Personal Recovery Plan Summary

My goals and Motivations are

Enter goals and motivations

How I intend to deal with people who are dicouraging

Enter your ideas on how you can deal with people who are holding you back

How I intend to deal with people that may cause negative emotions

Enter the steps you plan to take to avoid relapse due to problems with Friends, you might want to list names and any specific problems and how you plan deal with them

How I intend to build up trust

Detail how you are going to deal with trust issues and build trust

What other social outlets I may think about

Are there any new social groups you can join?

A list of places that may cause cravings

Enter the places you associate with active addiction

How I intend to deal with places that may cause cravings

Enter the steps you plan to take to avoid relapse due to problems with Places

A list of things that may cause cravings

Enter the things that may cause cravings

How I intend to deal with places that may cause cravings

Enter the steps you plan to take to avoid relapse due to problems with specific things

HALT

Write down what your thoughts are on how to avoid these 4

What I intend to do when I am really suseptable to relapse

What is my strategy if things get too much.

How I intend to reward myself

What positive rewards can I give myself.

Routine and Stucture

Morning activities
Afternoon activities
Evening activities

How I intend to improve sleep

List the changes you want to make to help establish a better sleep pattern

Hobbies

List hobbies that you may be interested in. These may be long forgotten pastimes, or something brand new

Meditation

Write down your thoughts on meditation

Improveing feelings of self worth

Write down your thoughts on how you can improve your feelings of self worth

Thoughts on councelling

Write down what your thoughts on counselling. If you think it will be worthwhile and when you should look into it.
I would like to review this plan on

Why create a Personal Recovery Plan?

From LifeRing's opening statement "You don't have to change everything in your life, just almost everything". Creating a recovery plan will allow you to:

- Create short term and long term goals
- Create steps to achieving those goals
- Identify relapse cues (People Places Things)
- Plan for mitigating relapse cues

The following form will be personal to you, by selecting what you want to concentrate on now, the plan will change and will give you reading material and support suggestions.

There is no size fits all to recovery. What works for one may not work for another.
No one can tell you what will work for you, you have to work this out for yourself.
You would be welcome to fill out this form and talk about it at one of our meetings.
We will not give advice on what you should do.
We may ask questions and say what worked for us, but ultimately is up to you to figure this out.

Goals and Motivation

Write down what your recovery goals are. What are your motivations for deciding to embark on this positive journey of change?
Enter goals and motivations

Building a support structure

Having a support group will help you in your recovery.

You may be able to go this alone, but regular conversations with like minded people really help.
The problem with not having a support system is that we are left with our own thoughts which can drift towards feeling that "This time will be different"
Regularly attending meetings between peers will decrease your chance of relapse and reduce the amount of time in active addiction if you do relapse.

Professional support

Some people will benefit from receiving professional help, either in early recovery, or regularly throughout recovery.

Your GP should be there to support you. Often people feel that they do not want to be open with their GP or even see a GP at all. Your GP will be the first point of contact for getting to the root of any undiagnosed mental health issues that you may have.
There is a real, dangerous risk with stopping heavy use of alcohol and other substances suddenly.
Your GP will be able to ensure that you detox safely if required.

Talking with peers

LifeRing believes that there are two conversations that we are having with ourselves, one from our sober self, the other from our addicted self.
When in active addiction, our addicted self is dominant.
LifeRing works by sober to sober conversations, which encourage your sober self (as opposed to your addicted self) to become more dominant.

LifeRing Meetings

LifeRing Scotland Meetings (Opens in new tab)
LifeRing Ireland Meetings (Opens in new tab)

Cues

It is a good practice to understand what are the things that can cause us to move towards active addiction. The exercise here is to identify cues which will possibly affect us negatively and will have the potential to create cravings.

People

In this section you want to think about any person that may create a negative emotional response.

People who hold you back

Good friends who hear of your recovery, will support your choice and see it as a positive change that you are making for your well being.
People who actively try to sabotage your recovery are certainly worth avoiding, and you might want to think whether they are actual friends or are they trying to get you to use again because they feel bad about their own substance abuse?
This can be a tricky area when these people are family / loved ones. See section on building self confidence / assertiveness.

Enter your ideas on how you can deal with people who are holding you back

Friends who use

Some times we have friends who are not necessarily in active addiction but we only socialise with them

when we are using.
Are they willing to socialise in a different environment and without using?

External reading material

Can people in recovery stay friends with users (Opens in new tab)

Enter the steps you plan to take to avoid relapse due to problems with Friends, you might want to list names and any specific problems and how you plan deal with them

Dealing with Trust

Perhaps loved ones feel let down, and are concerned that you will start again and hide the evidence.
The longer you are in recovery the more trust will grow.
Being questioned or having restrictions placed upon you may be difficult to deal with and be negative, especially when you are doing the right things.
It may be useful to try and see things from the other person point of view.
It is also important to have agency, and not be coerced.
This is a difficult area, but openness from your end will go a long way to rebuilding trust.
Good communication is key. If your loved one is understanding then it may be good to let them know your own fears of relapse, times when you avoided temptation.
If they know your positive thought process then that can help with understanding where you are in your development.
It may also be important for them to understand that the motivation for recovery must come from within and that you are doing this because you want to improve your life.
Some people who have had a problem with alcohol take antabuse (if so prescribed from your GP) in front of their partners for the sole purpose of building trust.
This is often a source of frustration in early recovery, but gets easier over time.
Also it may be an opportunity to improve the relationship, either from working together, or with counselling.
Detail how you are going to deal with trust issues and build trust

Creating new social outlets

Isolation is a danger to recovery.
Being connected to people who share similar interests and in healthy settings will keep you engaged and is a lot better than being lonely.
This might be a sport, walking, art, music etc.
Are there any new social groups you can join?

Places

We all had places that we associate with active addiction, that may be a specific off-licence, pub, club etc, or even a certain isle down the supermarket
Enter the places you associate with active addiction
You may decide that it is better to avoid these places all together, take a different route to work, never to walk down that isle.
Enter the steps you plan to take to avoid relapse due to problems with Places

Things

This is a catch all for anything else that create negative emotions and may induce cravings.
This may be a specific time of the week, anniversaries, feelings, anxiety, stress of work, music, money etc.
Enter the things that may cause cravings

Enter the steps you plan to take to avoid relapse due to problems with specific things

Whole life improvement

As stated in our opening statement:
"You have an opportunity to make changes that are both difficult and rewarding. Take advantage of this opportunity and use it to fundamentally improve your life. Don't just stop using.
People in recovery often describe themselves as grateful. Why would someone be grateful to have an addiction? Because they realize that the process of recovery has helped them find out who this amazing person really is, and what a peaceful existence is all about."
We don't have to fix everything right way.
What is important is that we move in a positive forward direction.
It is good to identify, the improvements that we can work towards in the short term, and improvements that will need to thought over for a longer period of time.
It may be useful to think of practical things you can put in place straight away for short term goals and deeper more difficult things for longer term development once you have a period of sobriety established.
How quickly you go about it is up to you. The goal here is to establish and maintain sobriety as top priority, and to use that foundation to build upon.

Short term personal development

Getting through the day

The important thing here is to do whatever you need to do to stay sober.
This is tough, you can make it easier by being kind to yourself.
See our tips for early recovery (Opens in new tab)

Hungry Angry Lonely Tired

Often cravings are due to one of these things.
Are we simply hungry?
Are we angry?
Are we lonely?
Are we tired?
Write down what your thoughts are on how to avoid these 4
Try to think about what your strategy will be when cravings are at the worst.
This may be contacting someone to talk, walking, running, cleaning, anything but using.
What is my strategy if things get too much.

Rewarding yourself

You are going to have more money.
Plan to reward yourself
Success and good events can cause cravings as much as bad times.
We often have been in the habit of rewarding ourselves with indulging in our favourite addiction.
It is good to think about how you would reward yourself in a more positive healthy way.
That may be as simple as eating ice-cream, or spending some of that money on something nice for ourselves.
What positive rewards can I give myself.

Establishing routine

Routine is a way of replacing the chaos of active addiction with good regular habits. The habitual nature of routine will make it less likely that we will fall back to old ways.

External reading material

Please read the following articles on the benefits of establishing routine.
Importance of structure (Opens in new tab)
Establishing a healthy routine (Opens in new tab)

Morning activities
Afternoon activities
Evening activities

Improving sleep hygiene

External reading material

Improving sleep hygiene (Opens in new tab)

Tips for sleeping better (Opens in new tab)

List the changes you want to make to help establish a better sleep pattern

What do I want to spend my time on?

There is no point in being sober and being miserable.
This is an opportunity to find out who this amazing, authentic person really is.
You may be at a stage where you do not know what activities makes you happy, or what you would like to

do with life.
List hobbies that you may be interested in. These may be long forgotten pastimes, or something brand new

Long term personal development

Meditation

If one of the reasons that you used mind altering substances was because you wanted to quieten or dull down your thoughts, then meditation is a good healthy alternative

External reading material

Please see the following resources on meditation.
The biggest take away is to not stress about whether you find it difficult to meditate, "be kind to your wandering mind"
How to meditate (Opens in new tab)
Calm app (Opens in new tab)
Headspace app (Opens in new tab)

Write down your thoughts on meditation

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is about being aware. Being aware of our emotions, our surroundings, sounds etc.
For example being aware of anger as it starts, seeing it as it develops, acknowledging it, and not letting it control us.
Mindfulness can help with cope with cravings, because we are aware of them, we see them for what they

are.

External reading material

Please see the following resources on mindfulness.
Benefits of mindfulness (Opens in new tab)

Building confidence and self esteem

If you are in early recovery, then you may have low confidence and self esteem.
It is important to work on that.
This is a continual process, and it will get better over time in recovery.
It is important to feel good about this process, good about yourself.
You are important. Your voice matters.

External reading material

Please see the following resources on mindfulness.
Boost your self confidence (Opens in new tab)
Write down your thoughts on how you can improve your feelings of self worth

Counselling

If you have underlying trauma, from childhood, or relationships with other people, then counselling will help.
This can be a difficult thing to do, so you should choose when it is the right time for you to do this.
Finding the right counselor who you are comfortable with is important.
You might want to think about being as open as possible with a counselor, and get the most out of the sessions as possible.
Write down what your thoughts on counselling. If you think it will be worthwhile and when you should look into it.

Review by: