Personal Recovery Plan

Goal

What are your short-term and long-term recovery goals?
Example: Stay sober one day at a time, rebuild trust with family

Motivation

Why do you want to stay sober? Who or what are you doing this for?

Example: My children, my health, my future, my relationship with God, a fulfilling life of meaning

Sobriety Date

Record your sobriety date here. Example: January 1, 2023

Carnes' Circles

Go to this webpage to read about the circles: Recovery Home - Addiction Cycle and Carnes' Circles

Inner Circle Definition

List behaviors that represent a complete loss of sobriety.
Example: Viewing pornography, contacting escorts, compulsive masturbation, dishonesty

Middle Circle Definition

List warning signs, triggers and risky behaviors that may lead to relapse. Example: Triggers: 1. Browsing dating sites, 2. emotional affairs, excessive screen time. Write down what actions you take

when you are in or approaching your middle circle. Read your Recovery Plan and take action.

Outer Circle Definition

List healthy behaviors that support recovery. Example: Exercising, attending meetings, journaling, quality time with family

Prayer

Write down your morning and evening prayers or use this space to compose one. Examples provided below:

- *God, I offer myself to You today. Direct my thinking, words, and actions."*
- **"God, show me how I can be a light today." "Help me to be useful, loving, and humble."**
- Use the **AA Prayer Sheet** for ideas.

Meditation

Describe your meditation practice. Seek out 5-10 minutes of silence each day to calm your mind Include frequency, type, and duration. Example: 5 minutes of guided meditation using an app, nature or frequency video on YouTube

Daily Bible or Spiritual Reading

Note your reading plan or meaningful scriptures. Select the sites you like and keep them here for future access.

Free Bible Reading Websites

1. Bible Gateway - Large library of translations with parallel reading, audio, and plans.
Link: https://www.biblegateway.com/

2. Bible.com (YouVersion) - Free web and app platform with many translations, plans, notes, and highlights. Link: https://www.bible.com/

3. Bible Hub - Parallel translations, interlinear, commentaries, concordances, and cross references. Link: https://biblehub.com/

4. Blue Letter Bible - Word studies, interlinear tools, lexicons, and cross reference tools.
Link: https://www.blueletterbible.org/

5. NET Bible - Full NET translation with extensive translators' notes for context and study.
Link: https://netbible.org/

6. STEP Bible - Free study environment by Tyndale House with interlinear and word tools.
Link: https://www.stepbible.org/

7. ESV.org - Clean online reader for the ESV translation with reading plans and audio.
Link: https://www.esv.org/

8. OpenBible.info - Topical Bible and verse mapping that helps find passages by theme.
Link: https://www.openbible.info/

9. BibleStudyTools - Multiple translations plus concordances and reading plans.
Link: https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible/

10. Oremus Bible Browser - NRSV and KJV reader with simple search and copy options.
Link: https://bible.oremus.org/

Free Non-religious Spiritual Reading Websites

Select the sites you like and keep them here for future access.

1. Mindful.org - Articles and practices on secular mindfulness, attention, and presence.
Link: https://www.mindful.org/

2. Greater Good Magazine - Science-based writing from UC Berkeley on well-being, compassion, and meaning. Link: https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/

3. Psyche by Aeon - Guides and essays on the mind, relationships, meaning, and self-care.
Link: https://psyche.co/

4. Aeon Essays - Longform essays on philosophy, ethics, and the human condition.
Link: https://aeon.co/essays

5. The School of Life - Essays on emotional intelligence, relationships, work, and purpose.

Link: https://www.theschooloflife.com/article/

6. The Marginalian - Reflections on art, science, literature, and meaning by Maria Popova.
Link: https://www.themarginalian.org/

7. Nautilus - Science and culture magazine exploring meaning, wonder, and human questions. Link: https://nautil.us/

8. The Conversation: Mind and Psychology - Expert essays on mind, behavior, and well-being in accessible language. Link: https://theconversation.com/us/topics/psychology-49

9. Big Think - Ideas and interviews on purpose, personal growth, and critical thinking.
Link: https://bigthink.com/

10. Zen Habits - Simple living, habits, focus, and mindfulness in everyday life.
Link: https://zenhabits.net/

Recovery Reading

Include a list of books, articles, or literature you're currently reading or plan to read. Example: SAA Green Book, 'Out of the Shadows'

Links to some recovery literature resources:

- **12 Steps and 12 Traditions**
- **SAA Green Book**
- **AA Big Book**
- **AA Prayer Sheet**

Morning Traditions

List the healthy morning habits that help you start your day in recovery. Example: Prayer, gratitude list, making the bed. See below for more examples. Send this to yourself as a daily calendar invitation so you get reminded everyday.

Start your day with spiritual clarity, humility, and readiness to be of service.

1. Quiet Time with God (10–20 minutes)

- Surrender each day – admit your powerlessness and unmanageability your compulsive behaviors and addiction can bring to your life and the lives of others you care.

- Begin with a simple prayer:
  "Lord, I offer myself to You today. Direct my thinking, words, and actions."
- Read a short daily devotional or Scripture (e.g., Psalms, Proverbs, or Gospels).
- Sit in silence for a few minutes, listening for God's direction.

2. Review the Day Ahead (Step 11 Guidance)

- Ask yourself:
  - What responsibilities do I have today?
  - Where might I be tempted, triggered, or tested?
  - Who may need encouragement or love today?

3. Set Intentions (Spiritual Focus)

- "God, show me how I can be a light today."
- "Help me to be useful, loving, and humble."

4. Step 3 Prayer (or personalized surrender)

"God, I offer myself to Thee—to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt…"
(Full Step 3 prayer from the Big Book or a similar personal version.)

Evening Traditions (Steps 10, 11 & 12)

List your nightly habits to wind down and reflect. Example: 10th step inventory, prayer, reading. Here is an example for you to follow:

End your day with reflection, gratitude, and spiritual accountability.

1. Step 10 Daily Inventory Questions

Reflect prayerfully on these:

- **Was I resentful, selfish, dishonest, or afraid?**
- **Do I owe an apology to anyone?**
- **Did I keep something to myself that I should have discussed?**
- **Was I kind, loving, and patient?**
- **Was I thinking of others or just myself?**
- **Did I seek God's will throughout the day?**

Finish with:

"God, show me where I fell short and how I can do better tomorrow. Thank You for the grace to grow."

2. Step 11 Evening Connection

- Read Scripture or recovery meditation.
- Spend 5–10 minutes in prayer and/or journaling:
  - Thank God for blessings and victories.

- Offer your fears, failures, and burdens to Him.
- Ask for restful sleep and direction for tomorrow.
-

"Search me, God, and know my heart... lead me in the way everlasting." (Psalm 139:23–24)

3. Step 12: Prepare to Carry the Message
Ask yourself:

- **Did I practice the principles in all my affairs today?**
- **Was I of service to anyone? Did I miss any opportunities?**
- **Who can I pray for, encourage, or help tomorrow?**

Pray: *"God, use me tomorrow to carry the message of hope and redemption. Make me Your hands and feet."*

Affirmations

Read your affirmations daily. Write 3–5 positive affirmations to repeat daily. Example: I am enough. I am healing. I am loved.

In a 12 Step recovery program, affirmations play a crucial role in countering the shame, self-doubt, and internalized guilt that often accompany addiction. They help align one's thinking with the spiritual and emotional renewal that recovery seeks to foster.

Affirmations can be especially helpful beginning in Step 2, when a person becomes willing to believe in a power greater than themselves, and they gain even more strength from Step 3 onward as individuals surrender their will and begin reshaping their identity. Integrating affirmations early in the process supports emotional stability, builds confidence, and strengthens spiritual openness throughout the journey.

Add Affirmations during Step 2 and make them part of your daily routine. Speak them out loud, while facing a mirror. Drown out the negative thoughts that are controlling your emotions and behavior.

Twenty of the Best Affirmations for Recovery
These affirmations are drawn from the below sources. They are adapted and compiled to serve as powerful daily reminders during recovery:

- I am stronger than my addiction.
- I am worthy of love, respect, and happiness
- Every day, in every way, I am getting better. diamondhousedetox.com
  The past has no power over me anymore.
- I forgive myself for past mistakes and focus on my future.

- I choose to live a sober and fulfilling life.
- I am capable of achieving anything I put my mind to.
- I have control over my actions and decisions.
- I am committed to taking care of my physical, emotional, and mental well-being.
- I deserve to be happy and healthy
- I am proud of how far I've come.
- I can handle my current challenges—they are not too big for me.
- I am improving and becoming a better version of myself every day.
- I have confidence in my ability to conquer obstacles.
- I am surrounded by people who support and care about my recovery.'
- I embrace inner peace and release shame and guilt.
- I trust the process of my healing and growth.
- I nourish my mind with empowering thoughts and positive self-talk.
- I allow myself to feel and express my emotions in healthy ways.
- I am brave, resilient, and capable of lasting sobriety.

Here are **5 online sources** offering positive affirmations specifically designed for addiction recovery:

- **Diamond House Detox – "50 Positive Recovery Affirmations"**
  https://diamondhousedetox.com/positive-affirmations-tell-someone-navigating-recovery/ verywellmind.com+14diamondhousedetox.com+14positiverecovery.com+14

  Positive Recovery – "15 Positive Affirmations for Addiction Recovery"
  https://positiverecovery.com/positive-affirmations-for-addiction-recovery/ soberlink.com+2positiverecovery.com+2freebythesea.com+2

  Free By The Sea – "The Importance of Positive Recovery Words"
  https://freebythesea.com/the-importance-of-positive-recovery-words/ freebythesea.com

  Soberlink Blog – "Positive Self-Talk for Addiction Recovery"
  https://www.soberlink.com/addiction-recovery-blog/positive-self-talk-for-addiction-recovery-100-words-of-affirmation verywellmind.com+7soberlink.com+7verywellmind.com+7

  St. Joseph Institute – "25 Affirmations for People in Recovery"
  https://stjosephinstitute.com/blog/using-affirmations-to-support-your-recovery/ positiverecovery.com+5stjosephinstitute.com+5diamondhousedetox.com+5

Tips for Using These Affirmations

- **Speak them daily**, straight to yourself—morning, midday, or during challenging moments.

- **Write one or two** on a sticky note, phone wallpaper, or journal prompt to make them visible.
- **Pair with mindfulness**: breathe deeply, visualize success, and repeat the mantra.
- **Personalize them**, turning general statements into first-person, current tense: e.g., "I *am* sober right now."

Gratitude List

List at least 3 things you are grateful for each day. Here are some examples:

- *I am grateful for my life*
- *I am grateful to my family*
- *I am grateful for having a job*
- *I am grateful for having shelter*
- *I am grateful for my pets*
- *I am grateful for having a chance to become a better person*
- *I am grateful for my sobriety*
- *I am grateful for nature, good movies, good literature*

Gratitude Lists: Why They Matter and How to Practice Them

Why Gratitude Is So Important in Recovery
Addiction is often fueled by shame, resentment, fear, and a constant sense of scarcity — not having enough, not being enough. Recovery begins to heal these wounds by teaching us to live differently. One of the simplest and most powerful tools we have is the practice of gratitude.

Gratitude helps rewire the brain. It shifts attention from what is missing or painful to what is present and sustaining. It doesn't deny suffering; it balances it. In recovery, where emotional sobriety is just as critical as physical sobriety, gratitude helps stabilize the heart and mind. It reconnects us to hope, humility, and perspective.
A gratitude list is not just a mental exercise. It's a spiritual discipline, a cognitive reset, and a form of emotional nourishment.

What Is a Gratitude List?
A gratitude list is exactly what it sounds like — a written (or spoken) list of people, experiences, blessings, or even small comforts that you are thankful for. It might include something profound like a second chance at life, or something simple like your morning coffee, a smile from a stranger, or a moment of peace.

These lists are not meant to impress. They are meant to ground you.

The Process: How to Create a Gratitude List

1. Keep it Simple.
Start with 3 to 5 items. They don't need to be deep or dramatic. Try not to overthink it.

2. Be Specific.
Instead of "my health," try "I'm grateful I could take a walk without pain today." Specificity connects you more directly to the feeling.

3. Write It Down.
Use a notebook, journal, or app. Writing helps solidify awareness and creates a record you can return to on hard days.

4. Speak It Aloud.
Say it during prayer, meditation, or even on a phone call with a sponsor. Sharing gratitude reinforces its power.

5. Make It a Practice.
Doing it regularly — even when you don't feel grateful — trains your brain and heart to find what's still good.

When Is the Best Time to Practice Gratitude?

Morning: Start the day with a grounding practice. A short gratitude list can set your mindset before the noise of the day creeps in. It shifts your focus from anxiety to appreciation.

Evening: End your day reflecting on what went right. This helps calm the mind before sleep and reorients your spirit after a long day.

During Triggers or Cravings: When anxiety, anger, or temptation arise, pausing to name a few things you're grateful for can interrupt the emotional spiral and redirect your focus.

During Prayer or Meditation: Gratitude naturally leads to surrender and peace. Including it in spiritual practices deepens connection and humility.

What If I Don't Feel Grateful?

You're not alone. Many people in early recovery struggle to feel any gratitude. That's okay. Gratitude is often an act of *faith*, not just feeling. Start by being willing. With time, the feelings often follow the practice.

Gratitude won’t solve every problem, but it changes how you face them. A gratitude list is not just an activity — it's a statement: **"I see the good. I receive the good. I will build from here."**

Recovery Meetings (Weekly Tracker)

Check off each day you complete the activity.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
[ ] Meeting Info:	[ ] Meeting Info:	[ ] Meeting Info:	[ ] Meeting Info:	[ ] Meeting Info:	[ ] Meeting Info:	[ ] Meeting Info:

Recovery Calls (Weekly Tracker)

Check off each day you complete the activity. List your support network contacts.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
[ ] Names & Phone Numbers	[ ] Names & Phone Numbers	[ ] Names & Phone Numbers	[ ] Names & Phone Numbers	[ ] Names & Phone Numbers	[ ] Names & Phone Numbers	[ ] Names & Phone Numbers

Other Recovery Activities

List additional practices that support your sobriety. Example: Therapy, exercise, service work, hobbies. Here are examples of service and outer circle behaviors for you to consider. They are also located here: Recovery Home - Service Opportunities - Step 12 and Recovery Home - Addiction Cycle and Carnes' Circles

Outer Circle Opportunities:

Physical Activities (Redirecting Energy)

- Go for a run or hike in a peaceful location
- Engage in high-intensity workouts (boxing, weightlifting, cycling)
- Practice yoga (emphasizing discipline and body awareness)
- Try cold showers or deep breathing for impulse control
- Take up martial arts for self-discipline and focus
- Join a recreational sports league for healthy socializing
- Go swimming to release tension
- Take long walks in nature for stress relief
- Stretch or do low-impact exercises to stay grounded

- **Creative Outlets (Refocusing the Mind)**
- Start a journal to track emotions and triggers
- Write letters to your future self about your progress
- Learn to play a musical instrument
- Try painting or drawing to express emotions
- Experiment with photography (especially nature photography)
- Engage in DIY projects or crafts to keep hands busy
- Take up pottery or sculpture (tactile but non-sexual activity)
- Write poetry or short stories that focus on healing
- Start a gratitude journal
- Learn graphic design or digital art

Social and Community Activities (Building Healthy Connections)

- Join a 12-step group like **SAA (Sex Addicts Anonymous)**
- Attend **therapy or counseling** (individual or group)
- Participate in **faith-based recovery programs** if applicable
- Volunteer at a shelter, food bank, or community center
- Spend quality time with supportive family and friends
- Join a book club or discussion group
- Find a **mentor or accountability partner**
- Attend **non-sexual social events** (game nights, church groups)
- Participate in **mentorship programs** (helping others heal)
- Engage in **community service** to shift focus outward

Mindfulness and Relaxation (Managing Cravings)

- Practice **daily meditation** to calm compulsive thoughts
- Try **progressive muscle relaxation** to ease tension
- Take up **prayer or devotional study** (if faith-based)
- Read **self-help books** on addiction and recovery
- Listen to **calming or motivational podcasts**
- Take a **warm bath** with essential oils
- Use **aromatherapy** for relaxation and mood regulation
- Engage in **breathwork exercises**
- Try **mindful eating** to practice self-control
- Spend time **observing nature** (birdwatching, stargazing)

Learning and Personal Growth (Redirecting Focus)

- Take an online class (psychology, business, or any interest)
- Learn a new skill (cooking, woodworking, coding)

- Start a **recovery-focused blog or podcast**
- Research personal development strategies
- Listen to **audiobooks** on addiction, self-growth, and healing
- Join a **public speaking group** to build confidence
- Study healthy relationship skills
- Work on **assertiveness and boundary-setting**
- Take a **finance or budgeting course** to set life goals
- Set **long-term recovery and life goals**

Outdoor and Adventure Activities (Breaking Patterns)

- Try **hiking or camping** to reconnect with nature
- Go **kayaking, paddleboarding, or fishing**
- Explore a **new part of town** with a friend
- Visit a **museum, zoo, or aquarium**
- Plan a **road trip or weekend getaway**
- Try **gardening** as a meditative activity
- Visit a **botanical garden** or scenic park
- Go **stargazing** for relaxation and perspective
- Walk barefoot in the grass (grounding exercise)
- Watch the sunrise or sunset in a peaceful spot

Productive and Practical Activities (Building Structure)

- Create **daily schedules** to avoid idle time
- Declutter and organize your living space
- Set up **accountability check-ins** with a sponsor
- Work on **career or educational goals**
- Plan **future travels or experiences**
- Cook healthy meals and learn new recipes
- Improve sleep hygiene (consistent bedtime, no screens)
- Set up **screen-time limits and phone restrictions**
- Work on **budgeting and financial stability**

Examples of Service Opportunities in Recovery

There are countless ways to practice Step 12, both formally and informally. Here are many paths to consider:

Within the Fellowship

- **Be a sponsor or co-sponsor** to someone newer in the program.
- **Chair or lead a meeting** on a rotating basis.
- **Share your story** at meetings or events.
- **Set up or clean up the meeting space**, online or in person.
- **Volunteer for service positions** like secretary, treasurer, or literature person.
- **Start a new meeting** where there's a need—especially for underserved groups.
- **Help newcomers feel welcome** and check in after meetings.
- **Join intergroup or regional committees** to support broader outreach.

In the Broader Recovery Community

- **Speak at treatment centers** or recovery events.
- **Write articles, blogs, or recovery reflections** for others to read.

- **Contribute to online forums or social media groups** in a helpful, sober way.
- **Start a recovery devotional group** or book study for spiritual growth.

In Your Church or Faith Community

- **Offer to lead a religious-based recovery Bible study**
- **Invite others to your meetings or share about your recovery journey** when appropriate.
- **Serve in ministries that support hurting or addicted individuals** (prison, counseling, pastoral care).

In Everyday Life

- **Practice the principles of recovery at work, in marriage, in parenting**—this *is* service.
- **Be available to listen, support, or pray for someone else's struggles**.
- **Offer rides to meetings**, especially for newcomers without transportation.
- **Start a small accountability group** or recovery-focused prayer group.