



Peer Assistance Services

Client Name: _____

Relapse Prevention Plan

Recovering from an addiction takes time. You did not develop your addiction over night and it will not go away that quickly either. It is important to remember that no one can recover perfectly and there will be slips and relapses during the recovery process. This is normal and it is to be expected. The Relapse Prevention Plan is something that may be helpful to you in preventing a relapse.

Things Which May Cause Slips and Relapses

- ◆ Stress
- ◆ Dealing with the underlying issues in therapy
- ◆ Becoming overwhelmed by feelings and emotions
- ◆ Death of a family member, friend, etc.
- ◆ Marital and family problems
- ◆ Feelings of loneliness, shame, guilt, anger, and abandonment.
- ◆ People's reactions to changes you are making in your life
- ◆ Fear of change and/or living without the addiction

These are a few things that can cause someone to have a slip or relapse. At the time, the person may be overwhelmed by any of the above and end up resorting to old methods of coping.

Create your own list of things that you feel may cause you to have a slip or relapse:

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| | |

List each situation that may cause you to relapse on the left and on the right, list a healthier way of dealing/coping with it. (You may list more than one way to cope for each situation)

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Start believing.

PEER ASSISTANCE SERVICES, INC.

2170 South Parker Road, Suite 222 | Denver, Colorado 80231

TEL 303.369.0009 TOLL-FREE 1.866.369.0009 FAX 303.369.0982 www.peerasists.org



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Most people with addictions are very hard on themselves. Putting themselves down, calling themselves names, convincing themselves they are a failure, etc., are all things that can lead to slips and relapses. The section below will be a difficult one to complete, but it is important to try and change negative attitudes you have about yourself into positive ones.

On the left side, list the negative dialogue you use on yourself or hear. On the right side, challenge those same negative statements and replace them with positive ones. When you find yourself overwhelmed with negative thoughts, take out this list and practice telling yourself the positive ones. Even if at first you do not believe them, the more positive messages you give yourself, the more likely you are to start believing them.

NEGATIVE

POSITIVE

Whenever you find yourself making negative comments to yourself, be sure to pull out this list, write down the negative statement and turn it into a positive one. Try to do it each time you catch yourself being hard on yourself so that you do not spend the whole day, week, etc. with this negative thought going through your head. You do not deserve to put yourself down, you are a wonderful person and it is important that you learn how to love and respect yourself. By being able to take the negative statement and turn it into a positive one, you will be taking the necessary steps towards learning to love and accept yourself for who you are. The more positive messages you give yourself, the better you will start to feel about yourself.

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In times of crisis, it can be difficult to remember healthy ways of coping. Many people in crisis do resort to familiar ways of coping. Making a plan ahead of time can be helpful. Make a list of 10 things you can do instead of using the addiction as a way to cope. After the list is completed, keep it in a place where it can be accessed when needed. (I.e. refrigerator, cupboard, etc.)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

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2170 South Parker Road, Suite 222 | Denver, Colorado 80231

TEL 303.369.0009 TOLL-FREE 1.866.369.0009 FAX 303.369.0982 www.peerasistsr.org



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During the recovery process it is not always possible to avoid slips and relapses. Many people tend to be very hard on themselves if they do have a slip or relapse. It's important to remember that no one can recover perfectly. If you have a bad day, you can forgive yourself, put it behind you, and continue to move forward in your recovery. A good saying to remember is, **“Yesterday is but a dream. Tomorrow a vision of hope. Look to this day for it is life.”** We cannot change yesterday so it is important not to dwell on what happened yesterday, we cannot spend time worrying about relapsing in the future, because we cannot predict the future. All any of us can have is today and we must live for today. Do the best that you can and be proud of yourself for having the courage to continue to fight your addiction. It takes a lot of strength and courage to do that and that is something you can be proud of. If you do experience a slip or relapse, it is sometimes helpful to try and figure out why it happened. Below is a list of things that you can do if you experience a slip or relapse.

- ◆ Sit down and try to figure out how you were feeling before the slip/relapse occurred.
- ◆ Write about how you felt before, during and after.
- ◆ Make a plan of how you will handle the situation, feelings, emotions, etc. when it happens again, but in a healthier way.
- ◆ Call someone and talk about what happened and how you feel. (I.e. friend, therapist, family member, sponsor, etc.)
- ◆ Remind yourself that just because you had a slip/relapse, does not mean that you have failed. It only means that there are feelings inside that need to be dealt with.
- ◆ Be gentle with yourself and do something nice for you. (I.e. soak in a hot bath, take a nice walk, read a book, etc.)
- ◆ Remember that there is no shame in having an addiction, there is no shame in having a slip or relapse and it is okay to reach out and talk about it.

Below make a list of things that you can do to help yourself get past the feelings you may experience after having a slip or relapse:

- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____

Excerpts from <http://www.morror-mirror.org/relplan.htm>
 Written By: Colleen Thompson
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 TEL 303.369.0009 TOLL-FREE 1.866.369.0009 FAX 303.369.0982 www.peerasists.org