & Facts

****Myth 1:**** "If I relapse, I've lost all my progress."

****Fact:**** Recovery is cumulative. Learning from relapse is part of the process.

****Myth 2:**** "I can have just one small bet."

****Fact:**** One bet often restarts the cycle. It's rarely just one.

****Myth 3:**** "I should be stronger by now."

****Fact:**** Urges don't mean weakness. They mean your brain is still healing. Strength is asking for help.

Re-read these truths whenever guilt creeps in.

4. Thought Reframing (CBT Style)

Use this framework to challenge automatic, unhelpful thoughts:

- **Triggering Situation:** _____
- **Emotion Felt:** _____
- **Negative Thought:** _____
- **Is it 100% true? Evidence for/against:** _____
- **More balanced thought:** _____

Example:

Negative Thought: "I always mess things up."

Balanced Thought: "I've made mistakes, but I'm working hard to change. That counts."

Do this once a week or during difficult moments. Over time, your thinking becomes more supportive and realistic.

5. Emergency Relapse Action Plan

If a relapse happens — or feels close — use this plan to respond with clarity instead of shame:

- **What were the early warning signs?** _____
- **Who can I call or message now?** _____
- **What healthy coping strategy can I try immediately?** _____
- **How will I protect my money for the next 48 hours?** _____
- **What do I need to forgive myself for today?** _____

Print this page and keep it visible or share it with a trusted support person.

6. Monthly Progress Review

Check in every 30 days to notice your growth:

- Wins I'm proud of this month: _____
- Strategies that helped me the most: _____
- What was hardest, and how I responded: _____
- New triggers I noticed: _____
- Goals for next month: _____

This process builds momentum. Review past months to track long-term growth.

7. Goal Setting & Vision Board

Define what recovery looks like for you. Use this section to dream beyond addiction:

****Short-Term Goals (1–3 months):****

- _____
- _____

****Long-Term Goals (6–12 months):****

- _____
- _____

****Visual Prompts:****

- What kind of life are you building?
- Who benefits from your recovery?
- Draw or list the images, words, or values that guide your future.

8. Quotes for Recovery Reflection

“You are not your worst day. You are every choice you’ve made to keep going.”

“Growth is not about never falling. It’s about rising each time you do.”

“Forgiveness is not forgetting. It’s choosing not to give past pain your power.”

Pick one quote per week and write your response:

- What does this quote mean to me?
- How does it apply to my journey this week?

9. Encouraging Self-Forgiveness

Many people in recovery carry shame or guilt. This exercise helps shift that mindset:

****Prompt:**** Write a letter to yourself — the version of you who just relapsed or made a mistake.

“Dear Me, I know you’re hurting. I see your effort, your fear, your regret. But I also see your strength, your honesty, and your willingness to change...”

Let your inner voice become your ally — not your critic. Revisit this when needed.

10. What's Next: Maintaining Recovery Momentum

- Keep journaling weekly
- Share reflections with a therapist or support group
- Add new goals every 30 days
- Revisit past pages to track growth
- Celebrate every week you show up for yourself

Recovery isn't about perfection. It's about choosing the next right step. And then another.