

# CLIENT WORKBOOK

Substance Use and Brain Injury



Second Edition

## **SUBI Project Team First Edition (2007)**

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## Foreword to the Second Edition

We know from our experience and from research that problems with substance use and brain injury often go together. However, brain injury rehabilitation programs and services to address substance use are often in separate places, creating a gap in services. This workbook was originally created to help people living with brain injury and those who work with them to bridge that gap.

We also know that people heal best from brain injury when they avoid the use of alcohol and other non-prescribed drugs. While that is the best advice we can offer, decisions about substance use rest with the person who uses them. Reducing harm that comes with substance use is very important, whether it is the first or the only step taken in the journey to better health.

Much of the content from the original SUBI workbook is retained. The overall structure has been modified to better accommodate people who may not be ready to commit to change in their substance use behavior in the short term. Our goal is to make all of the information about the effects of substance use available to everyone. It does not matter how someone is currently feeling about their own substance use. No one should feel excluded from this conversation, nor should they feel pressure to do something they are not ready to do.

# Introduction

This workbook was created for people who are living with the effects of a brain injury and are wondering how their substance use may be affecting them.

The original workbook and the second edition were designed by a partnership of people at Community Head Injury Resource Services of Toronto (CHIRS) and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). To get the most out of this workbook we strongly recommend that clients review it with a trusted person who is familiar with addictions and/or is helping people after brain injury.

If you do not have a particular expertise in the area of brain injury or substance use disorders, you are strongly encouraged to get consultation from a professional who can provide support and guidance.

## **This workbook is designed to be a resource for these groups:**

- People living with the effects of brain injury who thinking about the effects of substance use on their quality of life and health. The multiple choice and checklist format of check-ins is designed to facilitate self-reflection for people whose cognitive difficulties make answering open-ended questions difficult.
- Providers with little experience in substance use should find enough information and examples in each chapter to have meaningful conversations with their clients about substance use and its effects. However, the workbook is not intended to be a replacement for consultation with substance use professionals.
- Providers with little experience in acquired brain injury should find that the structured, written presentation and concrete examples will help clients to compensate for memory impairments and other cognitive difficulties. However, consultation with an acquired brain injury provider is strongly recommended. A good place to start is with your state or local brain injury program.



## How to Use This Workbook

This workbook can be used to start a conversation about substance use or for handouts in group settings. Each chapter is organized into the following sections to make the workbook easy to follow:

- Goals
- Information
- Check-in (self-assessment)
- Worksheet
- Planning tools

To make the content easy to understand, conversations using the workbook should begin with a review of the goals, followed by the presentation of information, Check-in (self-assessment) and when appropriate, personal goal setting. In most chapters, information is brief enough that it can be reviewed in a single session. However, there are some topic areas that are more complex and may take several sessions to review.

The Check-ins are intended to encourage people to reflect on their own experiences. Worksheets and plans are provided to support the process of applying the new information and creating a plan of action that makes sense.

The order of the chapters provides a logical sequence for the introduction of information. This order can be altered to fit the needs of a particular client or the structure of the program in which it is being used.

Please note that not all chapters contain all sections. Worksheets can be taken out of the workbook and used as handouts for groups.



# Introduction to Substance Use and Brain Injury

## ***Is my substance use really a problem?***

This is a hard question to answer, particularly for a person who has had a brain injury. We have reviewed available information about the effects of alcohol and brain injury. We have concluded that it is not safe to use alcohol in any amount after brain injury, even though safe use guidelines do exist.

Unfortunately, there is relatively little information about the particular effects of other substances after brain injury. Safe use guidelines for cannabis are still being developed for the general population. There are also no safe use guidelines for illegal substances. There is no clear agreement about how other substances, including cannabis, affect people after brain injury. We believe that a high degree of caution is needed.

There are many reasons why it is considered unsafe to use illegal drugs. There is a risk of getting arrested. People who sell drugs are not regulated by law, so people who buy them are at risk for being the victims of crime. Some illegal drugs are a great risk for causing further brain injury. Taking more of your prescription drugs than your doctor prescribes is also dangerous. Medical complications, including further brain injury, can happen.

We firmly believe that if you have had a brain injury, there are risks that come with drinking alcohol in any amount. We also believe that it is not safe to use illegal drugs, and it is not safe to take more than the prescribed dose of your medications.

### ***These are signs that it might be time to ask for help. Do these apply to you?***

- You have tried to cut back or stop using substances on your own but somehow you keep on using
- Someone around you is very worried about your use of alcohol or drugs
- You worry about your use of alcohol or drugs
- You have had legal, financial, or relationship problems that are related to your use of alcohol or drugs



## **Eight reasons why many people choose to avoid substance use after brain injury.**

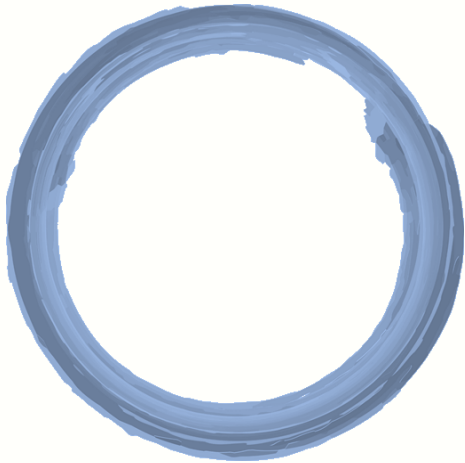
Your brain health and the ability to recover from brain injury are probably very important to you. Here are the reasons that the Ohio Valley Center gives for not using drugs or alcohol after a brain injury:

- 1. People who use alcohol or other drugs after their injury do not recover as well as those who do not.** After brain injury some neurons (brain cells) are killed. Sometimes connections between neurons are disrupted as well. Recovery is the process of rebuilding connections between brain cells. Unfortunately, the body cannot make new brain cells. Being intoxicated (drunk) means that functioning of your brain cells has been disrupted. This makes it more difficult to heal from your injury.
- 2. Problems with balance, walking, and talking are made worse by alcohol and drugs.** Alcohol and drugs can cause falls and/or difficulty in speaking, even in those without brain injury. After a brain injury, problems with balance and speech caused by the injury itself can make these problems worse.
- 3. People who have had a brain injury sometimes say and do things without thinking them through.** This problem is made worse by drugs and alcohol. One of the functions of your brain is to stop you from acting on bad ideas. That function is turned off when you are using substances. This can result in doing and saying things that you regret later.
- 4. Brain injuries can make it more difficult to pay attention, remember new information, and think things through clearly. Drugs and alcohol interfere with all of these mental abilities.** Many people find that after brain injury they have to relearn some of the skills they once had. It is common to have problems finding the right word, concentrating, solving problems, and making use of other thinking skills. Adding alcohol and drugs to these problems makes it even harder to get things done.
- 5. After a person has had a brain injury, they generally find that alcohol and other drugs have a more powerful effect.** After a brain injury, the brain is more sensitive to alcohol and drugs. No matter what a person's ability to handle alcohol and drugs was before their injury, it is reduced after injury. Alcohol and drugs can also interfere with any prescribed medications.

- 6. After a brain injury it is common to have times when a person feels down or depressed. Drinking and using drugs can make depression worse.** After a brain injury there are a lot of changes and challenges that make life more difficult. That can be a cause for feeling down. The effects of a brain injury itself can cause a depressed mood. That may be one reason why some people turn to alcohol or drugs to feel relaxed and happier. That may be true in the short run. Eventually, things usually get worse. Alcohol acts as a depressant in the brain. That will make you more depressed.
- 7. Drinking and using drugs can increase the likelihood of having a seizure.** About 5% of people with a brain injury go on to have trouble with seizures. Seizures are serious and can cause further brain damage or injury. That is why doctors take great care to help their patients prevent having seizures. Many people are prescribed drugs to prevent seizures after they have had a brain injury. It is very dangerous to mix alcohol and other drugs with these medications. Taking yourself off prescribed drugs so that you can drink is also very dangerous. Talk to your doctor and get the facts.
- 8. Using drugs or alcohol after a brain injury increases your risk of having another brain injury.** After you have had one injury, your chances of having another brain injury are much greater. Brain injuries can cause people to have more accidents because of changes in their balance, coordination, and judgment. Alcohol and drugs only make these difficulties worse.

**Congratulations on deciding to seek more information on the effect of substance use on acquired brain injury.** Going through the information in this workbook will help you learn more about your substance use. You will also find strategies to help you manage difficulties that may happen during your recovery. You will find information about how to pursue a healthy lifestyle. Remember that one book will not give you all the answers. It is important to find people who you trust to help you.





## Part 1: Is My Substance Use Something to Worry About?

There are different paths that lead a person to look at the way they use alcohol and other drugs. One person is curious how substance use might cause problems. Another person may get advice from the doctor about cutting back or stopping. Someone

else may get a warning from a partner or family member that their relationship is in trouble because of drugs or alcohol. Another person might have legal trouble because of something that happened while drunk or stoned.

It does not matter why you are reading this book. We want you to know that thinking about your substance use is difficult but the rewards are big. This is true even if you do not decide to act right away. You – and those you trust – are in the best position to decide what you should do about your substance use and when the time is right to act.

The first part of the workbook is to help you think about all the things connected to substance use that are happening in your life right now. The information and activities that follow give you all the information you need to make informed choices about what is best for you. The second part of the workbook gives you information and resources about how to set a substance use goal. Getting organized will help you succeed in meeting your goal. The third part includes tools that you can use to help you along your path.

We believe that you deserve all the support that you can get, whatever path you choose. Our sincere belief is that no one really does anything big totally by themselves. The idea that anyone can do it alone when tackling something important is a myth. It can be hard to know who you can and should depend on for support. That is why we will start with an exercise to help you build a team of people that can support you in making progress on whatever goals you choose to pursue – whether they are substance-use related or general life goals. No matter what challenges you might be facing, the feedback and guidance from a trusted support network is important.



## Chapter 1: Building a Support Network

Tackling something big in your life may feel impossible if you try to do it alone. It can also be hard to find the right people to help you along the way. Step one on any important journey is figuring out who will be going with you.

Here is an exercise to identify and further expand your support network.

You might be feeling alone now because some of your relationships have changed. Often the people you see most are the ones who you spend time with to drink or use drugs. They may be friendly, but they might not really think about what is best for you. Professionals like doctors or counselors who support you is a great start, but their time is limited.

That is why it is important to think about getting support from different places.

### What kinds of social support should you look for?

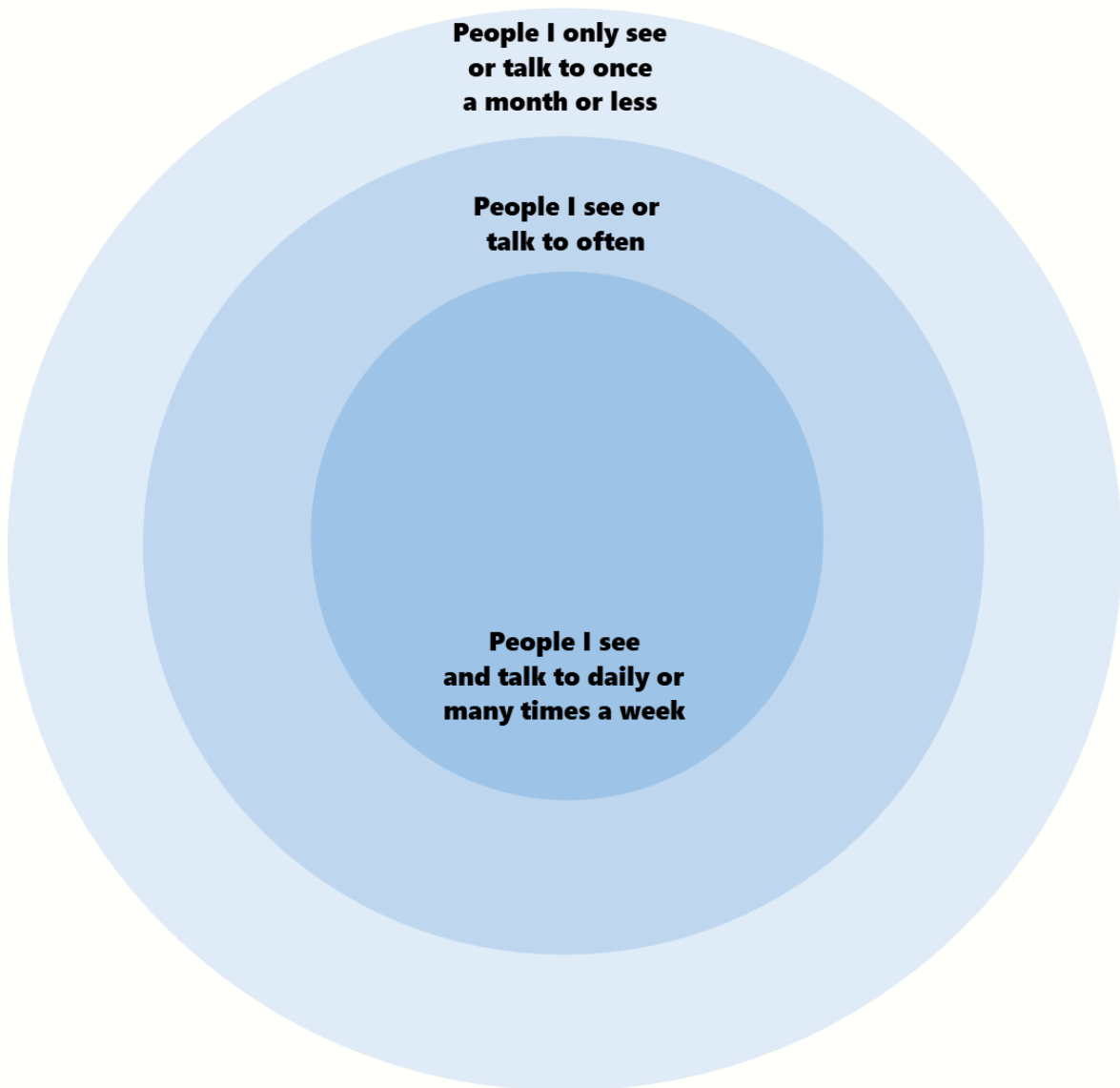
- Emotional** Someone who will listen to you, that you can talk to about feelings
- Moral** Someone who will encourage you
- Practical** Someone you can ask for help with daily tasks, like transportation
- Mentorship** Someone you can look to for guidance and instruction
- Recreational** Someone you can have fun with

## Check-In: Who Is in Your Life Right Now?



By completing this exercise, you will get an idea of how everyone you know fits into your life. When you identify and label everyone, you will be able to see more clearly who might best help you in your recovery.

1. Write the **names** of people on the circle based on how often you see them.
2. **Circle** the names of people who are now or could be supportive.
3. Write an **X** by the names of people who are not supportive, or who might be harmful.
4. **Try** to move the unhelpful people away from the center.
5. **Plan** to move the helpful people closer.



## Worksheet: Building a Support Network



**Complete the sections below.** Refer to the list above to help you think of your unmet support needs. For example, if you would like to start playing baseball again and have no one to take you, write that down. Then think of someone who could take you there and even play. Next, plan how you will contact that person. Look at the circle on the previous page to get ideas of who you could contact and who you should not contact.

What do I need support with?

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Who can I ask?

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What is my plan?

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## Chapter 2: What Everyone Needs to Know About the Effects of Substance Use

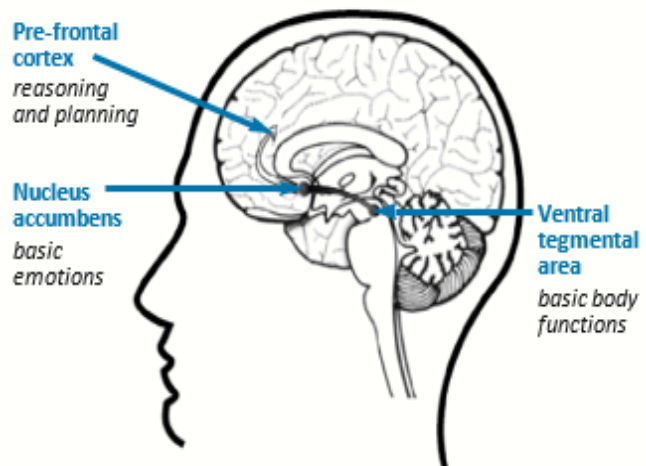


One thing to notice is that substance use can sometimes harm a person’s health. To make good decisions, it is important to have accurate information about the health effects of any substance you are using now. We suggest that you review the following information with a highlighter and mark the details that are next to the substances you are currently using. After you do this, there is an exercise at the end of this chapter to help you summarize the most relevant information.

### ***Why it feels like you cannot live without drugs or alcohol***

Our brains make signals in a certain way. When we do something that gives us pleasure, we tend to want to do it again. That is what drives us to do things that help us survive — like eating, for example. Drugs used to get high will change how the natural chemicals work in the brain’s pleasure center. This change tricks you into thinking that the drug is something you need for survival. The changes in brain chemistry that drugs cause last much longer than the high experienced. That can cause serious long-term problems, including withdrawal symptoms and brain damage.

This is a picture of the reward circuit in the brain. The most important thing to notice is that the reward circuit has strong connections to the part of your brain that is responsible for basic emotions (the nucleus accumbens) and the part of your brain that regulates basic body functions (the ventral tegmental area). One of the reasons that addictive drugs have such a strong effect is that they act on the part of the brain that oversees basic survival instincts.



**Reward Circuit**

In some ways drugs “highjack” our natural reward system. When the urge to use the drug is strong enough, part of the brain can override the part that oversees reasoning and planning (pre-frontal cortex). Drugs can make the problem of being impulsive (acting without thinking) worse.

This is also why people spend a lot of time and energy getting the drug they use for a short-term high, even though it causes problems eventually. Some drugs have the effect of creating a strong urge to seek out the drug, even though the person using the drug may be fully aware of the negative effects eventually.

### ***What do drugs and alcohol do to your body and your brain?***

Stimulants (like cocaine) speed up bodily functions. Depressants (like alcohol) slow down body functions. Some substances change your thinking. This makes it harder to tell the difference between reality, thoughts, and images that come from the brain itself.

When we add chemicals to our bodies and brains, our bodies do their best to restore our natural balance. This causes tolerance (needing more chemicals to get the effects of the drug). Often this results in less of the effect that is pleasurable (feeling energetic, confident, relaxed, or happy) and more sensitivity to the side effects (like anxiety, feeling paranoid, and having a pounding heart).

What can be very confusing is that some drugs, particularly stimulants, create a strong urge or desire, which makes seeking the drug feel necessary, important, or even pleasurable, even while a person is becoming more sensitive to the side effects. A person can develop stronger and stronger urges to use substances, and continue to use them, even though they are fully aware that results of using the drug have become disappointing or even uncomfortable. For some people, it is the wanting, not the actual liking of a drug that makes changing drug use so hard to do.

Other drugs have pleasant effects (like opioids), but they may change how you experience other pleasures in life. This can cause a withdrawal that makes a person keep using just to feel normal. These are ways that substance use can be confusing and can make a person feel out of control.

The following table show the effects of common drugs. These effects may change as the result of how they are used (smoked, eaten, injected, or snorted). As you read the information on the following chart, compare what you read to your experiences. You might want to make notes about what you have learned by experience. It is important to consider your own situation, including your brain injury, as you compare.

*For a more complete list, visit the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) website: <https://www.samhsa.gov/>*

<b>Opioids/Opiates</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Common Names</b>	<b>What They Do</b>	<b>Problems They Cause</b>
<b>Fentanyl</b> (duragesic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Apache</li> <li>○ China Girl</li> <li>○ China Town</li> <li>○ China White</li> <li>○ Murder 8</li> <li>○ Jackpot</li> <li>○ Poison</li> <li>○ TNT</li> <li>○ Tango/Cash</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pain relief</li> <li>● Feeling of well-being</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Drowsiness</li> <li>● Constipation</li> <li>● 100 times stronger than morphine</li> <li>● Very dangerous if misused</li> <li>● <i>Small amount causes overdose/death *</i></li> </ul>
<b>Tylenol</b> with codeine <b>Cough syrup</b> with codeine <b>Talwin</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cody</li> <li>○ Schoolboy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pain relief</li> <li>● Feeling of well-being</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Drowsiness/nausea</li> <li>● Constipation</li> <li>● Slows breathing</li> <li>● Stopped breathing</li> <li>● <i>Coma, Death</i></li> </ul>
<b>Oxycodone/Vicodin</b> <b>Oxycontin</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ TNT</li> <li>○ Tango</li> <li>○ Cash</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pain relief</li> <li>● Feeling of well-being</li> </ul>	Same as above plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Withdrawal</li> <li>● Diarrhea</li> <li>● Nausea</li> </ul>
<b>Morphine</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ M</li> <li>○ Morph</li> <li>○ Monkey</li> <li>○ Ms. Emma</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pain relief</li> <li>● Feeling of well-being</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dangerous in large amounts, when taken with depressants (alcohol, benzodiazepines)</li> <li>● Slow breathing</li> <li>● Bluish skin</li> <li>● <i>Coma, Death</i></li> </ul>
<b>Heroin</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ H</li> <li>○ Dope</li> <li>○ Horse</li> <li>○ Junk</li> <li>○ Smack</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pain relief</li> <li>● Feeling of well-being</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased risk for HIV with IV use</li> <li>● Hepatitis risk</li> </ul>
<b>Opium</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Block</li> <li>○ Gum</li> <li>○ Hop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pain relief</li> <li>● Feeling of well-being</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Body damage</li> <li>● Collapsed veins</li> <li>● Health problems caused by contaminants</li> </ul>

**\*Fentanyl:** dangerous and responsible for many overdose deaths across North America. Found in other substances where it is not expected to be. Often impossible to tell if a powder or pill contains fentanyl. Cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted. Even trusted dealers might not know the strength or the content they are selling. The difference between a dose leading to a high and a dose leading to death is very small (source: camh.ca).

<b>Cannabinoids</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Common Names</b>	<b>What They Do</b>	<b>Problems They Cause</b>
<b>Marijuana Hash</b> <i>Active Ingredient:</i> Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Blunt</li> <li>○ Dope</li> <li>○ Grass</li> <li>○ Hash</li> <li>○ Hemp</li> <li>○ Joint</li> <li>○ Pot</li> </ul>	Imitates a pleasure chemical in the brain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Slow thinking</li> <li>● Loss of motivation</li> <li>● Poor balance</li> <li>● Poor coordination</li> <li>● Poor memory</li> <li>● Poor learning</li> <li>● Anxiety</li> <li>● Panic attacks</li> <li>● Fast heart rate</li> <li>● Cough</li> <li>● Increased risk for psychotic episodes</li> </ul>

<b>Hallucinogens</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Common Names</b>	<b>What They Do</b>	<b>Problems They Cause</b>
<b>LSD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Acid</li> <li>○ Blotter</li> <li>○ Boomers</li> <li>○ Cubes</li> <li>○ Microdot</li> </ul>	Change in thinking and perception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Nausea</li> <li>● Flashbacks</li> <li>● Increased body temperature</li> <li>● Fast heartrate</li> <li>● Poor appetite</li> <li>● Trouble sleeping</li> <li>● Weakness</li> <li>● Tremors</li> <li>● Altered thinking might continue after the drug has worn off</li> </ul>
<b>Mescaline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Buttons</li> <li>○ Cactus</li> <li>○ Mesc</li> <li>○ Peyote</li> </ul>	Change in thinking and perception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Severe withdrawal that includes the above list and diarrhea, nausea</li> </ul>
<b>Psilocybin</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Magic Mushroom</li> <li>○ Shrooms</li> <li>○ Purple Passion</li> </ul>	Change in thinking and perception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Anxiety</li> </ul>

## Depressants

Name	Common Names	What They Do	Problems They Cause
<p><b>Barbiturates</b> Amytal Phenobarbital</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Downers</li> <li>○ Reds</li> <li>○ Red birds</li> <li>○ Phennies</li> <li>○ Yellows</li> <li>○ Yellow jackets</li> <li>○ Candy</li> <li>○ Sleeping pills</li> <li>○ Tranks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reduce anxiety</li> <li>● Feeling of well-being</li> <li>● Lower blood pressure</li> <li>● Lower pulse</li> <li>● Cause drowsiness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Impulsive behavior</li> <li>● Poor concentration</li> <li>● Fatigue</li> <li>● Confusion</li> <li>● Poor judgment</li> <li>● Slurred speech Dizziness</li> <li>● Interferes with memory storage</li> <li>● Blackouts</li> <li>● <i>For Barbiturates: Medically dangerous withdrawal</i></li> <li>● <i>Death with overdose</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Alcohol</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Spirits</li> <li>○ Beer</li> <li>○ Wine</li> <li>○ Booze</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Feeling of well-being</li> <li>● Deaden pain</li> <li>● Reduce social anxiety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Impulsive behavior</li> <li>● Poor concentration</li> <li>● Fatigue</li> <li>● Poor balance</li> <li>● Poor coordination</li> <li>● Confusion</li> <li>● Poor memory</li> <li>● Poor judgment</li> <li>● Slurred speech</li> <li>● Shrinks brain</li> <li>● Liver damage</li> <li>● Heart damage</li> <li>● Birth defects</li> <li>● Seizures</li> <li>● <i>Medically dangerous withdrawal</i></li> <li>● <i>Death with overdose</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Ghb</b> Gamma-hydroxy butyrate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Georgia</li> <li>○ Homeboy</li> <li>○ Liquid ecstasy</li> </ul>	<p>Feeling of well-being</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Impulsive behavior</li> <li>● Poor concentration</li> <li>● Fatigue</li> <li>● Confusion</li> <li>● Poor memory</li> <li>● Poor judgment</li> <li>● Nausea/vomiting</li> <li>● Headache</li> <li>● Seizures</li> <li>● <i>Coma, Death</i></li> </ul>

## Stimulants

<i>Name</i>	<i>Common Names</i>	<i>What They Do</i>	<i>Problems They Cause</i>
<b>Amphetamine</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Speed</li> <li>○ Bennies</li> <li>○ Back Beauties</li> <li>○ Crosses</li> <li>○ Hearts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Feelings of increased energy</li> <li>● Mental alertness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fast, irregular heartbeat</li> <li>● Increased body temperature</li> <li>● Poor appetite</li> <li>● Weight loss</li> <li>● Seizures</li> <li>● Heart failure</li> <li>● Headaches</li> <li>● Nervousness</li> <li>● Trouble sleeping</li> <li>● Tremors</li> <li>● Poor/complete loss of coordination</li> <li>● Aggression</li> <li>● Impulsive behavior</li> <li>● Confusion</li> <li>● Stroke</li> <li>● Heart Attack</li> <li>● Psychosis</li> <li>● Panic Attack</li> <li>● Paranoia</li> <li>● Violence</li> <li>● Psychotic behavior</li> <li>● Memory loss</li> <li>● Impaired memory</li> <li>● Impaired learning</li> <li>● Shrinking of brain</li> </ul>
<b>Cocaine</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Blow</li> <li>○ Candy</li> <li>○ Charlie</li> <li>○ Coke</li> <li>○ Flake</li> <li>○ Rock</li> <li>○ Snow</li> <li>○ Toot</li> </ul>		
<b>Methamphetamine</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Meth</li> <li>○ Chalk</li> <li>○ Crank</li> <li>○ Crystal</li> <li>○ Fire</li> <li>○ Glass</li> <li>○ Go Fast</li> <li>○ Speed</li> </ul>		
<b>MDMA</b> Methylenedioxy-methamphetamine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ecstasy</li> <li>○ Adam</li> <li>○ Clarity</li> <li>○ Lover's Speed</li> <li>○ Peace</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Feeling of well-being and empathy</li> <li>● Mild hallucinations</li> <li>● Increased sensitivity to touch</li> </ul>	



## Other Drugs

Name	Common Names	What They Do	Problems They Cause
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PCP</b></p> <p>Phencyclidine</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Angel dust</li> <li>○ Boat</li> <li>○ Hog</li> <li>○ Love boat</li> <li>○ Peace pill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Numbness</li> <li>● Change in perception</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fast heart rate</li> <li>● High blood pressure</li> <li>● Poor coordination</li> <li>● Memory loss</li> <li>● Nausea</li> <li>● Vomiting</li> <li>● Severe mood change</li> <li>● Psychosis</li> <li>● Anxiety</li> <li>● Violence</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Inhalants</b></p> <p>Solvents Paint thinners Gasses Glue Nitrites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Laughing gas</li> <li>○ Snappers</li> <li>○ Poppers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Head rush</li> <li>● Sudden stimulation of senses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Impulsive behavior</li> <li>● Headache</li> <li>● Nausea</li> <li>● Vomiting</li> <li>● Slurred speech</li> <li>● Poor memory</li> <li>● Wheezing</li> <li>● Unconsciousness</li> <li>● Weight loss</li> <li>● Depression</li> <li>● Muscle weakness</li> <li>● Liver damage</li> <li>● Brain damage</li> <li>● Sudden death</li> <li>● <i>Use associated with suicide</i></li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Steroids</b></p> <p>Anabolic Steroids Androl Oxandrin Winstrol Testosterone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Roids</li> <li>○ Arnold's gym candy</li> <li>○ Pumpers</li> <li>○ Stackers</li> <li>○ Weight trainer juice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Imitates the effects of male hormones</li> <li>● Taken to increase muscle mass/strength</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased risk-stroke, heart, liver disease</li> <li>● Increased risk of infection</li> <li>● Aching joints</li> <li>● Nervousness</li> <li>● Trembling</li> <li>● Increased anger/rage attacks</li> <li>● <b>Men:</b> Baldness, breast development, inability to get erection</li> <li>● <b>Women:</b> Facial hair, deepened voice, reduced breast size and changes in appearance including: Acne, oily hair, baldness, jaundice, swelling feet/ankles, bad breath, mood swings</li> <li>● <i>Health risks associated with injection include HIV and hepatitis</i></li> </ul>

## Chapter 3: How Satisfied Are You with Your Life Right Now?



Has your drinking or drug use caused problems in any of these areas of your life? You might not have thought about this before, or recently. When you stop to consider it, you might decide that parts of your life or your relationships have been affected by your behavior.

Take a minute to think about it. Follow the instructions below.

### Check-In: Your Level of Satisfaction

1. **Circle** the problems that have happened to you in the last three months:

**Physical Health** (accident or injury, illnesses)

**My Mood** (feeling guilty, depressed, or thinking about regrets)

**My Relationships** (other people complaining about my alcohol or drug use, arguments with family or friends)

**Things that I am doing** (being late for appointments, mistakes at home or at work)

**Breaking the law** (getting into fights, theft, even if you were not arrested or charged)

**Managing money** (running out of money I need for rent or food, or spending money on things I do not need while drunk or stoned)

2. Here is a list of symptoms of heavy drinking and drug use. Have you had any of these in the past three months? ✓ **Check** the ones that apply to you.

	Often	Sometimes	Never
Trouble getting to sleep			
Waking during the night			
Headache or hangover			
Stomach problems			
Rapid heartbeat			
Shakiness or unsteady hands			
Sweating, particularly at night			
Poor memory			
Trouble concentrating			
Mood changes			
Feeling tired			

3. How satisfied are you with your life?

	Happy	Okay	Little unhappy	Very unhappy
Health				
Emotional health (mood)				
Relationships with family				
Relationships with friends				
Money situation				
Ability to think, remember and problem solve				
How I spend my free time				
How well I get things done (work, volunteering, things around the house)				
Legal status (arrested, sued)				

4. Is there a link between your drinking or drug use and any areas of your life that are problems for you? **Circle** the areas of your life you might be interested in changing above.

## Chapter 4: How Will I Know When It Is Time to Act on Substance Use?



Now that you have thought hard on your life, it is time to pull it together. Our experience tells us that a person's substance use can change over time. The problems that arise from drinking or drug use can change over time too. We have another worksheet that will make pulling things together easier.

The **How will I know it is time?** worksheet will give you something to refer to at any time in future so that you can decide whether you think it is time to set a substance use goal. This goal could be cutting back or seeing what it is like to stop completely.

The important thing about it is that any goal you choose – just for now or for the future – will bring improvements to your health and well-being. You are the captain of the ship of your life. It is important that you are making decisions that make sense to you.



## Worksheet: How Will I Know It Is Time?



**Referring to all the things you have done from Part 1 of this workbook, please fill in the blanks below:**

When I do decide that it is time to set a substance use goal, here are the trustworthy people who can support me:

---

---

---

These are the things that most concern me about how the substances I am using affect me (i.e., physical, or mental health problems):

---

---

---

These are the things about my substance use that are causing me dissatisfaction in life:

---

---

---

---

These are the **top five** reasons I would make a change in my substance use when I decide to do so (Note: for making this list, you may want to take things from the previous two lists you have made):

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Consider the information you have summarized above. Please answer the following questions:

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 means you are definitely seeing the need to do something about your substance use, how would you rate yourself right now? (Circle a number below)



(Note: choosing a number on this scale is an easy activity you can do occasionally, to keep track of how your substance use may be affecting your life)

2. What is the most important thing that explains your current rating (for instance, the reason you circled the number you did and not a lower number)?

---

---

3. What is the most important thing that would have to happen to increase your 1 to 10 score by at least one point?

---

---

---

4. If you share this worksheet with a person, you really trust, how would you like them to remind you that it exists? Check the ones that apply.

- Have them send you the letter through the postal service in a month or two.
- Ask them for a regular meeting (i.e., once per month) where you can talk about your current situation and review the worksheet.
- Ask them to send you an email or text occasionally, to check in.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_



**Idea:** Here are other ideas about how you could make this worksheet more memorable:

- Make it into a poster and hang it in a place that you will see each day.
- Include pictures of the trustworthy people that you have listed at the top of this page.
- Make a piece of artwork based on the details in the worksheet.
- Do some creative writing (example: journaling about the life you want to be living and how you are working towards it).

**Good luck. Do not forget - anything you can do to make your life better will be worth it!**





## Chapter 5: A Letter to My Future Self



When you have completed the “How will I know it’s time” worksheet, we recommend that you put the information in the form of a letter to yourself and we have included a form to help you with this. This letter is a good thing to share with the people you trust so that they know exactly where you are coming from.

If you decide to write a letter, you can also make a video recording of it to make it more memorable whenever you look at it down the road.

Here are all the materials you need to complete this final Part 1 activity of the workbook:

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dear Me of the future** (write in your first name if you like),

I have just finished an activity to clarify how substance use fits into my life. I am writing this letter as a way of making sure I do not forget the most important things I have discovered. Some of the highlights to include:

\_\_\_\_\_ is a person I can trust to talk about my substance use occasionally, to make sure I am staying on the right track.

If \_\_\_\_\_ starts to happen with my health, that might be a signal I should be taking a closer look at my substance use.

The top five reasons I would be interested in making a change in my substance use are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that acting on my substance use does not necessarily mean quitting. It is possible to set a short-term goal about reducing my substance use and I can find this information in Part 2 of the SUBI workbook.

**Yours truly,  
Me**

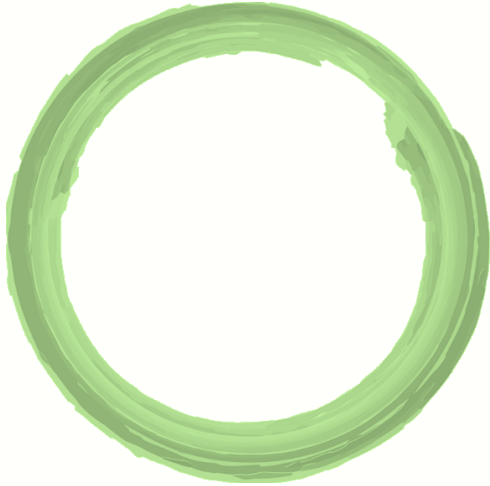
## **Conclusion**

Congratulations! By completing Part 1 of this workbook, you have taken a major step to make sure that substance use does not stay under your radar, causing you problems and spoiling your future. By staying connected with people you trust about how things are going with your substance use over time, you can get valuable feedback to inform your decision making. It is hard for anyone – no matter who they are – to see their blind spots.

We want to encourage you to have faith that when you have decided to tackle your substance use – whether now or later - there are many who have been in similar circumstances in the past and have been able to change things for the better.

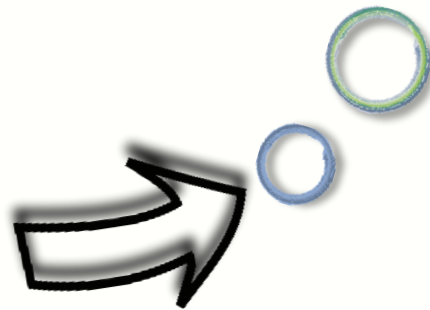
You can, too!

It is only a matter of time and getting the support you need and deserve to succeed!



## Part 2: Tackling My Substance Use

You have taken an important step. You are deciding to get organized on addressing your substance use. As you read before in Part 1 of this workbook, any changes you make to your substance use behavior can improve your life in different ways. Before we get into the information you need to make clear substance use goals, we want to cover some background information.



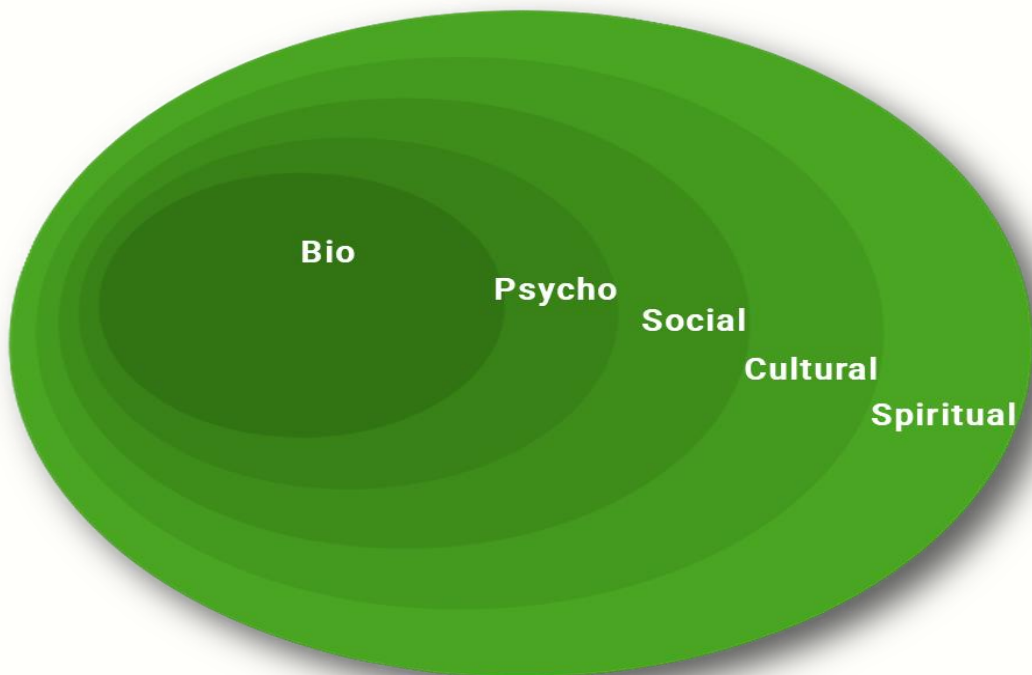
## Chapter 6: Goal Setting for Substance Use



Background information helps people understand all the parts of their life that can be affected by substance use. This understanding gives a person more power to do things that will help them meet the substance use goals they set.

Consider it a map that helps you keep track of all the things that are important to you in working towards the life you want to live. It is called the Biopsychosocial Plus Model. On this page is a picture of what it looks like. There is a lot of detail so we will walk through it one section at a time.

### Biopsychosocial Plus Model



**Bio** - everything about your brain and how it works. Scientists have learned a lot about how drinking or drug use can change the way our brain works. Sometimes these changes make it hard for us to do the things we want to do. It can be helpful for you to understand a little about what scientists have discovered when setting your substance use goals.

**Psycho** - short for psychology and covers how alcohol and drug use can control the way we behave. This includes the fact that the longer we use substances, the harder it becomes to fight off urges to use again and again.

**Social** - the ways the people in our lives can affect our decisions to use substances or not. This includes family and friends as well as people in our surrounding community (like neighbors or coworkers).

**Cultural** - the culture we grow up in can affect how we use alcohol and drugs. A powerful example is how people of color in North America have been discriminated against by mainstream society. This mistreatment can cause more use of alcohol and drugs. Substance use may be a part of your culture, just like alcohol is a part of a lot of things that happen. In some communities, drug and alcohol use may be accepted as a normal part of life. For example, getting drunk may be looked at as a normal thing for youth to do. You might not feel like a normal part of things if you are not doing the same. In other communities, using any alcohol or other drugs in any amount may be seen as harmful and completely forbidden. You may have been made to feel ashamed of your substance use.

**Spiritual** - many people who change their use of alcohol and drugs have found support through looking for sources of meaning in their lives. Sometimes people can find this by connecting to a temple, synagogue, or church. Some people have found this type of strength in other ways (for example, indigenous people spending time with an elder in their community).

As you can see, alcohol and drug use can affect a lot of things in your life. When you are setting a substance use goal, we recommend that you think about as many of these details as possible.

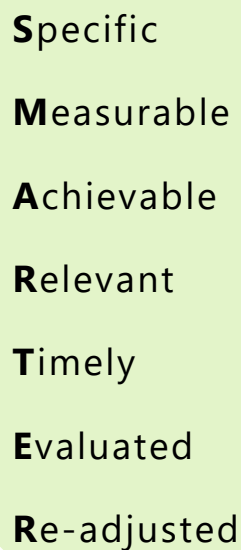
### ***Setting a substance use goal***

In our experience, we have noticed that people have the most success when they choose their own substance use goals. We have also found that a clear, detailed goal statement is one of the most important tools for gaining control over substance use. Some people decide very quickly that the only realistic goal is not to use alcohol and

drugs at all. Others may decide to cut down on how much they drink or use in the short-term. Whatever you choose, making sure your goal is clear and has enough details is key.

There are all sorts of ways you can organize a substance use goal. One popular way is described by the letters **SMARTER**.

When you set a **SMARTER** goal, it will be:



**S**pecific  
**M**easurable  
**A**chievable  
**R**elevant  
**T**imely  
**E**valuated  
**R**e-adjusted

You can read more about this approach by accessing the website at the following link:  
<https://www.peoplegoal.com/blog/smarter-goals-setting>.

The main ideas in this approach are summarized in the following tips for setting clear substance use goals:

- To make your goal specific and measurable, include numbers. Think about an average seven-day week and then describe the limits you want to aim for:
  - ✓ The maximum amount you plan to use in a day.
  - ✓ The maximum number of days you plan to use from Monday to Sunday.
  - ✓ You can also decide how many zero use days you want to build in.

An example for alcohol:

*On an average week, I will aim to limit my drinking to a maximum of 3 drinks per day, on no more than 3 days per week.*

- You can make your goal even stronger by building in more details. Good additional details include:
  - ✓ The form of the substance (beer, wine, or liquor)
  - ✓ Describing risky situations that you want to avoid (past circumstances that have caused major negative consequences or consistently led to loss of control)
  - ✓ Describing situations when use may be relatively safe (with trusted friends or family)
  - ✓ Duration of “experiment” (the number of weeks over which you will assess whether this goal is suitable for you)
  
- Building in these additional details to the example above, here is what a substance use goal could look like:

*On an average week:*

- 1. I will aim to limit my drinking to a maximum of 3 drinks per day, on no more than 3 days per week.*
- 2. I will stick to regular beer (5%) and avoid any hard liquor.*
- 3. I will avoid drinking in bars and when I feel angry (because the last time I did this I got into a bad fight with my sister).*
- 4. When I have a drink, I will ask my best friend, Mo, if she’s available to join me (Mo supports me in my effort to make things better in my life).*
- 5. I will try this goal for one month. I will meet with a trusted friend to discuss how it is going, and if there are any changes I should make to my goal.*



**Here are more tips:**

For alcohol use goals, you can measure your drinking more accurately if you go by the Standard Drink (SD) system. Information on this system is included in this graphic:



Source: <https://www.rethinkyourdrinking.ca/what-is-a-standard-drink/>

Do not feel that you must use a substance up to the daily limit you have set for yourself. For example, if your limit is to use cannabis no more than three times per day, you may only feel like smoking once on a particular day and that is totally okay.

People are more successful in meeting their substance use goals when they make it a habit to keep track of how much they are using. This can be done by using a log, diary, or smartphone app. If you have a smartphone, there are some apps that you can download for free.



The information on one such app is available through this link:

<https://www.camh.ca/en/camh-news-and-stories/saying-when-app-launches-for-android>

Here's a link with information on ways of keeping track of cannabis use:

### **5 Tools for Tracking Your Cannabis Use:**

<https://ceresmedvt.com/5-tools-for-tracking-your-cannabis-use/>

Here are two other worksheets on the next few pages that might be helpful to you:

- ✓ **Daily Diary** worksheet - for all other substances
- ✓ **My Early Recovery Plan** - for making your own substance use goals

## Worksheet: Daily Diary



**By monitoring the risky situations that you encounter, and any urges and temptations that feel to drink or use other drugs, you can develop better coping strategies and alternative behaviors.** Keeping track of any drinking or other drug use that occurs helps you get an overall picture of how well you are doing. The simple exercise of daily monitoring can, by itself, help you achieve your goals.

For each day this week:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Describe the riskiest situation (urges, temptations, and cravings) that you had during that day. Write down: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ where you were</li> <li>○ time of day</li> <li>○ who you were with</li> <li>○ what you were doing, thinking, and feeling</li> <li>○ what happened</li> </ul>	Describe what you did to cope in this situation: (went for a walk, left, thought of the negative consequences of using)	If you did use any alcohol or other drugs, record: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ what kind</li> <li>○ how much</li> </ul>
<b>Monday</b>			
<b>Tuesday</b>			
<b>Wednesday</b>			
<b>Thursday</b>			
<b>Friday</b>			
<b>Saturday</b>			
<b>Sunday</b>			

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## My Early Recovery Plan



**Write down your substance use goals:**

1. Goal for \_\_\_\_\_  Reduced use (details below)  No use

No more than \_\_\_\_ per day      No more than \_\_\_\_ days per week

I will avoid using in these circumstances \_\_\_\_\_

2. Goal for \_\_\_\_\_  Reduced use (details below)  No use

No more than \_\_\_\_ per day      No more than \_\_\_\_ days per week

I will avoid using in these circumstances \_\_\_\_\_

3. Goal for \_\_\_\_\_  Reduced use (details below)  No use

No more than \_\_\_\_ per day      No more than \_\_\_\_ days per week

I will avoid using in these circumstances \_\_\_\_\_

Challenges for me in meeting my goals	Coping strategies

My Safe Zones are:

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

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

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

Positive messages I can repeat to myself when I get discouraged:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## ***Getting advice from a professional***

It is recommended that anyone setting a substance use goal should get support from someone who is dependable. A trusted friend can be a big support, but that friend may not have detailed knowledge about the science of substance use.

That is where seeking advice from an experienced health care professional can put you in an even better position to succeed in any goals you set.

An example of something a professional might tell you about is the big pool of research available in the substance use field. Scientists know a lot about how people use alcohol and cannabis. They have even produced guidelines for those two substances. You and individuals supporting you might find it interesting to read these guidelines. They are included here:

**Low Risk Drinking Guidelines:** <http://www.rethinkyourdrinking.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2012-Canada-Low-Risk-Alcohol-Drinking-Guidelines-Brochure-en.pdf>

**Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines (LRCUG):** [Lower-Riskhttp://www.rethinkyourdrinking.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2012-Canada-Low-Risk-Alcohol-Drinking-Guidelines-Brochure-en.pdf](http://www.rethinkyourdrinking.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2012-Canada-Low-Risk-Alcohol-Drinking-Guidelines-Brochure-en.pdf)

Interesting fact: there are no similar guidelines for other substances. If you are setting a goal for something like cocaine or painkillers, we strongly recommend that you get support from a professional to do so.

One of the other advantages of seeking a professional's help is that they are trained to do a detailed assessment of your current situation. After an assessment, a professional will give you a recommendation about what you can do about your substance use. This recommendation can be in the form of a plan or set of follow-up options. Many professionals these days will support your right to make your own decisions unless they are very concerned about your immediate safety. Sometimes professionals (especially doctors) feel responsible to give you direct advice about how you can protect your health.

An example of direct advice you may get from a professional is that if you have had a long history of problems resulting from your alcohol and drug use – like liver failure - not drinking or using drugs is the best goal.

If you are not unsure about what goal to set, professionals will often recommend trying out a short-term goal of not using any substances. The benefits of this approach include:

- Improved thinking ability
- Improved learning and testing coping skills and strategies
- Lowered tolerance accompanied by improvements in physical health
- Increased success in achieving long-term moderation

### ***Final words of encouragement on goal setting***

It is common for people setting substance use goals to take a while before they have consistent success. If you do not meet your goal this week, there is always next week to try again. Chances are that you have probably learned some things this week that you can use to make your plan better.

We want to encourage you to get the support you need and deserve to set the goal you feel is the best one for you. If you are struggling or feeling bad, please reach out to someone you trust.

Shame and isolation are your enemies!

References:

1. Herie, M & Skinner, W.J.W. (2014). Fundamentals of Addiction. A Practical Guide for Counsellors. 4th Ed. CAMH, Toronto. (Biopsychosocial Plus graphic is on page 12).
2. Structured Relapse Prevention manual (second ed, CD version), CAMH: Toronto.
3. Harrison, S. & Carver, V. eds (2004). Alcohol and Drug Problems. A Practical Guide for Counsellors. 3rd ed. CAMH: Toronto.

## Chapter 7: First Things First. Ideas for Getting Started

### Goals

- ✓ **Make a list of things to do to help you get started**
- ✓ **Make a list of early coping strategies**

### Information

**Once you decide to make a big change in your life, it can be hard to decide how to start. This list includes ideas to support your new lifestyle:**

- 1** If your goal is not to use, throw out all alcohol and drugs, and anything that goes with them (pipes, supplies). If your goal is to decrease use, think about ways you can limit access to a big supply of alcohol and drugs.
- 2** Stop seeing or talking to the heavy drinkers and drug users you know.
- 3** Do what you can to avoid being around people who drink or use drugs.
- 4** Change your phone number.
- 5** Throw out the contact information of dealers or people who drink heavily.
- 6** Try new activities that are drug-free.
- 7** Try a self-help group such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous.
- 8** Talk to people you trust about difficult situations.
- 9** Tell people who can and will help you quit drinking or using drugs what you are doing. Let them know what they can do to help.
- 10** Have your money deposited directly in your bank or get help to manage your money.

## Plan: Getting Started with Your Goals -----

Here is a plan to help you get started with meeting your drug and alcohol use goals.

Fill in the blanks:

On (date) \_\_\_\_\_

- ✓ I will get rid of the following items:

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- ✓ I will avoid the following people:

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- ✓ I will avoid those people by doing the following things:

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✓ Here is what I will say if I do have to speak to those people:

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✓ I will not go these places:

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✓ Doing these things will make it easier to avoid those places:

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✓ People who I can count on to help me:

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✓ Things they can do to help me:

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✓ Things that I can do that will be safe and healthy:

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✓ Places I can go that will help me meet my drug and alcohol use goals:

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## Chapter 8: Saying No to Alcohol and Drugs



- ✓ Learn how to say no, when you need to, to drugs and alcohol
- ✓ Practice using the Top 5 Motivators to keep moving forward

### Information

**If someone is too interested in what is in your glass, it is their problem - not your problem.** When you decide to change your alcohol and drug use, one of the hardest situations is when someone offers you a drink or drugs. Some people will encourage you to drink or use drugs even if they know you are trying to change your behavior.

It is more common than you think for people who do not have a brain injury, and who are not tackling substance use, to choose not to drink or use. At any event. You might feel self-conscious saying no, but you do not have to feel that way or explain. Try to remember that for other people it is not a big deal if you refuse a drink. No one will think it is unusual.



### Tips

- Look the person offering you something in the eye, so they know that you mean what you are saying.
- Say “no thanks” right away without offering an explanation. If you do not get into a conversation about your decision, things will end more quickly.
- If the person offers again, say “no” and ask the person to stop offering.
- Suggest something else to do or ask for something else to drink or eat.
- Change the subject.
- If you feel uncomfortable, leave the situation.
- Remember – it is your choice. You do not have to explain your reasons.
- Use your Top 5 Motivators to remind you why you are not using alcohol or drugs.
- Feel proud of your choice!

## Worksheet: Planning Ahead



**Use this worksheet to plan ahead for situations that you might find hard to manage.** We have listed a few examples. You complete the worksheet with situations you might face, and solutions to those situations.

Who will ask or offer?	Where and when?	Who/what can help?
My friend Marty	Phone call when I am at home	Voicemail My notes or counselor notes
<p><b>What I can say and do:</b></p> <p>Make sure I have my Top 5 Motivators</p> <p>I will keep a script near me to remind me of what I want to say. "I do not want to party with you." "I am done with that." "Please stop asking."</p> <p>I will keep saying "no thanks and please stop asking".</p> <p>If he asks for reasons, I will say "My mind is made up. I do not want to do that".</p> <p>I will end the phone call.</p> <p>I will screen my phone calls before answering.</p>		

Who will ask or offer?	Where and when?	Who/what can help?
Cousin Frank	At a family party	My brother Stan
<p><b>What I can say and do:</b></p> <p>I will tell Frank I would rather have a Coke. I will go get a coke.</p> <p>Ask Stan to hang out with me for a while.</p> <p>Take a walk away from the party.</p> <p>Look at my Top 5 Motivators.</p>		

Who will ask or offer?	Where and when?	Who/what can help?
<p><b>What I can say and do:</b></p>		

Who will ask or offer?	Where and when?	Who/what can help?
<p><b>What I can say and do:</b></p>		

Who will ask or offer?	Where and when?	Who/what can help?
<p><b>What I can say and do:</b></p>		

## Chapter 9: Coping with Cravings

### Goals

- ✓ Learn about cravings
- ✓ Develop coping strategies for cravings

### Information

#### How do you know if you are having a craving?

Everyone who changes their drinking and drug use has cravings. A craving is a feeling that you want to get high. Sometimes these feelings are very strong, and it is hard to think about anything else. Other times, the feelings are weak, and you can easily focus your mind on something else. You know you have a craving when:



- You think about wanting to use drugs or alcohol
- You have physical sensations, like a knot in your stomach or tension
- You find yourself thinking about how to get alcohol or drugs

### Tips

Once you start to pay attention to your thoughts find a way to be your own best coach. This is not easy at first, but practice will make it easier. Here are a few useful thoughts to review when you get a craving:

- It is normal to have cravings. It does not mean I am not getting better.
- Cravings do not last forever. They go away even if I do not get high.
- The longer I do not drink or use drugs the weaker the cravings get.
- The longer I do not drink or use drugs the fewer cravings I will have.
- Cravings might be uncomfortable, but they will not hurt me.
- I have been doing well.
- I have worked hard. I do not want to spoil it now.
- I can do this!

## Check-In: Stop and Think About Cravings

**When you recognize thoughts or feelings that are part of a craving, stop and review this list to help you fight it. Check any that might work for you:**

- Keep a picture of a stop sign in my wallet, purse, or somewhere I will see it often.
- Wear a rubber band on my wrist and snap it to stop my thoughts.
- Review my reasons for avoiding drugs and alcohol.
- Practice breathing or relaxation or meditation.
- Distract myself with something interesting or fun.
- Find book, song, poem, prayer, or photo of person/place that gives me hope & strength.
- Have something to eat.
- Listen to music.
- Talk to someone I trust.
- Write in my journal. (Chapter 15)
- Leave the situation or do something to change it.
- Read my journal or workbook.
- Pat myself on the back.
- Make a list of my accomplishments.
- Audio or video record my own self-pep talk that I can watch or listen to when I need it.

### Plan

Having a plan to cope with cravings will help. Practicing your plan before you need it will help even more. One way to get ideas about what to do is to think about a time when you did not have a craving. What were you doing? Where were you? Who was with you?

Use this Coping Card of ideas to make your plan.



#### Coping Card

Top 5 reasons for change

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Call: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Call: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Emergency Plan

\*Leave the situation

\*Go somewhere safe such as:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\*Take a few breaths and try to relax.

## Chapter 10: Being in Groups

### Goals

- ✓ **Get information about being in therapy groups**
- ✓ **Identifying coping strategies to make being in a group easier**
- ✓ **Learn how peer support can help reach your goals**

### Information

#### ***Ways to feel more comfortable***

If you have never attended group therapy before it can be a scary experience. Everyone feels uncomfortable at first. When you go to a group for the first time it is a good idea to make sure you have some basic information. Try to find answers to these questions:

- Who is the group leader?
- What do people talk about?
- How long does the group meeting last?
- Do people take turns talking? Is it a conversation, or does someone raise their hand?
- What does everyone in the group have in common? Why are they all there?
- Does the group have special rules to follow?

#### **Most people have rules. Here are some common rules.**

**Confidentiality.** What happens in a group session is the private business of the group members. It is not polite to talk outside the group about the people and what happens. The other people should show you the same respect. After a session you might think about something that was shared. If you want to talk about it, ask a staff member or your counselor. Leave other people's name out of your discussion.

**Show respect.** Avoid 'isms', like racism and sexism. Address people how they want to be addressed.



**Be caring and understanding.** Put yourself in someone else's shoes. Try to see things from the other person's point of view.

**Start your sentences with the word 'I'.** Hearing about your experiences helps others and makes them feel more comfortable. "I worry about..." instead of "you worry about"

**Only one person talks at a time.** Do not start side conversations with other group members.



**Be a good listener.** Make eye contact and nod your head. This helps the person talking to know that you are paying attention.

**Ask if you do not understand.** If you are not sure what someone means, it is ok to ask.

**Give everyone a chance to talk.** Try to keep your remarks to the point, and on topic.

**Avoid giving advice.** Do not offer your opinion unless someone asks what you would do.

**Do not force your point of view on others.** Arguing does not help.

**Learn how to be positive when you give feedback.** Think about how you would like others to treat you. Blame and shame do not help others.

## Frequently Asked Questions about Groups

- 1. What should you do if you have trouble paying attention, or understanding what people are say, or get too tired?** Let the group leader know before the session starts that you have attention and fatigue challenges. Decide to get feedback. Sit near the leader-they can give you a signal if you drift off. You can give a signal to the leader if you feel lost. Sometimes it might be good to admit your difficulty to the group and ask for support. The leader and your group might agree it is okay to leave the room quietly for a little break to rest or refocus. The important thing is to admit the challenge and plan to manage it. Let the leader know that you will leave the room, and where you will go.
- 2. What should I do if I get angry during the group session?** The advantage of group therapy is that everyone is there together to learn from each other. There will probably be people you enjoy spending time with, and others who are harder to get along with. If you know that this will be a challenge for you, make a plan with the leader. Let the leader know when you will leave the room, where you will go, and how to talk about it later. You can also work on your anger management outside the group.
- 3. Sometimes I say things without thinking or I talk off topic. What can I do to keep this from being a problem?** Let the group know that you are working on these things. Ask for their feedback. It helps to write out your comments or ideas before you say them. That will cause you to edit your words. You might be able to work on this in the group. Before you do, talk about this strategy with them first. This way no one will question why you are writing things down during the session.
- 4. It is rude to interrupt but sometimes I forget what I want to say while someone else is talking.** Writing things down during the group session can also help with this challenge. Again, let your leader or the group know why you are making notes. If you have trouble thinking of what to say in the moment, you can prepare ahead of time. Make a note of what you want to bring up.



## Worksheet: Being in Groups



**Doing a little homework before beginning a group will help you be more relaxed.** It will also help you gain more from your group sessions.

**What should I let the group leader know about me?**

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**How should I say it?**

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**What coping strategies might be useful? Check the ones you think you can use:**

- Get there early.
- Sit near the front.
- Arrange a scheduled break with the leader.
- Ask to have any distractions removed.
- Turn off my cellphone.
- Ask the leader to make a card with that day's topic on it. Place it where I can see it.
- Make my own card with that day's topic on it to help me stay focused.

## More Information

### Self-Help Groups and 12-Step Programs

**What are they?** A model for self-help groups started with Alcoholics Anonymous, the goal of membership is to provide the social support needed to remain abstinent from drugs and alcohol – to stop drinking and stop using drugs.



**12-steps**

#### Who runs them?

Local chapters of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA), and Cocaine Anonymous (CA) are led by people who have been successful in not using drugs or alcohol. Each of these groups is an independent organization, but they all use the same model. National and local chapters provide support and written materials. There is no charge to attend.

#### Who attends?

People who are willing to consider that their substance use causes problems for them.

#### Basic concepts of a 12-step group

- If you follow the 12 steps you will learn to take responsibility for your drinking or drug use. You will learn how to change what you are doing.
- Substance use is a disease that gets worse if you do not do anything about it.
- The only way to get better is to stop using drugs or stop drinking.
- You stop using drugs or alcohol one day at a time
- The idea of spiritual life is discussed, but no particular religion/faith is promoted.

## Frequently Asked Questions About AA, NA, and CA

### What Are the 12 Steps?

1. Admit that if you drink or use drugs your life will be out of control. Admit that the use of substances after brain injury will make your life unmanageable.
2. Start to believe that someone can help you put your life in order. This someone could be God, an AA group, a counselor, or sponsor, for example.
3. Decide to get help from others or from God. Open yourself to change.
4. Make a complete list of your past negative behaviors and any current behaviors that you would like to change. Also make a list of your positive behaviors.
5. Meet with someone you trust and discuss the lists from step 4.
6. Become ready to sincerely try to change your negative behaviors.
7. Ask God for the strength to be a responsible person with responsible behaviors.
8. Make a list of the people that your negative behaviors have affected. Be ready to apologize or make things right with them.
9. Contact these people from step 8. Apologize to them and make things right.
10. Continue to check yourself and your behaviors daily. Correct negative behaviors and improved them. If you hurt another person, apologize, and make corrections.
11. Stop several times a day to think about how you are behaving. Are your behaviors positive? Are you being responsible? If not, ask for help. Reward yourself when you can behave in a responsible and positive way.
12. If you work through these Steps, you will start to feel better about yourself. Now it is your turn to help others try and do the same thing. Helping others will make you feel even better. Continue to work these Steps every day.

*12 Steps of AA/NA developed by William Peterman, BS, CADC, reprinted with permission of the National Head Injury Foundation Substance Abuse Take Force Position Paper, Southborough, MA, NIF, 1988.*

## How do I find a meeting?

The Alcoholics Anonymous website will point you to a local meeting based on where you live. <https://www.aa.org/>. You can also ask your counselor for help finding this information.

## What different kinds of meetings are there?

- Open Meetings – Anyone can go, regardless of whether they admit a problem with substance use
- Closed Meetings – Only people who are willing to admit that they have a problem with substance use can go.
- Lead Meetings – A primary speaker tells his or her story of recovery
- Discussion Meetings – These meetings are round-table discussions in a smaller setting.

## How should I start?

- Most people like to start with open meetings.
- It is okay to ask someone to go with you to an open meeting. It is a good idea to ask a counselor to go with you until you feel comfortable going by yourself.
- Arrive 10 minutes early. You can adjust to the setting, look at the written materials, and select an available seat. You can also introduce yourself to others.

## What happens in meetings?

- Meetings often start with reading the 12 steps.
- People who have met important milestones will be recognized. Tokens (which look like poker chips) are given after specific periods of staying away from alcohol or drugs.
- In Lead meetings, the chairperson will introduce the speaker. The speaker will tell the story of their addiction and recovery.
- People in the group might respond to the speaker. The speaker will share words to encourage them or talk about how the story relates to their own experience.



- The formal meeting ends with everyone reciting the Lord's Prayer and an optional collection of money is taken to support the meeting.
- People stay to talk and drink coffee.

### **Do I have to say anything in front of the group?**

It is okay to attend an open meeting and just listen. Observe what happens in the group. All the rules we mentioned before apply at AA/NA/CA meetings.

### **What is Sponsorship?**

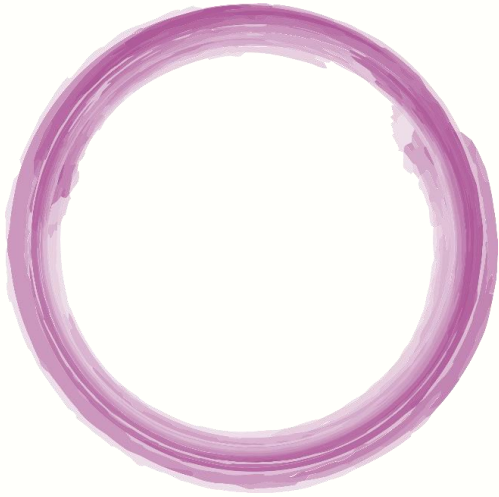
Sponsors are mentors for people who are new to a 12-step group. Having a sponsor is optional, but useful for people who are new to the program. A sponsor is a person who has experience with the group and can support you along the way. People who are sponsors for individuals with brain injury will need some information to help them know more about brain injury. Here are some good sources of information to get them started:

***The Addictions Toolkit:*** <https://attcnetwork.org/centers/mid-america-attc/home>

***Accommodating the Symptoms of TBI Booklet:*** <https://wexnermedical.osu.edu/-/media/files/wexnermedical/patient-care/healthcare-services/neurological-institute/departments-and-centers/research-centers/ohio-valley/for-professionals/accommodating-symptoms/accommodating-tbi-booklet-1-14.pdf?la=en&hash=175F7559BA27362695DDBC8121A89C85F794F4D0>

### **Other self-help groups**

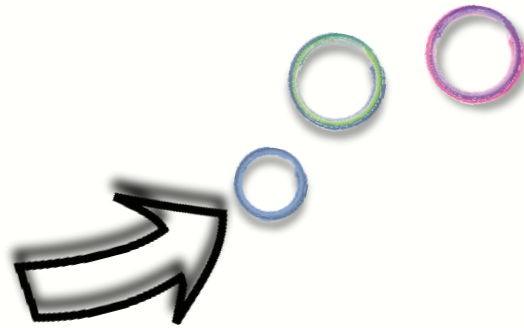
Other community support groups are available. These groups are led by volunteers. An example is SMART Recovery (SMART stands for Self-Management and Recovery Training). More information can be found at: [www.smartrecovery.org](http://www.smartrecovery.org)



## Part 3: Coping Strategies for Life

You have learned about substance use and the effect it has on people. You also know a little more about yourself and your goals for tackling your own substance use. We will now take a look at setting yourself up for success.

We will share some ways to learn to use your strengths as well as some coping strategies to deal with difficulties that could come up on your journey.





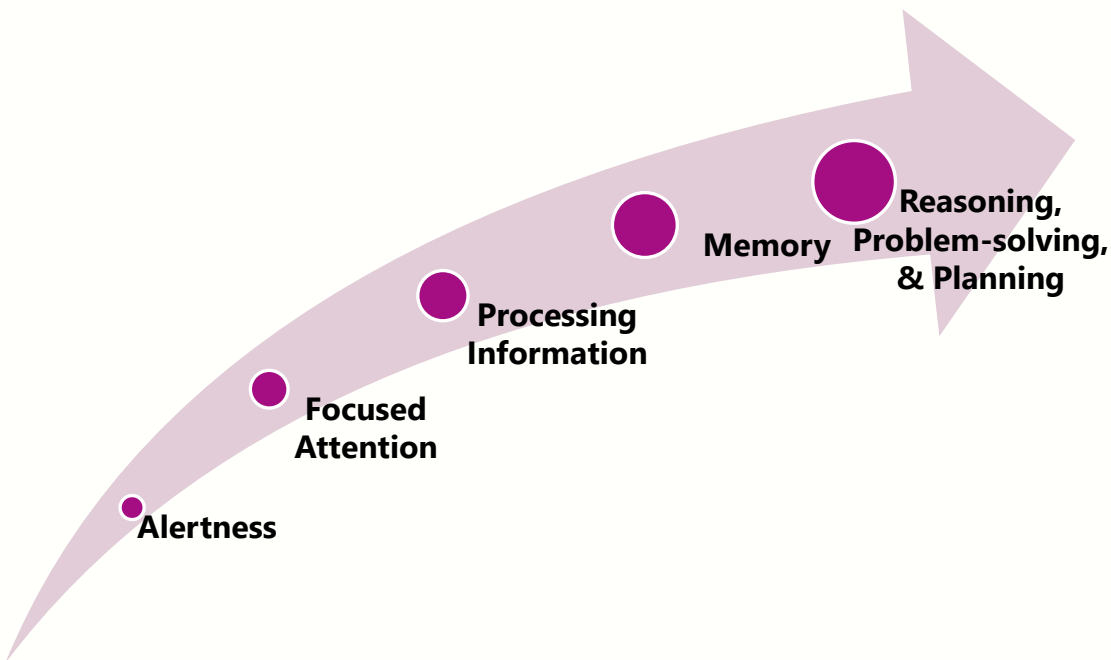
## Chapter 11: Making the Most of Your Brain Power

### Goals

- ✓ **Identify challenges you may be having with learning, planning, and remembering**
- ✓ **Start developing strategies that work best for you**

### Information

Have you noticed any difficulty with learning new information, keeping track of conversations or remembering what you would like to do? You are not alone. We all need strategies to stay organized, remember things that are important, and stay on track with our goals. No matter where you are on your journey, learning to work around your challenges and use your strengths will go a long way to helping you to meet your goals. The functions of the brain can be thought of as steps on a ladder. Each step depends on the one below.



To do any thinking at all you must be awake and alert. If you are awake, you need to be able to focus your attention. When you can focus your attention, you need to be able to process (take in and understand) information. It is then possible to learn and remember new information. Once you have understood and can remember information, it becomes possible to reason, plan and problem-solve.

## Worksheet: What Are My Strengths and Challenges?



**Use the chart below to help you to think about your strengths and challenges.** Make some notes about how the strength helps, or how the challenge might hold you back. Consider reviewing your list with someone you can trust to be supportive.

<b>Alertness, Attention</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Your notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>When does this happen?</b></li> <li>○ <b>How does your strength help?</b></li> <li>○ <b>How does your challenge make things harder?</b></li> </ul>
Staying awake			
Feeling energetic			
Focusing my attention, even when there are noises or distractions			
Being comfortable in loud or busy places			
Keeping track of my place when I am doing something			
Finishing things I start			
<b>Processing information</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Your notes</b>
Listening to and understanding information			
Understanding what I read			
Expressing my thoughts by talking			
Writing down information			

<b>Memory</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Your notes</b>
Remembering faces of people I meet			
Remembering names			
Remembering new information			
Remembering things from my past			
Remembering things that have happened recently			
Remembering to do things I want to do			
Remembering appointments/things I must do (like take medication)			
Finding my way around a new place			
Remembering where I left something (losing things that are important)			
<b>Reasoning, planning, problem-solving</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Your notes</b>
Figuring out how to do something I haven't done before			
Solving problems in my life			
Organizing my ideas			
Organizing my belongings			
Making a plan			
Getting started on things I must do			

<b>Reasoning, planning, problem-solving</b>	<b>Strength</b>	<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Your notes</b>
Remembering when I set a goal			
Thinking about the pros and cons before I do something			
Understanding other people's emotions			
Understanding and making jokes			
Finding new ways to do something			
Following routines			

### More Information

The best strategies are the ones that you like, that you believe in, and that you find helpful to meet a goal that is important to you.

If you have an important goal you are working on, write it here:

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Is there a challenge holding you back? Write it here:

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## **Ideas** Here are some tips to get you started for planning

### **If your challenge is staying alert, you might notice:**

- You get more irritable toward the end of the day
- You nod off when you are waiting or trying to listen to something
- You yawn a lot
- People think you are zoning out



### **What you can do:**

- ✓ Look for patterns in your level of energy. Are you a morning person or are you at your best in the evening? Plan important tasks for when you are at your best.
- ✓ Are you getting enough sleep? A sure sign that sleep is a problem is being tired during the day. Getting enough sleep is important for your brain power.
- ✓ Are you getting regular meals? Being hungry or only eating sugary snacks can leave a person feeling tired.
- ✓ If you do get tired easily, pace yourself. Give yourself time to rest during the day so that you can be your best when you need to be.
- ✓ Walking, or even standing and stretching can wake you up a bit
- ✓ Getting regular exercise will build your strength and energy. The best thing you can do for your brain power is to get regular exercise.
- ✓ People depend on coffee or energy drinks to get them through. That can cause health problems and make being tired worse in the long run.
- ✓ Talk to your doctor. They can make sure there isn't a physical problem that is holding you back. They can make recommendations for improving your health.

### **If your challenge is attention:**

- You might zone out while someone is talking
- Get distracted by noise
- Have trouble focusing when there is more than one conversation, or things are busy
- Realize that you missed part of what someone was saying
- Misplace things you need

## What you can do:

- ✓ Keep distractions down. Turn off the TV or the sound when you are trying to have a conversation, read or work on something.
- ✓ Be an active listener. When you are in a conversation, check your understanding by re-stating the important parts.
- ✓ If you do lose your attention, ask for the information, "I think I might have missed something..."
- ✓ Take notes if you can.
- ✓ If you can, ask for a break.
- ✓ Some people find that having something to hold in their hand, like a stress ball or a coin, helps them settle into a situation. Just be sure that it doesn't make noise or distract others.
- ✓ Ask a person to slow down and give instructions one step at a time.
- ✓ Get in the habit of checking for your important belonging when you leave.



## If your challenge is processing information:

- You might feel slow.
- You might get the first part or the last part and miss the middle of what is being said.
- You might take a long time to think of a response.
- You might have a lot of misunderstandings with others.
- You find that you have trouble understanding what you read.



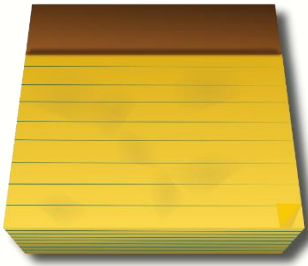
## What you can do:

- ✓ Ask for instructions and information to be given in small chunks.
- ✓ Repeat the information you heard, and how you understood it.
- ✓ Ask for information to be written down so that you can go over it at your own pace.

## If your challenge is memory:

- You might have trouble remembering names.
- You might forget how something happened.
- You might remember how you felt about something (like being angry) but not remember exactly why.
- You might forget to take your medication.

## What you can do:



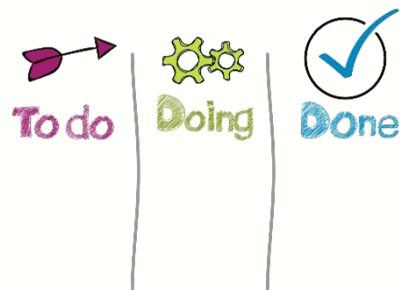
- ✓ Use a calendar in a place that you see often to write down important dates and appointments.
- ✓ Ask for written information when you can.
- ✓ Use routines (doing the same thing at the same time every day).
- ✓ Learn how to use the alarms on your cell phone.
- ✓ Carry a small notebook and a pen to write down instructions.
- ✓ Keep important stuff (like your phone and wallet) in the same place.

## If your challenge is reasoning, problem-solving or planning:

- You may have trouble coming up with ideas for solving a problem.
- You might leave some things unfinished.
- You might have trouble getting started on something.
- You might act before you think things through.

## What you can do:

- ✓ Find a support person that you can trust to help you brainstorm and problem solve.
- ✓ Learn how to set goals and make a daily plan.  
You don't have to do everything on your daily plan, but having some goals makes it easier to get things done. Check out the section on setting goals.
- ✓ Things often won't go as planned. Sometimes you need a plan "B", the thing you will do if a problem happens. Planning for difficulties means you won't have to wing it when a problem happens.



## Chapter 12: Assertiveness

### Goals

- ✓ Understand what assertive behavior is, and how it can help you to manage stress
- ✓ Consider any changes you might want to make to how you communicate what you need to others

### Information

#### *What is being assertive?*

Being assertive means saying what you really mean but doing it in a way that is respectful of other peoples' feelings and rights. There are times when saying what you need could make someone else feel hurt, uncomfortable, or angry. Saying no when someone asks you for something does not seem fair. Have you had a friend who borrows things, but does not return them, or asks for money but does not pay it back? That kind of behavior might make you angry. What would you do? Perhaps someone keeps calling you by the wrong name or does something you find rude. How do you tell them? Being assertive means taking the middle way - not being an angry person or a bully, but not being a pushover either.





## Check-In: Basic Coping Styles

There are four basic coping styles. Which one seems most like you? We all use different styles at different times. The middle way can be difficult if you are not feeling calm.

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### *Passive*

- I do not like to argue or fight.
  - Sometimes I ignore my own feelings to help others.
  - Most of the time I think other people are more important.
  - I often feel hurt, anxious, or resentful.
- 

### *Aggressive*

- I know I can get what I want if I look angry enough.
  - I do not mind arguing. Sometimes it feels good to pick a fight.
  - People tell me I hurt their feelings or do not understand them.
  - I often feel like I need control. Some people say I am a bully.
  - After shouting or showing anger I feel guilty.
- 

### *Passive/Aggressive*

- I do not say what I mean; sometimes I just drop hints.
  - I keep my mouth closed, but then I blow up.
  - I will not usually tell people what is really bothering me.
  - I may make sarcastic or hurtful jokes.
  - I often resent others and sometimes think about getting revenge.
- 

### *Assertive: the Middle Way*

- I can tell people how I feel without putting anyone down.
- I try to be honest and direct.
- I like myself, and I do not need to put other people down to feel okay.
- I can usually find a way to get along or compromise.
- I feel respect for myself and for other people.

**How to make an assertive statement** - Use this formula to make an assertive statement. It is usually best to keep your statement to one or two sentences.

### 1. Describe what is happening

**I think...** Start by telling the person who said things to you. Share facts without blaming or judging.

"I think it was mean of you to speak to me like that."

### 2. Express your feelings

**I feel...** Try to be honest without blaming or intimidating.

"I feel angry and pretty frustrated."

### 3. Specify what you want

**I would like it if you would...** Be specific enough so that a person can really do what you are asking them to do.

"I would really like it if you would stop shouting. Tell me what you want in a nice way."

### 4. Consequences

**I think we would both benefit because...** State the payoff for you and the other person.

"I will understand you better, and then we can go back to having a good time."

---

#### Examples:

**I think** you have asked me to do a lot of work, and **I feel** like it is just too much.

**I would like it if** you would make me a list, so I know what to do first.

**We will both benefit because** I will work better and get more done.

## Worksheet: Assertiveness



**Practice good communication with some situations of your own using the steps you just learned.**

Where were you?

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Who were you having a problem with? \_\_\_\_\_

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---

What did they want from you? \_\_\_\_\_

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How did that make you feel? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

How did you respond? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Now, practice three different assertive statements that would have worked for you in that situation.**

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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### *Tips for becoming a good communicator*

- **Think things through before you respond.** When something feels wrong because you feel hurt or angry, pay attention! Think about what is happening and why you feel that way.
- **Choose the right person to talk to.** Is this the person that can solve the problem? Do they have control over the situation? Talking to people who are not involved in a situation or cannot help will not solve the problem.
- **Be ready. Make sure that you are feeling calm and ready to listen before you start to speak.** Most of the time people want to respond to what you have to say. The conversation will go better if you are ready to have a two-way conversation. It is okay to let a person know you are not ready to talk.
- **Make sure the person you are talking to is also ready.** For a good conversation to happen, both people must be calm enough to listen.
- **Choose the right time.** Most difficult conversations should happen when there is enough time to finish, so that no one is embarrassed.
- **Prepare.** It helps to prepare for difficult conversations by talking about things with someone you trust, or practicing some assertive statements on your own. Things might not go the way you planned, but having a plan can help things go more smoothly.
  - Practice difficult situations. You can even make a script for yourself and practice it.
  - Ask someone supportive to role play with you. Start by 'being' a person who responds well to your message. Practice what to do if someone disagrees or has an aggressive response to you.
- **You have a right to your feelings.** Feelings happen and they are not right or wrong. You do not have to justify your feelings or argue. Sometimes just restating your point in a simple way is all that is needed.

It takes time to learn how to communicate in an assertive way. It may take practice before you are able to think of what to say in the moment. Over time it will get easier. Most of us need to think through the sticky situations, so you are not alone.



## Chapter 13: Dealing with Boredom



- ✓ **Learn the benefits of planning how to use your free time**
- ✓ **Consider what kind of a plan might work for you**

### Information

Being bored can really be a trap for someone who is thinking about changing the way they use their spending time instead of using substances. Maybe drinking or using drugs was your 'go-to' activity. Do you need ideas about what to do instead of using your time that way? Having some plans for your free time is an important part of leading your best life.

#### The benefits of leisure activities

- Reduces boredom
- Works as a healthy form of escape from things that are not going well in your life
- Decreases stress and tension
- Makes you feel good
- Helps you to sleep better
- Gives you something to look forward to
- Helps you meet people who have the same interests
- Gives you a focus
- Creates a sense of freedom
- Experience fun and pleasure
- Leads to self-discovery
- Creates a sense of control and accomplishment
- Allows for creativity

## Check-In: What Keeps You from Making Good Use of Your Time?



Check any that apply, or write in your own:

- Easy to fall into past habits (like turning on the TV)
- Hard to think of something new to do
- Lack the confidence to try something new
- No money
- Feel too busy with other things
- Transportation - no way to get where I want to go
- I miss doing things I used to do, but I am not sure if I still can do them
- Not having someone to do things with
- I am in a bad mood, and I do not feel like having any fun
- I would rather have a job and get paid for my time
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### What kind of activities are best for you?

- Something that I think is important or meaningful
- Something that is helpful to other people
- Meeting people and making friends
- Learning something new
- Being creative or making something
- Relaxing
- Doing something physical
- Getting in shape
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Worksheet: Dealing with Boredom



**It can be hard to think of things you want to do. Use this list to help with ideas.** It is best to have a variety of ideas, like things you can do alone or with others, both at home and in the community.

### Social/Group Activities

- Team sports
- Clubs/organizations
- Volunteering
- Church/religious
- Sing in a choir
- Adult/recreation classes
- Other

### Physical Activities

- Swim
- Bowl
- Golf
- Walk
- Tennis
- Cycle
- Yoga/Meditation
- Other

### Things to Do on Your Own

- Go to library
- Computers
- Puzzles (wordsearch, crosswords)
- Jigsaw puzzles
- Listen to music
- Meditate/Yoga
- Make art
- Other

### Creative Activities

- Arts/crafts (paint, woodwork, knit)
- Music (sing, play an instrument)
- Photography
- Creative writing
- Drama
- Dance
- Other

### Spectator Activities

- Watch sports
- Go to a play/museum/concert
- Go to a movie
- Trivia
- Board games
- Cards
- Other

### Outdoor Activities

- Picnic/cookout
- Hiking
- Water sports/boating
- Gardening
- Fishing
- Other

### Some ways to get ideas:

- Look through your community recreation guide
- Look for free and low-cost events in the newspaper
- Ask people to talk about what they like to do



## Plan

Use this table to start making your plan for dealing with boredom:

What I would like to do	Barriers and challenges	Possible solutions	Action plan
Go bowling	Do not know any bowlers	Find a league	-Pick up a community recreation booklet -Ask at bowling alley
Gardening	-Live in apartment -It costs money	Start with potted plants	Visit city gardens and volunteer

### This week, I will...

- Make a list of three things that I can do on my own, without much planning.
- Keep the list where I will see it when I am bored.
- Complete my action plan.



## Chapter 14: Coping with Strong Feelings



- ✓ **Learn about dealing with strong feelings**
- ✓ **Begin planning strategies to deal with strong feelings**

### Information

All human beings have feelings. Feelings are useful. They help us to survive by getting us to pay attention to what is happening around us. We might feel anxious or angry when someone does something that is threatening. The anxiety motivates us to do something to protect ourselves, and the anger gives us the energy we need to do what we need to do.

Strong emotions can be helpful, but only if they happen for the right reasons. Anxiety does not help if we are not really in danger. Anger is only useful if there is something important to fight for, and you can do it in a way that won't cause more trouble.

#### ***Can you see strong emotions coming?***

Sometimes things surprise us. However, most of the time there is a pattern to what makes us feel upset. If you think about it carefully, you may be able to identify some situations, places or people that often spell trouble for you. Once you know what kinds of situations are difficult, it may be possible to plan ahead to avoid problems. Trying to do better once a situation happens may not be enough. We all need a plan to handle life's tough situations.



#### ***Drugs, Alcohol, and Dealing with Strong Emotion***

It is very common to use alcohol or other drugs as a way of dealing with strong emotions. If that was true for you, you may have noticed that a lot of strong feelings came back when the effect of the drugs or alcohol wore off and may even seem worse

when staying away from the alcohol or drugs. You may be out of practice in dealing with things without using drugs or alcohol. Although it seems difficult now, once you learn to manage your emotions, you will notice that you feel better and the problems that may have come with alcohol and drug use will not make matters worse.

Part of being a mature and healthy adult means taking responsibility for your feelings and your actions. You think things through and act carefully, rather than reacting in the moment. If you are living with the effects of brain injury, emotions may feel stronger, and managing them can be harder. It is important to learn new ways of dealing with strong emotion and getting the help that you need to do that.

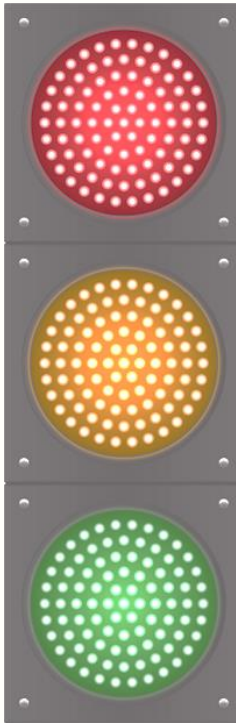
### ***Check In with Yourself Regularly***

One way to avoid becoming overwhelmed by your feelings is to stay in touch with them. Noticing a feeling when it is small will help you to deal with it before it becomes bigger. There are a lot of different ways a person can use to start to become more aware of how they are feeling. Here are some ideas to try to see what might be useful for you.

- Keep a journal of things that happen.
- Do a quick body scan relaxation. Take a few deep breaths and notice the tension in your body.
- Having a quiet moment over coffee to think about the day ahead.
- Try meditation.
- Telling a friend (or even talking to yourself) about something important that has happened.

### ***Stop and Think***

When you notice that you are having a strong feeling, taking a break from what is going on can be helpful. You might have to leave the situation, or just sit quietly where you are. Take a few deep breaths.



### **Stop**

### **Think**

Observe your feelings and what is happening around you. Do you know why you are feeling the way that you are? How strong is the feeling? Is it a small feeling, like being a little tense? Is it a medium feeling, but you are still able to listen to others and think, or is it a very strong feeling, so strong that you would have a hard time listening or thinking well?

### **Proceed with Caution**

When a feeling is very strong, the best thing to do is to focus on calming down and thinking things through before acting.

## **Know yourself**

Think back. You will probably be able to name the kind of situations that lead to strong or unpleasant feelings.

## **Practice expressing your feelings**

Letting others know how you are feeling takes time and practice. Going back to old habits of keeping your feelings bottled up or blowing up can be a warning sign of a setback.

## Worksheet: Coping with Strong Feelings



**Are there feelings you are struggling with?** What are they? Use this worksheet to think through and plan for ways to cope with strong feelings. The first two examples might help you.

<p><b>What I was feeling and what did I notice?</b>  <i>Angry. My jaw was clenched, and I was tense. My face was hot.</i></p>	<p><b>When does this happen?</b>  <i>Talking to my mother. I hate it when she tells me what to do. I am an adult.</i></p>	<p><b>How can I think differently about it?</b>  <i>Whatever happens, it is my choice. She is just trying to help.</i></p>
<p><b>What can I do?</b>  <i>Keep conversations brief.            Do not argue. Change the subject.            Say goodbye, hang up, or leave.</i></p>		

<p><b>What I was feeling and what did I notice?</b>  <i>Sad.</i></p>	<p><b>When does this happen?</b>  <i>Thinking about my failures, usually when I see how well my sister is doing.</i></p>	<p><b>How can I think differently about it?</b>  <i>I am making good progress.</i></p>
<p><b>What can I do?</b>  <i>Make a list of things I am doing well.</i></p>		

<b>What I was feeling and what did I notice?</b>	<b>When does this happen?</b>	<b>How can I think differently about it?</b>
<b>What can I do?</b>		
<b>What I was feeling and what did I notice?</b>	<b>When does this happen?</b>	<b>How can I think differently about it?</b>
<b>What can I do?</b>		
<b>What I was feeling and what did I notice?</b>	<b>When does this happen?</b>	<b>How can I think differently about it?</b>
<b>What can I do?</b>		



## Chapter 15: Journaling

### Goals

- ✓ **Learn how to keep a journal or diary**
- ✓ **Learn how keeping a journal can help you to learn about yourself and keep track of progress**

### Information

Thinking about making changes in your substance use is complicated. You are learning a lot about yourself, your body and your thoughts and feelings. It is hard to keep it all straight. Having a record can help you to sort out your thoughts and remember what happened. It can also help you to keep track of the changes you are making. Journals can be words on paper. They can also include artwork you create, such as a collection of pictures or images, recordings - anything that helps to remind you of important thoughts.

#### ***Here are some things to keep in mind that will make journaling easier:***

- Start with something you are grateful for, or that reminds you of why you are doing all of this work.
- Try not to worry about what it looks like to other people. This is for you!
- Take a picture that reminds you of what is happening in your life, or something you find beautiful or challenging.
- Make voice recordings instead of writing things down.

#### ***Ways to make keeping a journal easier:***

##### **Check the ones that might work for you:**

- You and your counselor can make notes together
- Voice record and say a few sentences each day
- Plan to write in your journal at the same time each day
- Use music to help you relax and stimulate creativity
- Make copies of the form on the next page and use it daily

### ***How does keeping a journal help?***

- + Keep track of my thoughts & feelings
- + Remember information
- + Think through problems
- + See my progress
- + Remember what I have done well
- + Keep track of ways to improve



### **What might keep you from journaling?**

- Too busy
- Nervous about seeing a blank page
- Reading or writing problems
- Do not see a benefit in it
- Sometimes I do not like what I wrote
- I do not want a written record
- Fear
- Forget to make a note - do not think of it
- Do not know what to write
- Worried that someone will find and read it



You might want to pull out the next page and ask your counselor to make enough copies for a week to get you started. Put them in a binder and have a special spot at home to keep the binder.

These are some suggestions for how to set up your daily journal and how it could work for you. Do not think too hard about it, even a few thoughts a day will help. You can write more on the back of the page if you have more to say.

**Remember: Your journal is for your eyes only. You do not have to share it with anyone.**



# Worksheet: Daily Journal



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Today I...** List your main activities. Give yourself credit for all of your efforts. You deserve it. \_\_\_\_\_

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**I am grateful for...** It could be progress toward a goal, something beautiful you saw, something nice someone said. Do not worry if it seems small. Was there a coping skill you learned or tried, something you learned about yourself?

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**I've been thinking about...** \_\_\_\_\_

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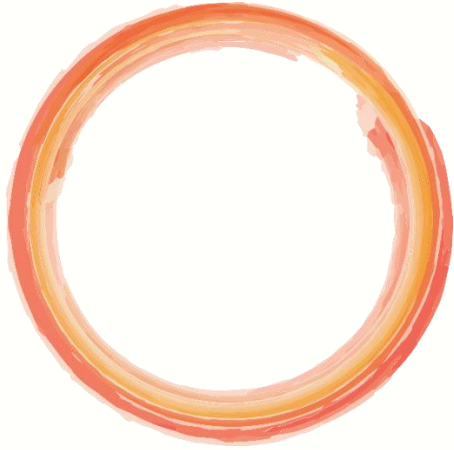
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**Questions or things I want to remember to do...** \_\_\_\_\_

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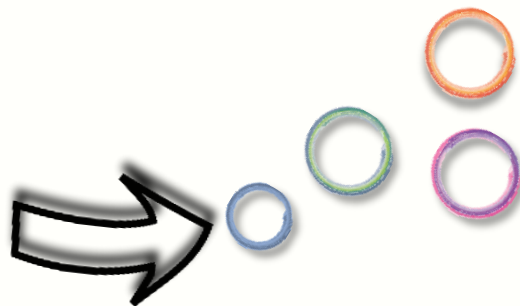
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## Part 4: Skills for Maintaining Your Health and Relationships

Keeping healthy – both inside and out – is important for many reasons. The healthier you are, the more you will enjoy life. Also, with better health, you will have more energy to do the things you want to do every day.

There are many skills that you can work on to take better care of yourself. The following six chapters will cover some of the most important “self-care” strategies.





## Chapter 16: Mindfulness

- ✓ **Introduce the concept of mindfulness**
- ✓ **Give an example of a relaxation technique**

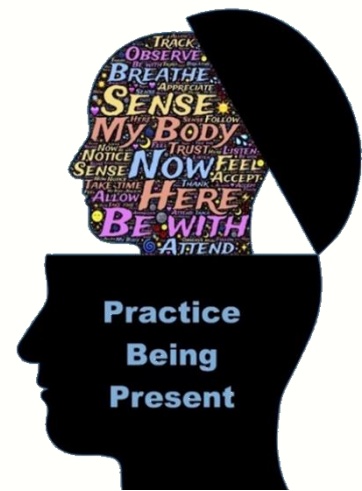
### Information

Have you ever noticed that the upsetting thoughts you have are not about what is happening in the present moment? It might be just an ordinary day and you are thinking about something bad that happened in the past. You could be kicking yourself for something or worrying about the future. Most of the time, the thoughts that make us sad or anxious are about things that happened in the past, or what we are worried will happen in the future. Remembering the past can help us to stop repeating mistakes. Preparing for the future is a good thing. If you find that you are stuck in the past or the future and it is not really helping you do better, focusing on today would probably feel better, and be more helpful.

Once you tune in to how you are thinking, you may notice that your mind has gotten into habits that are not very helpful. It might be a trigger to use a substance. Having a way to switch mental gears could be something to help you meet your goals.

Being mindful, or mindfulness practice means focusing your attention on what is happening now, without trying to change it. Just notice it and accept it. That can be a real challenge when your life is not going the way that you would like, or there are things in the future that have you feeling worried. We all need a break from our worries. We can let them go for a minute and find things that are happening now. This helps us realize that whatever happened in the past is still in the past. Whatever may happen is not happening right now. This gives us freedom to feel okay in this moment.

So how do you get out of your head? It takes practice, but the practice does not have to be a big chore. Just taking some moments in your day to consciously stop the chatter in your mind and be aware of what is around you can be enough to make a difference. You will learn that you don't have to let your mind go wild. You have tools to bring your mind back to a happier and more productive place.



## Check-In: How Do You Know When You Are Stuck in Your Thoughts or Feeling Tense?

Check any of these that sound like you:

- My mind races with thoughts about something I regret in the past
- I think about something that made me angry
- I think about something that made me sad
- I kick myself for something I did
- I think about something bad that might happen
- I worry I will not be able to do something I have to do
- My muscles get tense
- My heart pounds
- My face gets hot
- I start to breathe fast

Other \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Taking a Mindful Moment***

The first step in getting out of your head is tuning in to what is happening now, without being critical or trying to change things. You can try this breathing exercise.

Focus on your breathing. Feel your breath going in your nose. What does it feel like? Do you feel the breath going down your windpipe to your lungs? Just follow your breath in



and out. Can you feel the air going through your nose, out of your mouth?

Just taking a few natural breaths and focusing can help you to shift your mind. You will probably get distracted by your thoughts. That is okay. Just go back to your breath.

If sitting still makes you antsy, you can do this with walking. Just focus on what it feels like to take a step. Walk as slowly as you can and feel all of your muscles at work. You can count your steps. You will probably get distracted, but do not worry. Just go back to thinking about walking.

In fact, you can do this with whatever you are doing. If you are washing the dishes, try to zoom in on what the water and suds feel like. Notice everything you can about the dishes you are handling.

This simple practice will teach you that you do not have to stay with worried or anxious thoughts. You can focus your thoughts on now and start to feel better. Be patient with yourself. It takes time to put this kind of strategy to work.

Here are some good resources to learn more about mindfulness. There are all sorts of recordings and videos that can walk you through practicing. Finding one that you like can make mindfulness practice a great break from day-to-day stress. A quick search on google or YouTube for 'beginner mindfulness' or 'learning to meditate' will bring up loads of options. Try a few. Start with the short ones—and experiment to see what you like. There are some nice meditation Apps that you can get. An excellent free App, called 'Insight Timer' has loads of options. You can find it at: <https://insighttimer.com>.

### ***More suggestions for relaxing mindful practice:***

**Relaxed Breathing:** This works in two ways. It actually helps you breathe as if you were already relaxed, which sets your body on its way to letting go of tension; and it gives your mind something to focus on, which helps to relax you even more. Try the following exercises and then use the ones that work best for you.

1. Find a comfortable, quiet place to sit or lie down; make sure that you are in a comfortable position, but don't cross your legs, your back should be supported.
2. Close your eyes or find a spot on the wall to focus on.
3. Put one hand over your belly button, and the other on your chest.
4. Take in a slow deep breath through your nose; the hand on your chest should stay still; the hand on your belly should rise slowly.
5. Imagine that your lungs are filling from the bottom up.
6. Let your breath out slowly through your mouth.
7. Take another breath only when you feel the urge to breathe; try to breathe with a slow natural rhythm.
8. Take ten slow, relaxed breaths; each time, picture your lungs filling with air from the bottom up.

### **Tips for relaxed breathing:**

- Your tummy should go out when you are breathing in.
- Your chest and shoulders should be still.
- Your breathing should be at a comfortable, natural pace.



## ***Tickling your taste buds***



We often eat without really thinking about what we are tasting. What do you think will happen if you stop and just focus on the sensations of eating?

Get a strongly flavored hard candy. Sour or cinnamon flavors work well. Roll the candy around on your tongue and notice how it tastes. Push it to different places on your tongue. Does that change the flavor?

### **Play a mindful game:**

If find yourself thinking about things that are upsetting, you can help your mind to settle on the present moment by taking in your surroundings.

You can try playing this game:

- ✓ List 5 things you can see
- ✓ List 4 things you can hear
- ✓ List 3 things you can touch
- ✓ List 2 things you can smell
- ✓ List 1 thing you can taste

Puzzles and games are good exercises to shift your mind away from things that are troubling. Having a book of puzzles, a jigsaw puzzle, or some juggling balls can be a good way to focus your attention on the present moment.

## Worksheet: Relaxing Your Mind



**What are your top signs of feeling tense or being in your head?** List them here.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Did any of the mindfulness practices discussed sound good to you? List them here.

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What kinds of activities do you find soothing or engaging? Puzzles, bubble baths, doodling? Make a list of activities you can use when you need to focus your mind.

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Take a few minutes to reflect on how learning a mindful practice could help you meet your goals. Is there something you could start doing? Write your plan here.

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## Chapter 17: Problem Solving

### Goals

- ✓ Learn that effective problem-solving is an important life skill
- ✓ Understand how this skill will help you meet your goals

### Information

*There are six steps to problem-solving: D – B – R – A – I – N*

1. **Define the problem** Once you have decided that a problem exists, take your time. Think about it and see if you can get to the root of it. A good way to do this is to break a problem down into its parts. Try to write it as a statement, beginning with you. For example, I am bored, or I would like a job. Then try to answer these questions:
  - What are the pros and cons of the situation now? (It is probably not ALL bad.)
  - What do I need?
  - What do I want?
  - What are the barriers?
2. **Brainstorm possible solutions** Write down as many possible solutions as you can, but do not be too critical of yourself. Ask people close to you for some suggestions.
3. **Rate the possible solutions** Review the pros and cons of each solution. Consider them all carefully, then put them in order. Start with the one you like the most, all the way down to the one you like the least.
4. **Arrive at a plan** Your favorite solution might also have a barrier of some kind to achieving it. Your counselor, group, or someone close to you can help find a way around any obstacles.
5. **Implement the plan** Follow your plan and adjust if needed.
6. **Notes for next time** There is always something new to learn. It is important to review the results of your plan so that you are ready if a similar problem comes up in the future.

**Example:** Andrew likes spending time with friends. He has set a goal of not using cannabis during the day. Some of the guys he usually hangs out with smoke cannabis during the day, and sometimes drink during the day as well. On the one hand he does not really like being on his own all of the time. On the other, he knows, at least for the time being, hanging out with those guys will make it harder to meet his goal.

**Here is how Andrew dealt with the problem**

**(D – B – R – A – I – N):**



**1.** Andrew **defined** it: I want to get out and do stuff, but I do not want to go alone. Right now, most of the people I hang out with drink and smoke cannabis. He broke it down into parts.

*What do I want?*

- To spend time with friends
- To avoid using cannabis during the day
- To have some fun
- To keep my old friends

*What do I need?*

- People who want to do the same kind of stuff I like, but without cannabis or alcohol, or
- To be able to be around people who are using, and still meet my goal of not using.

*What are the barriers?*

- It is still hard for me to pass up using
- If I don't hang out with my friends, I am pretty much alone
- My friends call to ask me to hang out

**2.** Andrew **brainstormed** it: He discussed his situation with his counselor and came up with lots of possible solutions. Here are a few:

*Talk to my friends and let them know what my goals are.*

- Pros: They might be supportive and make it easier when I am with them.
- Cons: They might be discouraging, think I am trying to be better than they are, and stop being my friends.

*Try to get my friends to do something with me when they are not smoking cannabis.*

- Pros: Great if it worked
- Cons: If they have cannabis, they will smoke it and I do not want to tell them what to do.

*Get in touch with my cousin who does not use cannabis and make a plan.*

- Pros: He is good company
- Cons: It takes time and bus fare to get to his place, and he might be busy

*Find a self-help meeting to go to.*

- Pros: Fills time; makes it possible to meet people
- Cons: Feel awkward at new places. Some people who go to meetings are not ready to stop and they use anyway

*Find things I like to do in the community, and hopefully meet some people.*

- Pros: Doing something fun
- Cons: Awkward to meet new people; might mean traveling

**D**

**B**

**R**

**A**

**I**

**N**

**3.** Andrew **rated** the possible solutions: He looked at his list and realized that he had to make a plan to solve the problem and achieve his goal. He was not really sure about what his friends might say, and he knew he needed to be smart about spending time with his friends who use substances. He thought that it would be good to make some new friends. He used these ideas to make his plans.

**4.** Andrew **arrived** at a plan: He figured that it would be easier to say no to his friends' invitations if he had something definite on his schedule. It is easier for him to turn down hanging out if he has somewhere else to be. Here is the plan he made:

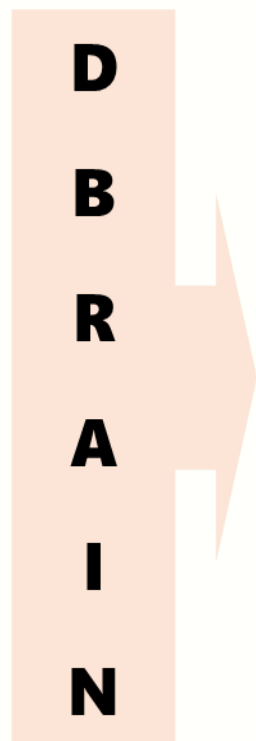
- Practice assertive ways to say *no thanks* to his friends.
- Practice with his counselor ways to say "no" even when his friends keep asking.
- Brainstorm a list of possible activities. He decided he might like to volunteer at the dog shelter and also see what is happening at his community center.
- Make a standing date with his cousin for Monday night to watch a video and have dinner. There is usually a good game on.

- Ask around for a self-help meeting on Wednesday nights. His cousin agreed to go with him the first time.
- Make a list of errands, like shopping that he can do on Thursdays.
- Look for a volunteer job twice a week.

5. Andrew **implemented** the plan:

- He made the call to his cousin who was happy that there was something he could do to be supportive.
- He and his counselor found meetings he could attend.
- He wrote times and instructions in his notebook so he would not forget.
- He applied for a number of volunteer positions.
- He talked with his sister and his parents about visiting them on the weekend.
- He tried walking dogs for the local shelter and thought the people there were pretty nice. He agreed to help them with a fund raiser.

6. Andrew made **notes** for next steps: Andrew did find that it got easier each time he



said “no” to his friends. After a few weeks they stopped asking, but he sometimes missed them and wondered what they are doing now. He talked with his counselor about some of the changes he was making but still felt he was losing a little of something he liked.

Andrew was shy at self-help meetings - a problem he had not realized. He noticed that when he was high, he didn’t talk much. Andrew and his counselor worked on tips for making small talk and meeting people.

Andrew found that he feels most comfortable being social when he is active, when he is doing something — he liked volunteering with dogs and talking with the other volunteers about the dogs. He plans to look for other volunteer jobs that will help him meet people who have interests like his own.

# Worksheet: Problem Solving



**Think of a problem in your life that you would like to solve.** Use the same steps as in the example with Andrew.

**1:** Define the problem: \_\_\_\_\_

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What is happening now? \_\_\_\_\_

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Break the problem down into parts:

<b>What do I want?</b>	<b>Barriers</b>
<b>What do I need?</b>	<b>Barriers</b>

**2 and 3:** Brainstorm and rate possible solutions:

<b>Possible Solution</b>	<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<b>Possible Solution</b>	<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>

Possible Solution	Pros	Cons

Arrive at a plan:


Implement the plan:


Notes for next steps:

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## Chapter 18: Staying Healthy

### Goals

- ✓ **Get basic information about eating right**
- ✓ **Get information about physical activity**
- ✓ **Get information about getting a good night's rest**
- ✓ **Start setting personal goals for staying healthy**

### Information

#### ***Why is eating right important to being healthy?***

There is an expression; "You are what you eat". If you feed your body good stuff it will reward you with feeling more energetic. Feeling good is easier when your body is healthy. Staying at a healthy weight can reduce your risk of some illnesses (like diabetes) and make your daily activities easier. If you are still using drugs or alcohol, paying extra attention to your diet is really wise. Some problems that come from substance use are the result of not eating well. Many people who drink alcohol in high amounts are low in important vitamins such as thiamine. This can lead to problems with brain function. People who use stimulants or opioids may miss meals, which wears a body down.

#### ***Eating right***

The body needs more than 50 different vitamins and nutrients every day. To get them you need to eat a variety of foods. There are lots of guides online to help you to make good choices. Here are two:

- Dietary guidelines for Americans: <https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/>
- My Plate Plan: <https://www.myplate.gov/myplate-plan>

The main food groups are grains, vegetables, fruits, milk and meat products, and alternatives. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a diet that includes fresh fruit, vegetables and calcium-rich foods like low-fat milk or fat-free yogurt, as well as protein (like meat and fish) will keep you healthy. While comfort foods

or fast food are okay once in a while, eating health food most of the time can make a big difference in how well your body works and how you feel.

### **Basic tips for when you are making changes to your eating**

- ✓ *Make small changes* over a period of days so you will stay with it.
- ✓ *If you do not feel like eating:* Do not force yourself to eat a lot at one time. Have small meals that include foods that look good to you and eat regularly to keep your energy up.
- ✓ *If you find you want to eat a lot:* It is common for people to eat too much when they are feeling stressed, bored, upset, or tired. If you find that you are using food as a coping strategy, then try to problem solve using other strategies, such as mindfulness.
- ✓ *Choose foods with various textures and colors* and arrange servings attractively on a plate. This will make eating more enjoyable.
- ✓ *Eat breakfast:* A lot of people skip this meal, but it is important to eat something in the morning to give your body enough energy to start the day. You do not have to eat right away, but you should eat something within the first hour of getting out of bed. Also, try to eat something that contains protein. Protein breaks down slowly and keeps your energy level higher longer than other food groups. Leftovers from dinner might make a good breakfast. Here are some other examples of good breakfast foods:



#### **Simple Breakfast 1**

Fresh fruit  
Low-fat yogurt  
Whole wheat toast or  
muffin

#### **Simple Breakfast 2**

Fresh fruit  
Whole wheat bagel with  
peanut butter  
Skim milk

#### **Blender Drink**

1 cup of skim milk  
1/2 cup of fresh fruit  
1 tablespoon protein powder  
Honey or sugar to sweeten



- ✓ *Eat often and snack right:* Having a light meal or a healthy snack every three or four hours keeps your body supplied with energy all day and keeps you from feeling tired. It also helps prevent mood swings and cravings. Snacks should be light and include protein, such as low-fat milk, cheese, yogurt, and lean meats.

### Snack Ideas:

Fresh fruit  
Small handful of almonds  
Low-fat yogurt

Piece of cheese (size of thumb) and 4 crackers  
Piece of lean meat on a piece of whole wheat bread  
Glass of low-fat milk

- ✓ *Keep sweets to a minimum:* Candy bars, cookies, and other foods high in sugar may give you energy for a short while, but then they will make you feel tired. They do not contain the nutrition you need, and they may spoil your appetite for healthier foods.
- ✓ *Cut down on fat:* Fatty foods are foods that are fried, like French fries and fried fish. They also include high fat meats like some sausages. Eating high fat foods can also leave you feeling tired.



- ✓ *Limit your caffeine intake:* Do not drink more than 3 or 4 servings of caffeine a day. That is one small cup (about the size of your fist) of coffee, a can of cola and small cup of tea. A lot of soft drinks contain caffeine — some more than coffee. Decaffeinated coffee has a very small amount of caffeine (about 3% of a regular cup of coffee). There is caffeine in some cold medicines, headache pills and weight loss products. So be careful and read the labels.

- ✓ *Drink enough liquid:* Your body is made up mostly of water. You need water to be healthy. Drink six to eight cups of water a day. If you do not like water, juice works too — but do not overdo the sugar. Cola and coffee do not count as healthy liquids.

## ***Getting some physical activity***

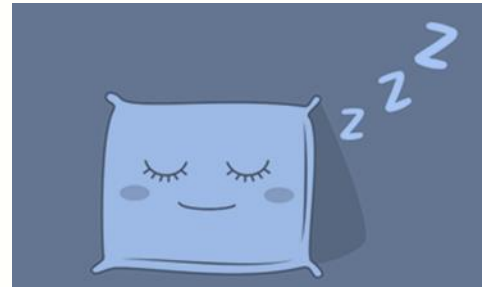
If there is one thing that will keep you and your brain healthy **IT IS EXERCISE**. All it takes to be healthy is about one hour of activity in the day. That may sound like a lot, but introduce activities ten minutes at a time here, ten minutes at a time there - before you know it, you are more active. Even if you have some difficulties with mobility there are lots of ways to add physical activity to your daily schedule. Your plan does not need to be complicated. Start off slow and build up slowly - that is the best way to make a lasting change in your habits.

- Take a ten-minute walk in the morning. Walking and propelling a wheelchair are both good forms of moderate exercise.
- A short routine of stretches that you can do in the morning or during the day will keep you flexible. If you have pain or limited mobility, ask your doctor or a physiotherapist for the stretches that would be best for you.
- Take a few breaks during the day to walk or wheel.
- Get off the bus or train a stop or two early, or park so you have to walk a little farther.
- Dance to your favorite music for ten minutes.
- Watch an exercise program on TV.
- Set a goal to find at least one active form of group recreation — dancing, hiking, or walking.



## ***Making sure you get enough sleep***

Getting a good night's sleep is important. Drugs and alcohol often affect your sleep patterns. You may find that you are wide awake at night when you want to get to sleep and tired or sleepy during the day. It is normal to have some sleepless nights. Do not let it worry you — what keeps most people awake is trying too hard to sleep!



**Make a schedule for going to sleep and waking up.** This helps train your body to feel tired at the right time. If you have a bad night, try not to sleep in. It is better to deal with the fatigue for a day and get yourself back in the right rhythm. Take a brief nap if you feel the need.

**Limit your naps to under an hour.** Avoid napping in the evening. You might feel tired and need to nap. Most people get tired in the afternoon. Resting is not bad, but if you do nap keep it short. Do not nap after 3 p.m. in the afternoon. Sleeping too much during the day will keep you from getting the right kind of deep sleep at night.

**Avoid caffeine 4-6 hours before bedtime.** Even if you think caffeine does not affect you it is a good idea to avoid it before bed. Remember that this includes chocolate, tea, and soft drinks.

**Avoid heavy, spicy, or sugary foods 4-6 hours before bedtime.** These can affect your ability to stay asleep.

**Exercise regularly, but not right before bed.** Regular exercise, particularly in the afternoon, can help deepen sleep. Strenuous exercise within 2 hours before bedtime, however, can decrease your ability to fall asleep.

**Make sure your bedroom is a comfortable place to be.** Adjust the temperature, get a comfortable bed, arrange for the room to be quiet and dark enough to get to sleep.

**Reserve your bed for sleep and sex.** Try not to use your bed for reading or work or watching TV. These are activities that can keep you awake at night. If you need some background noise at night, turn on the radio. Put it on a timer so it shuts itself off.

**Eat a small snack.** Warm milk (without cocoa) and foods high in the amino acid tryptophan, such as bananas, may help you to sleep.

**Practice relaxation techniques before bed.** Deep breathing and other relaxation exercises may help relieve anxiety and reduce muscle tension.



**Take a warm shower or bath before bed.** Warming up your body can make you feel more relaxed and sleepier.

**Read something relaxing.** Choose a book that you can put down easily and that leaves you in a peaceful mood. Reading from a book of poems, devotions, or religious text can be helpful. Magazines with short articles are also a good choice. But remember; do not bring the book to bed as it may keep you up.

**Avoid staying in bed if you are tossing and turning or worrying.** It is better to get out of bed and do something relaxing like reading until you feel drowsy. Go back to bed and try to fall asleep again. Sometimes writing a list of worries and telling yourself you will get to them tomorrow will help you to put problems out of your mind. Try a relaxation exercise (see Chapter 16) or move to a chair and read something calming. Go back to bed when you feel sleepy. It may be helpful to work with your counselor to develop a coping strategy for worrying at night.

**If you wake up in the middle of the night:** Most people wake up one or two times a night for various reasons. That is normal. If you find that you wake up in the middle of the night and cannot get back to sleep within 15–20 minutes, get out of bed and read something calming. Avoid getting into the habit of eating late at night because your body will then begin to expect a midnight snack. Do not watch TV. It is too easy to get involved in a program that will keep you awake.

**If you have nightmares, flashbacks, or dreams about using:** It is very common to have flashbacks of past problems or nightmares while you are in recovery. These experiences are normal. Talk with your counselor and doctor and make a coping plan.

## Worksheet: Staying Healthy



**Name three things you can do this week to start eating better (such as eat breakfast, choose a healthy snack, drink more water):**

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

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

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

Name three things you can do to get a good night's rest (such as set a regular bedtime, relax before bed, make sure my room is a comfortable temperature):

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

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

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

Name three things you can do to increase your physical activity (such as take the stairs, walk ten minutes in the morning, get off the bus one stop early):

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

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

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



## Chapter 19: Being Your Own Best Friend



- ✓ **Learn that what you say to yourself matters**
- ✓ **Start to think about your own self-talk**
- ✓ **Practice some helpful self-talk**

### Information

Do you remember a great teacher, coach, or friend? If so, it is probably because they helped you in one or more of these ways:

- Helped you see what is possible
- Predicted that you would be successful
- Told you what you did right
- Gave you specific tips about how to improve
- Encouraged you to keep trying even when things did not work out
- Helped you learn from your mistakes
- Listened to your feelings without being critical

What would you say to a friend who is having a tough time? The truth is, most of us are nicer to our friends than we are to ourselves. We do not expect our friends to be perfect and we try to help them feel better when they are discouraged. So why do we tend to kick ourselves when we are down? Having negative self-talk does not mean that there is something wrong with you. Actually, it is just a part of being human. The first step in being a better friend to yourself is to notice what you are saying to yourself, and then consider what you can do to change the pattern.

#### **Do you ever hear yourself saying things like this?**

- I will probably just screw this up too...
- I cannot do that; it is way too hard
- I am not good at these things
- I am an idiot
- No one will like me
- Anyone can do the stuff I can do
- I am not like other people

#### **How often do you say things like this to yourself?**

- + I did a good job
- + Everyone makes mistakes
- + I am a good person
- + I am good at this
- + My feelings are important
- + I tried.
- + I can learn from this

## Worksheet: Being Your Own Best Friend



**Think about the way you talk to yourself in new or uncomfortable situations.** Is it negative self-talk or positive self-talk that you hear? Use this chart to help you move through a negative approach and find a positive approach.

<b>Negative Self-Talk</b> When I do not like me, I tell myself... <i>How could I make that mistake?</i>	<b>Positive Self-Talk</b> When I make a mistake, I can say to myself... <i>Everyone makes mistakes; next time I can...</i>

## Check-In: Being Your Own Best Friend Takes Practice



If negative self-talk is a problem for you, you might choose one or more of these things to practice on your own. It helps to have someone you trust work on his with you.

1. Make a list of things that went right. Give yourself credit for everything you are doing for yourself, even if it seems small. Somedays just getting up in the morning is a challenge. Give yourself credit!
2. When something tough is happening, imagine what you would say to a good friend in that situation. Make a habit of checking in with your good friend regularly.
3. Use your sense of humor and create a silly character for your inner critic. When you hear that negative self-talk, imagine a funny voice. That makes it easier to realize that the inner critic is a part of you that you can observe and have some control over.
4. Create a character with encouragement as a superpower. Call on the super-hero's superpower when you are feeling down.
5. Take a mindfulness break. Breath and take a step back from the negative self-talk.
6. Remind yourself of something that makes you proud.
7. Check out a self-compassion meditation.



There is more information about this in the mindfulness chapter.



8. Give yourself a break and do something soothing. For example, take a walk, a bubble bath, have a healthy snack, sing a song, or listen to some music.





## Chapter 20: Building Self-Esteem



- ✓ Understand the basics of self-esteem
- ✓ Learn that you have good reasons to feel good about yourself
- ✓ Learn that only you can improve how you feel about yourself

### Information

Self-esteem is really what you think about yourself. What is your overall sense of worth? When you feel good about yourself you will see all of the ways that you can succeed and find that you are doing better than ever. People who feel good about themselves give themselves the credit they deserve for all of the little things that they do. The big stuff is nice, but it is the day-to-day stuff that sets us up for success.

Where does self-esteem come from? People who have high self-esteem know that no one is perfect. They change what they can and want to change, and they accept the stuff they cannot change. It is possible to accept your challenges, get past a mistake and see your strengths. For example, take pride in the way you are showing up to do the hard work of making changes. If you did not do that today, tomorrow's success would not be possible.

Your experiences, the important people around you and our society help to shape who you are and how you feel about yourself. Sometimes building self-esteem is a matter of changing how you think about yourself, your history and what others have told you. You might have some negative beliefs about yourself that just are not true.

People with high self-esteem are aware of how they talk to themselves about themselves. They accept themselves the way that they are. They take responsibility for what they do, they live their lives with a sense of purpose, and they know what they value and live by their values.

## Check-In: Start a Conversation



**Use these to start a conversation about self-esteem with someone you trust.**

- I give myself compliments whenever I can: “Good job for doing the dishes” or “I really do look good today.”
- I take time to celebrate my success when I make a good decision.
- I spend my time with friends who like me for me.
- I stay away from people who don’t treat me with respect or just seem to want something from me.
- I stand up for myself without putting other people down.
- Once I understand a mistake, I admit what happened and then move on.
- I let others live their lives without judging them. I do not have to join them if I know it will not be good for me.
- I accept and thank others for positive comments. I do not argue. It is possible they see something good that you didn’t realize.
- Instead of kicking myself I look for ways to improve things.
- I make self-talk my best friend.
- I know my friends and family are important, but I don’t think what I need is more important than what they need.
- I look for healthy ways to be good to myself.

**Here are some things that can stand in the way of feeling good about yourself. Do you do any of them?**

- I do not stand up for myself even when I feel resentful or hurt.
- I bully myself with thoughts about not being good enough (smart, fast, etc.).
- I do not ask for what I want or need because I put other people first or feel I do not deserve it.
- I do not ask for help when I need it because I am scared, feel ashamed or feel I do not deserve help.
- I tell myself that things will not change.
- I tell myself not to try something new because I think I will fail.
- I compare my successes to other people’s successes.
- I try to hide who I really am and what I really feel.



**Some ideas for getting started.** Here are things a person could do to boost their self-esteem. Check any or all you think would work for you:

- You have already done step one!** You are working on yourself. Celebrate that for just a minute.
- Take care of your body.** Bathe, wash, and comb my hair and dress in a way that makes you feel proud.
- Make a list** of your strengths and what you value in life.
- Think about** the ways you can live out your values.
- Do something you are good at.** Maybe you are good at cleaning, cooking, art, or making people laugh. Just do it!
- Try something** you do not think you are good at just for the experience.
- Help someone else.** It could be small, like opening a door for someone.
- Give someone a compliment** Watch how much your words mean to another person.
- Think about** what you want for your future.

**Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Worksheet: Building Self-Esteem



List all your strengths and the things you do that make you feel good:

<b>My strengths</b> What do you like about yourself?	<b>Feeling good</b> What things do you do that make you feel good?
<i>I have a good sense of humor</i>	<i>I hang around people who enjoy my sense of humor</i>

Do you have any thoughts about yourself that might be holding you back? What are they, and how can you replace them with thinking that is more productive?

<b>What is the thought?</b>	<b>How can I think about this instead?</b>

Is there anything you beat yourself up about? What can you say to yourself that would be kinder and more helpful?

What do I beat myself up for?	How can I be nicer instead?

Work with someone you trust to create a challenge for yourself that gets at a negative belief. Nothing too big, but something that you might not do otherwise. For example, if you think you are not good talking to strangers, make a point of asking someone for the time.

What is your plan? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Chapter 21: Building Healthy Relationships

- ✓ Learn about healthy boundaries in relationships
- ✓ Learn what it means to intrude on personal boundaries
- ✓ Learn how to bring relationships with others into balance

### Information

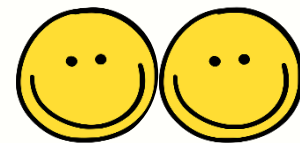
The amount of sharing and privacy between people is what makes up the boundaries in a relationship. Boundaries help you define what you are comfortable with and how you would like to be treated by others.

#### ***Personal Space***

This is the amount of physical space people like to have around them and how much physical contact they like to have. Personal space is different for everyone and may change depending on the relationship or where they are. Personal space might also depend on a person's culture, background, or even personal history. Some people do not mind when a friend pats them on the back or touches their shoulder. However, they would be uncomfortable if someone they just met did this. Some people hug friends, and other people are uncomfortable with that. There is no right or wrong.

When a person has good boundaries, they respect others' personal space and watch out for signs that a person is uncomfortable. If you reach out to pat or hug someone and they step away from you, or pull away, or even change their facial expression - they could be uncomfortable. Just give them their space by stepping back. If you are not sure what a person feels okay with, just ask.

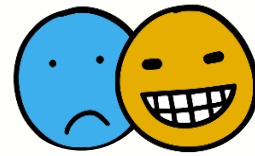
When a relationship has ***healthy boundaries***, the people involved are able to share their thoughts and ideas, give and receive affection, and give and receive help. Things might change in a relationship from day to day, or over time. If problems develop, each person helps to solve it. Most of the



Healthy

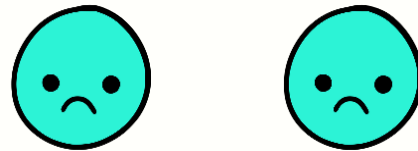
time things feel balanced and right. If you are the one giving support today, you feel confident that if you need support, the other person will do what can for you.

When a relationship has ***collapsed boundaries***, things feel uneven. One person is feeling unable to be honest, feels used, or has trouble remembering what they want or need. One person may feel that they are totally in charge of what happens.



**Collapsed**

When a relationship has ***rigid boundaries***, people may feel isolated. Neither person feels willing or able to share their thoughts, ideas, or feelings. There is a lack of trust.



**Rigid**

Use the self-assessment in this chapter to learn more about personal boundaries.

## Check-In: What Do You Do to Keep Healthy Boundaries?



- I wait to see if I can trust someone before I tell thing personal stuff about myself.
- I do not go against my own values to please someone else.
- I try to be fair, and don't take or do things just because I can.
- I know that in the long run, things I do for my friends are things they would also do for me when they can.
- The gifts I give are to show appreciation or affection to someone I care about.
- I pay attention to when I'm feeling resentful and stand up for myself.
- I think things through myself. I do not let people tell me what to think.
- I do not let others tell me what is important.
- I understand that I have to tell people what I need. I do not expect them to read my mind.
- If something does not feel right, I say no.
- I let myself trust other people, after I have had time to get to know someone.
- I realize some people may hurt me. Others will not. I ask for help when I need it.
- I offer people help when they seem to need it.
- I let myself trust people and have relationships that feel close.
- I can say no to requests in a nice way.
- I am okay when others say no to me.
- I have a lot of self-respect.
- I share responsibility and control.
- I share personal information as I get to know someone, and they share information with me the same way.
- I do not tolerate being abused.
- I know what I need and want and express myself assertively.
- I value my own opinions and are open to and value others' opinions.
- I ask for help when I need it.
- I do not push my own values aside to avoid being rejected.





## Worksheet: Building Healthy Relationships



**This worksheet is about boundaries.** Work through it and you will learn important information about yourself and your relationships.

What is important to me in my relationships with friends?

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What is important to me in my relationships with family?

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What is important to me in my relationships with a spouse or partner?

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Has my alcohol or drug use changed these important relationships?

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What do I need to change in my relationships to help me in my recovery?

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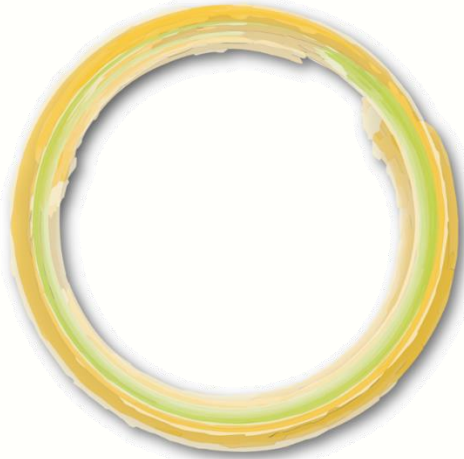
What steps do I want to take?

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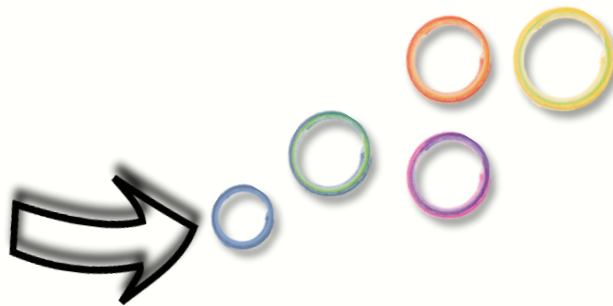
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## Part 5: Pulling It All Together

It can be very difficult to know for sure what will happen in the future. Even when we put a lot of effort into planning how we can live our lives, sometimes unexpected events do happen. This is a normal part of being human. The good news is that we can learn a lot when things do not work out. We just have to pay attention to the details.

For substance use goals, it is normal for people not to have success right away. They often have to learn from mistakes over time. The rest of this chapter will give you the information you need to learn from your experience when things do not work out the way you planned with your alcohol and drug use.





## Chapter 22: Learning from Setbacks

### Goals

- ✓ Learn that setbacks (when things do not work out as you hope) can teach you about how to improve your plans for making life better.
- ✓ Understand how your mind can play tricks on you when you have a “slip” or setback (when you drink or use drugs unexpectedly)
- ✓ Develop an emergency plan to get back on track with substance use goals

### Information

#### ***A setback is part of the process***

Having a setback (sometimes called a lapse) means a return to using either drugs or alcohol. It can be a single event or a few events. Having a setback does not mean that all your progress is gone. It does mean that something needs to be done to get back on track and stay there.

#### ***Early signs can be hard to see***

Look for decisions you make that do not seem important on their own but might bring you closer to a high-risk situation. You might even say to yourself that you have a good reason for getting into that situation. Really it is just a lie that you are telling yourself. This is how your mind can play tricks on you.

**Example:** Joe knows that if he takes the A-bus he will pass his old drinking buddy’s house and the place that they used to go to drink. He made a plan with his counselor to avoid this high-risk situation by taking a different bus home. One day, Joe had to stand in the rain waiting for his bus. When the A-bus stopped he thought “just this once...”. He started taking the A-bus each day, and after a week, he got off the bus in his buddy’s neighborhood. This led to his setback.

#### ***Signs on the road to setbacks:***

Here are some of the things that might let you know a setback is coming:



## Check-In: Am I At Risk for a Setback?



Check any of these factors that apply to you and your situation:

- Is my lifestyle out of balance? (Do I have too much stress, not enough coping supports, too much to do, too little to do?)
- Did a strong feeling lead to my setback?
- Was I trying to test myself?
- Were there people around me who influenced me to use alcohol or drugs?
- Was I thinking that I owed myself some pleasure?
- Did I decide to get into a high-risk situation?
- Did I feel discouraged about being sober?
- Did I think I could not handle a situation that came my way?
- Did I try to cope, but something went wrong?
- Did something happen that I did not expect?



### What to do in case of a setback:

Cut out this card and place it somewhere you can refer to it a few times each day. It is made to fit into your wallet. If you need larger print, use your computer printer or a copier to make it the size you need.

Use this card to refer to during the day.



**A setback is not a sign of failure.  
It is one stop on the road to success.**

1. Stop. Once you see it, stop it. Leave the situation and/or ask for help.
2. Look and listen. Pay attention to what is happening and learn from it.
3. Try to stay calm. A setback does not mean that your recovery has failed. One slip does not equal a total setback. It does not erase your progress.
4. Review your reasons for wanting to make changes ("How will I know it's Time?" worksheet)
5. Think about your past successes. This will help you know all is not lost.
6. Review the situation that led to the setback.
7. Try to let go of feelings of guilt and/or shame. Show yourself some love. Stopping is not easy.
8. Learn from what happened so you can cope better next time.

## Plan

It is a good idea to have an emergency plan. An emergency plan is a set of instructions you can refer to when you feel that you might have a setback, or you have had one.

**Leave the situation.** These are some places that I can go:

---

---

**Call someone.** These are people I can call:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Crisis numbers.** These are numbers that I can call:

Name/Agency \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Agency \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Agency \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Other instructions.** Information that might be useful:

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## Chapter 23: Finding Sources of Hope and Inspiration

### Goals

- ✓ Tackling hopelessness
- ✓ Finding hopefulness

### Information

As we mentioned in the previous chapter, when you are working hard on a goal, it is normal to have setbacks – times when your plans do not work out. During these times it is also normal to feel discouraged. We want to encourage you when you are discouraged about falling short of your goals that it is best to be active in finding things to inspire you. This can help you focus on positive things that will give you the strength to keep trying – to not give up.



**Idea:** A lot of what happens in life depends on the decisions you make. Some things we cannot control, but there are other things we can control. Two of the things we can control are:

- the thoughts we are thinking
- what we decide to do in any situation (what we call a person's "behaviors.")

The exercise in this chapter is in two parts:

- **Part A:** learning how you can choose thoughts and behaviors that *decrease hopelessness*.
- **Part B:** learning how you can choose thoughts and behaviors that *increase hopefulness*.

**Part A:** We are hoping that the following activities will help you figure out what takes away hope in your life and then do something about those sources of hopelessness.

**Look at these thoughts and behaviors and check the ones that apply to you:**

Thoughts	Example
<input type="checkbox"/> All or nothing thinking	I did not meet my drinking goal this week. I have failed. I might as well give up.
<input type="checkbox"/> Catastrophic thinking	The worst will happen, and I will not be able to cope.
<input type="checkbox"/> Negative self-talk	I cannot do anything right.
<input type="checkbox"/> Helplessness	There is nothing I can do to improve the situation.
<input type="checkbox"/> Passivity	Only my family member can make things better for me.

Behaviors	Example
<input type="checkbox"/> Fail to achieve goals	My goals were too high or vague.
<input type="checkbox"/> Fail to benefit from efforts	I did not get any support from myself or others for my efforts.
<input type="checkbox"/> Fail to try anything at all	I did nothing myself. I am waiting for others to make changes.
<input type="checkbox"/> Worrying	Spending a lot of time worrying and not acting

Pick one of the **thoughts** you checked above (the one that makes you feel most hopeless) and write it down here:

---

Now, list all the reasons you can think of that tell you this thought might not be true:

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The next time this thought comes up, you can think of more reasons this thought is not true and add it to the above list. Over time, you may have such a long list that the hopeless thought leaves you alone!

Here is an example: if you chose a thought like: *I did not meet my drinking goal this week. I have failed. I might as well give up.*

Reasons that indicate this thought is not true all of the time include:

- My counselor said: one slip is not a disaster; it is an opportunity to learn.
- I did not meet my goal for drinking this week, but I drank less than the previous week. That is progress!
- No one said it was going to be easy. Anything in life worth doing takes effort and determination.

---

You can do the same exercise with one of the behaviors that you have checked above.

Pick one **behavior** (the one that bothers you the most) and write it down here:

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Now think about a time when you did not do that behavior. You did something different instead. This is sometimes called an "exception." Describe the "exception" (alternative behavior) in this space:



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If you are having trouble remembering an alternative behavior, then use your imagination to come up with things that you could do instead of the behavior that bothers you, and list them here:

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---

Finally, plan how you can practice one of the alternative behaviors you have listed above in the next week.

The alternative behavior I will practice is: \_\_\_\_\_

The best day and time for my practice: \_\_\_\_\_

Who can support me in making it happen: \_\_\_\_\_

Details of how my support person can help me: \_\_\_\_\_

Here is an example of what a plan could look like:

The alternative behavior I will practice is: Asking a trusted support person for advice when I am worried about something.

The best day and time for my practice: The next time I start to worry about something. My next dentist appointment is this Thursday and that makes me nervous. So, I will talk to my community worker Wednesday afternoon to get support on how to manage my nerves.

Who can support me in making it happen: My community counselor. Also, my sister.

Details of how my support person can help me: Remind me that the dentist will manage my pain. Remind me that my teeth are important.

**Part B:** Once you have gotten some practice about how to address things that make you feel hopeless, then you can figure out how to find hope in your life. Here are some activities to help you with this goal:

1. To get your imagination going in a positive, hopeful direction, search the internet for inspirational stories. Stories about people being really being down and out and coming back to the life they want. Write down a few details about one of your favorite stories you find. Make sure you include what the person in the story did to beat the odds: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

*An example from history: a brief account of the career of American President Abraham Lincoln: <http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/education/failures.htm>*

2. Review and check all the thoughts and behaviors you have found helpful in the past:

Thoughts	Example
<input type="checkbox"/> Optimism	I believe that my situation will improve. I believe that treatment will be helpful.
<input type="checkbox"/> "Can do" thinking	I believe that I can improve my situation.
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-encouragement	I can do it. I can make these changes. I am a good person.
<input type="checkbox"/> Creativity	I can think of many ways to deal with any problem or get around any obstacle.
Behaviors	Example
<input type="checkbox"/> Achieving goals	Attaining success in making small steps toward my goals
<input type="checkbox"/> Reinforcing myself	Patting myself on the back Feeling good about myself
<input type="checkbox"/> Positive experiences	Enjoying time with others Engaging in activities that are pleasurable
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning from others	Hearing how others have survived or overcome difficult circumstances.

3. Pick a hopeful thought or behavior that you did not check above but that you feel most positive and hopeful about doing more of and write it down here:

\_\_\_\_\_

Now, make plans about how you are going to think the hopeful thought or do the positive behavior within the next week.

For a thought, capture the details of your plan by filling out the following blanks:

The thought I want to think more is: \_\_\_\_\_

The best day and time for my practice: \_\_\_\_\_

Who can support me in making it happen: \_\_\_\_\_

Details of how my support person can help me: \_\_\_\_\_

Here is an example of what a hopeful thinking plan might look like:

The thought I want to think more is: Optimistic/positive thinking

The best day and time for my practice: This Wednesday at 2 p.m. when I am meeting with my friend

Who can support me in making it happen: My friend, Sully

Details of how my support person can help me: Sully and I can talk about how my life is better now, compared to last year. I can record some of it on my smartphone so I can listen again.

For a behavior, capture the details of your plan by filling out the following blanks:

The positive behavior I will practice is: \_\_\_\_\_

The best day and time for my practice: \_\_\_\_\_

Who can support me in making it happen: \_\_\_\_\_

Details of how my support person can help me: \_\_\_\_\_

Here is an example of what a hopeful behavior plan might look like:

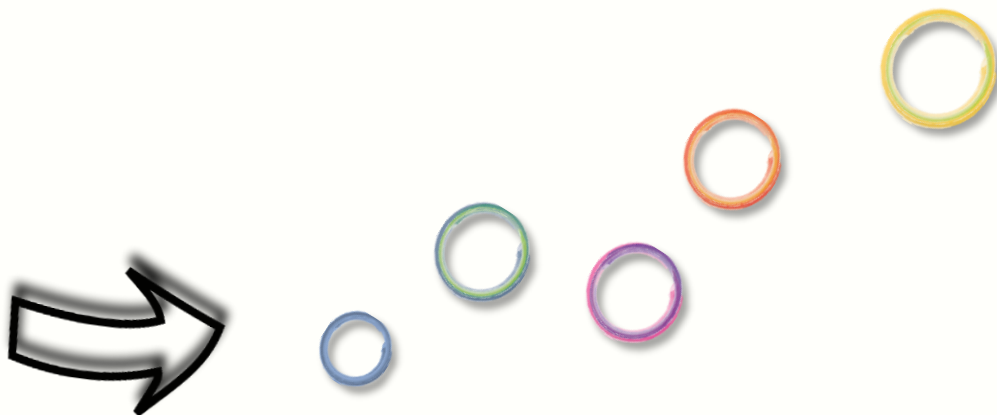
The positive behavior I will practice is: Learning from others

The best day and time for my practice: The next community meeting I attend is this Monday evening at 7 p.m.

Who can support me in making it happen: The group leader, Mo

Details of how my support person can help me: I can ask Mo to meet 15 minutes early get his help to spend some group time to find out what others have been doing to have fun safely

**Good luck. May hope be your constant companion on the road ahead!**



*Adapted from "Finding hope," module 17 (pp. 314 – 322) of Families Care. Helping Families Cope and Relate Effectively, CAMH (2008).*



## Closing Words of Encouragement

Because you are reading these words, it means that you have checked out at least some of the content of this workbook. We hope whatever you have found so far has been helpful to you. We also hope that you will pick up and review the workbook again.

Even if you have worked your way through all the chapters of this book in detail, it would not be surprising if you have not yet made your life the way you would like it.

A well-known philosopher once said that you could be the smartest person in the world and not reach your goals without one special ingredient for success: persistence. We want to encourage you to keep working on your goals as long as it takes to get the life you want and deserve.

Remember what we have mentioned throughout the workbook: almost everyone gets support from others to succeed at anything. If you have not built a support team yet (or your team is just one other person) building a bigger support team is a good thing to focus on right away.

Best wishes for a healthy and satisfying life.

**You can do it!**

Sincerely,

The Second Edition Team



## Appendix: Additional Resources



### National Websites with Information Related to Brain Injury

<https://www.subi.ca/> The Substance Use and Brain Injury Bridging Project coordinates interdisciplinary management of individuals living with both acquired brain injury and problematic substance use. Additional resources and materials are available through the project website.

[www.nashia.org](http://www.nashia.org) The National Association of State Head Injury Administrators provides information, training and advocacy on national trends, best practices, and state contacts on behalf of state employees supporting public brain injury programs.

<https://www.brainline.org/> BrainLine is a national multimedia project offering information and support to anyone whose life has been affected by brain injury or PTSD: people with brain injuries, their family and friends, and professionals.

<https://www.cdc.gov/traumaticbraininjury/index.html> The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is the nation's leading science-based, data-driven, service organization that protects the public's TBI health.

<https://msktc.org/tbi> The Knowledge Translation Center works closely with researchers in the 16 TBI Model Systems to develop resources for people living with traumatic brain injuries and their supporters.

[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov) The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration is the national US agency that leads public health efforts to advance behavioral health and reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities.

<https://www.biausa.org/> The Brain Injury Association of America and chartered state affiliates advance brain injury awareness, research, treatment, and education to improve the quality of life for all people affected by brain injury.

<https://usbia.org/> The US Brain Injury Alliance Members are united in a common mission to engage the community in preventing brain injury and improving lives.





## Other Manuals and Factsheets

### Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA)

SAMHSA ATTC Addictions Toolkit: <https://attcnetwork.org/centers/mid-america-attc/home>

SAMHSA Advisory-Treating Patients with TBI:  
[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5eb2bae2bb8af12ca7ab9f12/t/6155bcbf0f93b66066c274f2/1633008831964/SAMHSA-TBI-Advisory-FINAL+508\\_081921.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5eb2bae2bb8af12ca7ab9f12/t/6155bcbf0f93b66066c274f2/1633008831964/SAMHSA-TBI-Advisory-FINAL+508_081921.pdf)

### The Ohio State University at Wexner Medical Center: Brain Injury Program

The Effect of Substance use and TBI: <https://wexnermedical.osu.edu/-/media/files/wexnermedical/patient-care/healthcare-services/neurological-institute/departments-and-centers/research-centers/ohio-valley/for-professionals/substance-abuse-and-tbi/the-effects-of-substance-use-and-tbi.pdf?la=en&hash=05C182391D3598054E98DA190DD1409C86CB2080>

Accommodating the Symptoms of TBI: <https://wexnermedical.osu.edu/-/media/files/wexnermedical/patient-care/healthcare-services/neurological-institute/departments-and-centers/research-centers/ohio-valley/for-professionals/accommodating-symptoms/accommodating-tbi-booklet-1-14.pdf?la=en&hash=175F7559BA27362695DDBC8121A89C85F794F4D0>

Suggestions for Substance Abuse Treatment Providers Working with Persons Who Have Limitations in Cognitive Abilities: <https://wexnermedical.osu.edu/-/media/files/wexnermedical/patient-care/healthcare-services/neurological-institute/departments-and-centers/research-centers/ohio-valley/for-professionals/substance-abuse-and-tbi/suggestions.pdf?la=en&hash=E6C72EAD7892CFD0AE7A08AD05F87D8D7359AEDC>



## **INROADS (Intersecting Research on Opioid Misuse, Addiction, and Disability Services)-Brandeis University**

Supporting People with Disabilities and Opioid Use Disorders: A Guide for Providers: <https://heller.brandeis.edu/ibh/pdfs/inroads-oud-disability-provider-guide.pdf>

Opioid Use Among People with TBI: <https://heller.brandeis.edu/ibh/pdfs/inroads-oud-tbi.pdf>

Opioid Use Disorder Among People with Disabilities Fact Sheet – Medication Treatment: <https://heller.brandeis.edu/ibh/pdfs/inroads-mt-pwd-4-1-2019-final.pdf>

