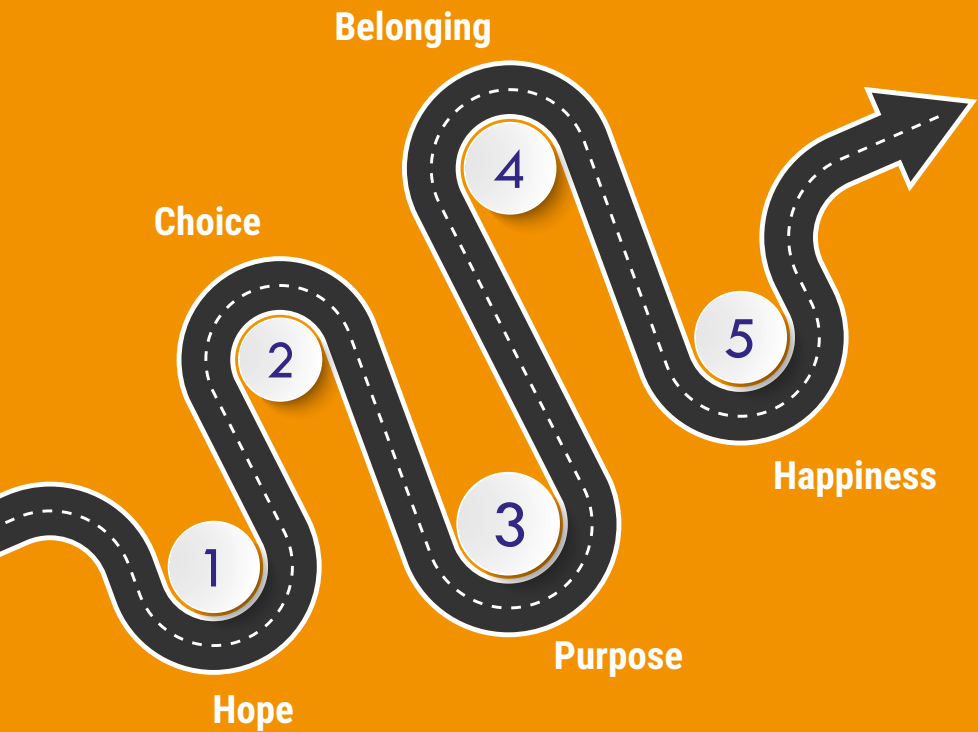


Mapping Your Recovery



Kaleidoscope Project

The way this booklet is laid out is in sections:

Section 1

Where you are now – reviewing where you are and what your STRENGTHS are.

Section 2

Where do you want to get to? This is called RECOVERY PLANNING.

Section 3

Challenging your doubts – this is referred to as MOTIVATION ENHANCEMENT.

Section 4

Building your RECOVERY CAPITAL, COPING SKILLS and SELF-ESTEEM and OVERCOMING OBSTACLES. In this section we will explore how to learn lessons when things go wrong.

Section 5

How to avoid lapses and slips – RELAPSE PREVENTION.

Section 6

Building a RECOVERY FUTURE – PLEASANT ACTIVITIES and planning your future through RECOVERY COMMUNITIES.

While the guide should help you through different stages and aspects of the RECOVERY JOURNEY, you will find some parts more useful than others. However, you should stick with all parts of the guide.

There are lots of other people who are both in the same position as you and who are able to offer you help. The last part of the manual – Appendix 2 – provides you with a list of some of the resources that you might want to tap into.

And remember, this is about you. Recovery is about: **HOPE; PURPOSE; BELONGING; CHOICE; HAPPINESS.**

Introduction

This manual is designed to assist you in your recovery journey by supporting you to consider where you are and where you would like to be. The manual uses a series of 'maps' that will help you to record and document your early recovery and list the resources you will need to help you move forward. Within this manual, we call these resources 'Recovery Capital'.

Recovery capital refers to the following:

Personal Recovery capital (eg; physical health, mental health, life skills, financial assets, food, housing, telephone etc)

Social Recovery Capital (eg; family relationships, friends, partners etc)

Community Recovery Capital (Mutual Aid groups, gyms, volunteering placements, community centres etc)

At the back of the manual you will find a tool called ARC (Assessment of Recovery Capital) that will enable you to see where you have recovery capital strengths and deficits. Your aim in your early recovery is to plan where you can increase your recovery capital and this manual will help you to do this.

SECTION 1

Getting Started

In treatment services, you will typically start with an 'assessment' – this is about talking about who you are and what you do. The map on the pages 6 and 7 is what we call a **GUIDE MAP**. You fill in the boxes that are relevant and then you will discuss what you put into each box.

This is an opportunity for you to get to know yourself and to get a sense of who you are and where you have come from. The idea is that you will put in each box what the important things are in your life.

These important things might include:

What relationships matter most to you

What is good about how you feel physically

What is bad about how you feel physically

What is good about how you feel emotionally

What is bad about how you feel emotionally

What interests you have

What interests you used to have that you don't partake in at the moment

What your job is or, if you're not working, what your previous employment was and what you would like to do

There is also a **BLANK BOX**. You can put whatever you want that is of importance to you within this box.

But this is not a task about filling boxes. In this task, you put down the things that matter to you and then use that as a way of talking about what makes you the person that you are and the key things in your life. You will come back to this as you progress through the **RECOVERY JOURNEY** and this will change, but in a good way.

You can always come back to this again later and add bits or change them. Or you could draw it out in a different way if you start to see links and patterns that you want to think about.

GETTING STARTED – THE ME TODAY MAP

Relationship

Health

Interests

ME TODAY

Work

Emotions

Getting Started

– WHAT ARE YOUR STRENGTHS?

This map is quite similar to the last one. However, this time you should think about all of the things that are positive in your life and enter them in the boxes, as you did before.

Before you start, it is important to think of how diverse these strengths can be.

Some strengths could be:

OTHER PEOPLE that you are able to draw upon in times of crisis whether they be friends, family, your partner, or someone else

GROUPS that you belong to who inspire you or who can support you (eg; NA/AA/SMART recovery)

TALENTS that you possess – perhaps you are good at practical things, or are seen by others as honest or as friendly

POSITIVIE QUALITIES that you possess – maybe you are naturally determined or strong-willed or generous

Again, remember that you don't have to fill out every box! The aim is to think about you.

Depending on how much time you have, once you have thought about what strengths and resources you have, there are two more tasks that we suggest you then complete:

To think of what aspects of these strengths you can use in your **RECOVERY JOURNEY**

Think of what the resources and strengths you want and need to develop to help you achieve your aims in life (which is what we mean by recovery) are and circle them in a different coloured pen

Once you have completed this map you will be ready to move on to phase two, where you will start to plan what you will do **next on your journey**.

Getting Started

– ASSESSING YOUR STRENGTHS

Sometimes, it's hard to think of our own strengths. This might be because we focus too often on our weakness that we forget our strengths, or it may be due to low self-esteem. Listed below are some examples of strengths to help you identify your own:

Adaptable	Flexible	Patient
Adventurous	Forgiving	Peacemaker
Ambitious	Friendly	People-person
Artistic	Funny	Persistent
Athletic	Generous	Polite
Believes in self	Good intentioned	Practical
Brave	Good memory	Principled
Community minded	Happy	Problem-solver
Competitive	Hard-working	Quick learner
Contented	Healthy	Quick thinker
Cool-headed	Honest	Relaxed
Cooperative	Imaginative	Religious
Curious	Independent	Responsible
Dedicated	Kind	Self-starter
Dependable	Likeable	Sense of humour
Determined	Logical	Sensitive to others
Endurance	Loving	Sincere
Energetic	Loyal	Smart
Enthusiastic	Mechanical	Spiritual
Ethical	Musical	Spontaneous
Even-handed	Optimistic	Strong
Expressive	Open-minded	True to self
Fair	Organised	Trusting
Trustworthy	Warm-hearted	

GETTING STARTED – ASSESSING YOUR STRENGTHS

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL

SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

PROBLEM SOLVING/COPING

EMOTIONS/TEMPERAMENT

**YOUR
STRENGTHS**

VALUES AND BELIEFS

WORK AND SKILLS

SECTION 2

Recovery Planning

In order to start setting goals, it is helpful to identify where the problem areas are in your life. Use the following table to really focus on which areas you need to work on. Then, take the top 5 areas and complete the goal planner maps that follow for each one.

Problem Area	Satisfaction Out of 10	What would have to change to score 10 out of 10?	Priority
Drug and/or Alcohol Use			
Health (physical and mental)			
Social Life and Friends			
Relationships			
Housing			
Job / Education			
Money			
Exercise			
Legal and Crime			

Having worked out what you have in terms of strengths and resources, and having considered what your problem areas are, the next thing to focus on is identifying which areas or problems you should prioritise. In specialist treatment services this is often called **CARE PLANNING** or **RECOVERY PLANNING**. This is about working out what your main areas of concern are and what you are going to do about them.

Remember that alcohol and drugs may not be the main things that you are worried about – you might be more worried about your health, or you might be concerned that your main relationship is breaking down. If so, that will be the thing that you put in the box on the top left of the map overleaf.

For each of the main problems, the map asks you to think through exactly what is wrong and what you would like to do about it. It will help you to ‘unpack’ the problem by describing exactly what is wrong and to start you down the process of how you might go about tackling it.

Remember that big problems often seem unsolvable until you start to break them down into chunks that are more manageable, and that is what you will do in more detail in this map.

This map also allows you to start thinking about how some of your problems might be linked to your drinking and/or to your drug use, and so different problems may also have the same solution!

RECOVERY PLANNING - WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES

PROBLEM AREA

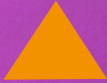


SUMMARISE THE PROBLEM



GOALS FOR TACKLING THIS PROBLEM





RECOVERY PLANNING

Creating a Plan of Action

Having worked out what the priorities are, you then need to think about the practical details of how you are going to set about acting to deal with these problems.

You now need to focus on setting goals to address your priority problems. The maps on pages 18 - 24 will help you break down your goals into manageable chunks.

You start these maps at the centre by copying down the overall goal and then the next task is to work out what that means in practice for you. It is good to start trying to order your thoughts about what you might have to do and by what date – this is to give you a deadline so that things don't slip away in time.

You also need to think about what help you can call on. That might start with friends and family members who are keen to support your **RECOVERY JOURNEY**. Recovery is nearly always a social process and it is important that you draw on the strength of other people.

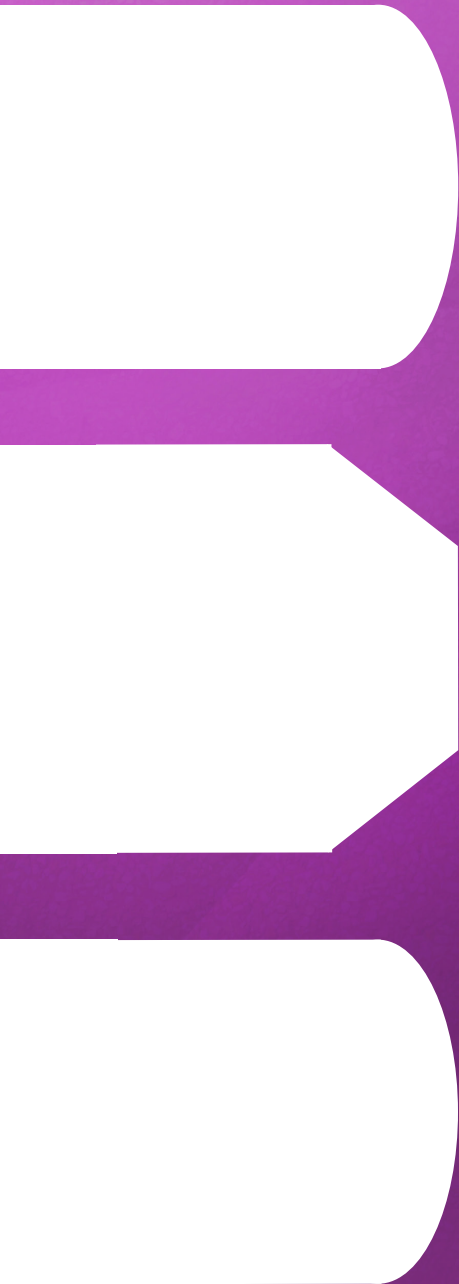
It is also important to be realistic and to think about what might go wrong. We will come back to this idea later. However, this is not going to be easy and you have to think about what you will do if you encounter problems and it is good to begin thinking about this as early as possible.

WHEN YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE SETTING A GOAL MAPS, YOU WILL HAVE REACHED THE END OF THE PLANNING STAGE. YOU SHOULD THEN BE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE TRYING TO DO AND WHEN YOU ARE GOING TO DO IT BY.

**A GOAL
WITHOUT A PLAN
IS JUST A WISH**

RECOVERY PLANNING – SETTING A GOAL

<div>SPECIFIC ACTIONS</div>	<div>WHEN</div>
<div>HELPFUL PEOPLE & USEFUL THOUGHTS</div>	<div>MY GOAL</div>
<div>STRENGTHS YOU HAVE/NEED</div>	



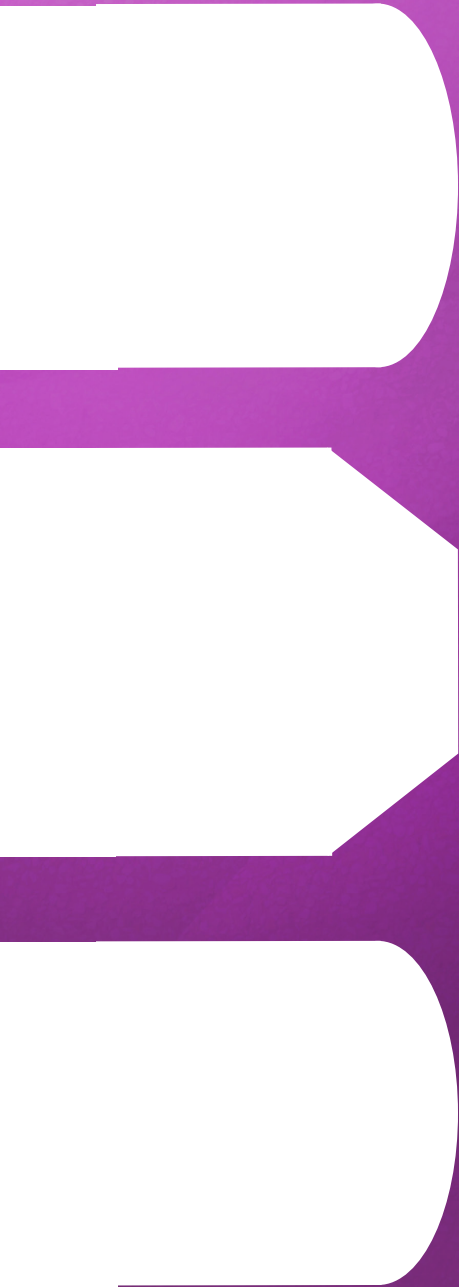
SOLUTIONS



POSSIBLE PROBLEMS

RECOVERY PLANNING – SETTING A GOAL

<div>SPECIFIC ACTIONS</div>	<div>WHEN</div>
<div>HELPFUL PEOPLE & USEFUL THOUGHTS</div>	<div>STRENGTHS YOU HAVE/NEED</div>
<div>MY GOAL</div>	



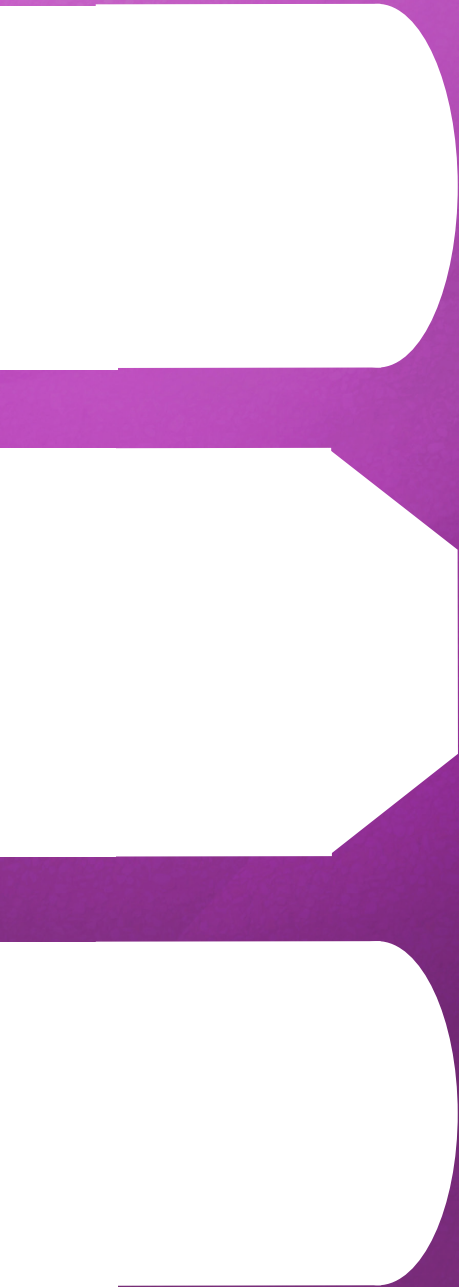
SOLUTIONS



POSSIBLE PROBLEMS

RECOVERY PLANNING – SETTING A GOAL

<div>SPECIFIC ACTIONS</div>	<div>WHEN</div>
<div>HELPFUL PEOPLE & USEFUL THOUGHTS</div>	<div>STRENGTHS YOU HAVE/NEED</div>
<div>MY GOAL</div>	



SOLUTIONS



POSSIBLE PROBLEMS

SECTION 3

How Strong is your Motivation to Change?

In the course of **YOUR** recovery journey you may have some wobbles and there may be times when you will be very tempted to use drugs and/or alcohol. To help you at these times, it is important to reflect on your motivation to change and to focus on what you will gain by moving forward and towards a new life that has more to offer you than drink and/or drugs do.

The first mapping exercise in this section for you to do is a kind of accounting exercise where you make a list of the advantages and disadvantages of both continuing to go on as you have been or of making a change in your life.

Remember that you are seeking help because you want to change and focusing on the happiness that long-term recovery can bring and by making you list the problems and disadvantages that drug and/or alcohol use have caused in your life.

BUILDING MOTIVATION

Motivational Balance

This is a map that you will want to come back to when you are wavering and it is something that you should add to both when good things happen in your recovery and as you think of other issues you have experienced as a result of your use.

There will be good things about using. It might take your troubles away in the short-term or take away the pain, but in reality drugs and alcohol just mask the pain. Facing your past trauma or pain will enable you to move forward.

So this is the first part of thinking about how strongly motivated you are and reminding yourself of what is driving you to change. We are calling this the **MOTIVATIONAL BALANCE** map and you should have this to hand as a reminder of what it is you are striving for and why you started on this journey for change. Only you can do this. You can, however, call on a whole range of resources and supports to help you, some of which are included in are included in Appendices 2/3/ and 4.

BUILDING YOUR MOTIVATION – STAYING THE SAME OR CHANGING?

CONTINUING AS BEFORE
COTINUING AS BEFORE

MAKING A CHANGE TO MY LIFE

ADVANTAGE

DISADVANTAGE

ADVANTAGE

DISADVANTAGE



BUILDING MOTIVATION

Planning for the Future

One of the other ways of thinking about what decisions you might want to make about your plans to change is to think about the future and what you want from your life.

The second motivation map is about planning for where you want to be in five years' time (although these timescales can change). For this you should be bold and ambitious and think about your hopes and your dreams. The map should help you to structure this by focusing on:

- Relationships

- Work

- Fun

- Other things

In other words, the map is about contrasting where you see yourself at the moment with where you want to get to in the future and whether drink and/or drugs will be a part of that vision and mission.

It is that sense of **HOPE** that building to your future requires – a belief that you can recover and that you will have an **IDENTITY** and a sense of **BELONGING** that leave behind your substance use.

At the end of this map, you should reflect on what you have mapped and consider what you want to do next. Once you have done this, it should be clear to you that:

You have **STRENGTHS** and **RESOURCES** to call on

You have a **RECOVERY PLAN**

You are **MOTIVATED** and committed to change

In the section after the '**PLANNING FOR YOUR FUTURE**' map, we will have you look at a number of things you might want to do to help you build some of the other key resources you will need – particularly your own sense of identity.



BUILDING YOUR MOTIVATION – LONG TERM CHANGE

WHERE I AM NOW

RELATIONSHIP/FAMILY

WORK/HOUSING

WHERE I WOULD LIKE TO BE
IN 5 YEARS' TIME

RELATIONSHIP/FAMILY

WORK/HOUSING

FUN/SOCIAL LIFE

OTHER

FUN/SOCIAL LIFE

OTHER

When planning where you want to be, there may be some things that you are more anxious about putting in place. Use the map below to look at ways of managing these anxieties.

MANAGING ANXIETIES IN THE RECOVERY JOURNEY

What do you see as your primary concern?

What are some steps to take?



How will this help?



SECTION 4

Coping and Self-Esteem – Assertiveness

The first example in this section is about assertiveness and about learning from a situation where you did not behave as you would have liked.

Remember that being assertive is not about being aggressive or even about getting your own way. Instead, it is about communicating effectively so that others know how you feel and what you want.

What the map asks you to do is to think through what happened and how it made you feel. Not being assertive can make you feel unhappy and this can be a strong feeling which is why the map asks you to think back and reflect on your **THOUGHTS** and **FEELINGS** at the time.

Having ‘relived’ the experience, the next task is to think about **WHAT HAVE I LEARNED FROM THIS?** And then **WHAT COULD I DO DIFFERENTLY?**

The point of this is not to think back and regret what you did not do or say but to work out how you could manage the situation more effectively whilst also respecting the needs and feelings of the other people involved. In this way, you will learn from your past experience and feel more confident it facing similar issues in the future.

What you will do during this exercise is to think of skills and resources that you could utilise to manage the situation if it were to occur again and feel more confident IF facing similar issues (not IT facing).

COPING AND SELF-ESTEEM – ASSERTIVENESS

SITUATIONS WHERE I DIDN'T BEHAVE ASSERTIVELY				
WHAT HAPPENED?	WHAT EMOTIONS WERE YOU FEELING?	HOW INTENSE WERE THOSE EMOTIONS? (0-100)	WHAT WERE YOUR THOUGHTS AT THE TIME?	

Four large white rectangular boxes are arranged vertically on the left side of the page. Two smaller white rectangular boxes are arranged vertically on the right side. An orange line connects the second box from the top on the left to the top-right box. Another orange line connects the third box from the top on the left to the bottom-right box.

**WHAT COULD I DO
DIFFERENTLY NEXT
TIME?**

**WHAT HAVE I LEARNED
FROM THIS?**

COPING AND SELF ESTEEM – THE INNER CRITIC

One of the reasons that we often don't behave in an assertive way is that we have a poor opinion of ourselves. This is referred to as **LOW SELF-ESTEEM**. While this may have come about because of how others have treated us in the past, it is often the case that we are our own worst enemies!

To start this exercise think of **SOMETHING THAT YOU REALLY WANT TO DO AND ACHIEVE IN THE NEXT YEAR**. It should be something ambitious that is not easy and that you have had doubts about.

The **INNER CRITIC** is that voice inside your head that tells you that you will not be able to achieve this goal. We all have these doubts but the **INNER CRITIC** is a destructive force that can stop you from doing the things you want.

There are particular ways that the **INNER CRITIC** operates and you need to think of ways that you can challenge them.

Some ways that the **INNER CRITIC** might operate include:

MAKING GENERALISATIONS: This is the voice that says things along the lines of: “you will never achieve that because you never achieve anything”. You will practice the **FIGHTING BACK VOICE** with the things you can point to that you have done – like starting your recovery journey!

MAKING SMALL UPSETS INTO BIG PROBLEMS: This is the voice that says “I can’t find the phone number – it is a sign that I just can’t do it”. Your response will be to think of ways that you can get round little problems without blowing them out of proportion.

MAKING ILLOGICAL LEAPS: This will often take the form of saying “the whole thing is too much for me” or exaggerating difficulties and setbacks. This may require you to step back and think about what strengths you can use!

IS TOO HARSH: The inner critic does not give you credit for what you are good at and exaggerates those things that you are not so good at. The **FIGHTING BACK** voice will focus on the positives and the sense of happiness that achievement brings.

The trick is to practice and to learn from your **FIGHTING BACK** voice and to recognise when the **INNER CRITIC** is in your head so that you can shout them down!

COPING AND SELF-ESTEEM – THE INNER CRITIC

INNER CRITIC'S VOICE

MAKES GENERALISATIONS

YOUR FIGHTING BACK VOICE

IS SPECIFIC

INNER CRITIC'S VOICE

MAKES SMALL UPSETS INTO BIG PROBLEMS

YOUR FIGHTING BACK VOICE

LOOKS AT THINGS REALISTICALLY

INNER CRITIC'S VOICE

MAKES ILLOGICAL STEPS

YOUR FIGHTING BACK VOICE

CHALLENGES ILLOGICAL THOUGHT

INNER CRITIC'S VOICE

IS TOO HARSH

YOUR FIGHTING BACK VOICE

BE REASSURING

COPING AND SELF ESTEEM – BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM

Your self-esteem will take a long time to re-build and this involves you starting to learn your worth as a person. Learning to appreciate yourself can involve:

Practising basic self-care like eating healthily, getting enough sleep, getting exercise and looking after your appearance

Doing fun or relaxing things to help yourself unwind when you find something frustrating

Reminding yourself of your strengths and achievements

Getting help from others

People who have low self-esteem often won't ask others for help because they feel that they don't deserve it. But getting help from others can be a really important step in improving your self-esteem. Talking to someone can help you vent your frustrated feelings.

The point of this map is to think about what you would like to do to work on your self-esteem.

As well as practicing ways of answering when the **INNER CRITIC** speaks to you and thinking about what you have achieved, there are also these core positive things to do:

Think about **HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOURSELF**

Find healthy and simple ways of **GIVING YOURSELF A TREAT**

Make sure you have an idea of **PEOPLE WHO CAN LISTEN AND HELP**

This is one of the tasks that will be something to work on, reflect on and come back to. You have to be vigilant not to let the **INNER CRITIC** back in!

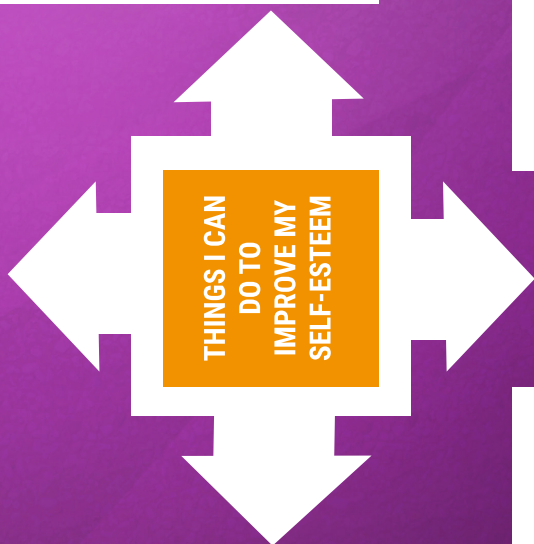


COPING AND SELF-ESTEEM – BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM

THINGS I CAN SAY BACK
TO MY INNER CRITIC

WAYS I CAN LOOK AFTER
MYSELF

WAYS I CAN LOOK AFTER
MYSELF



THINGS I CAN DO TO TREAT MYSELF
WHEN I'M FEELING DOWN

WHO CAN I TALK TO FOR SUPPORT?

SECTION 5

Avoiding Relapse – your Drug and/or Alcohol use

It can take a long time for people to achieve 'stable recovery' and you need to think of your **RECOVERY JOURNEY** as something that may take 2 or more years – and might well go on for the rest of your life. Remember – everyone's recovery journey is different and personal to you..

During that time, there may be all kinds of good and bad things happen to you and, when the bad times come, you might well be tempted to go back to your old ways. One of the main things that you can do to be prepared is that you can build techniques to cope with temptations and to 'ride out' the cravings.

The next few maps are referred to as **RELAPSE PREVENTION** techniques and they basically have two main aims:

To help you deal with the desire to go back to using

If you do have a slip, to make sure that is all that it is – a slip – and to help you get back on your recovery path as soon as possible.

The first map in this sequence is about helping you understand the ‘triggers’ for your use. There are three sections to the map:

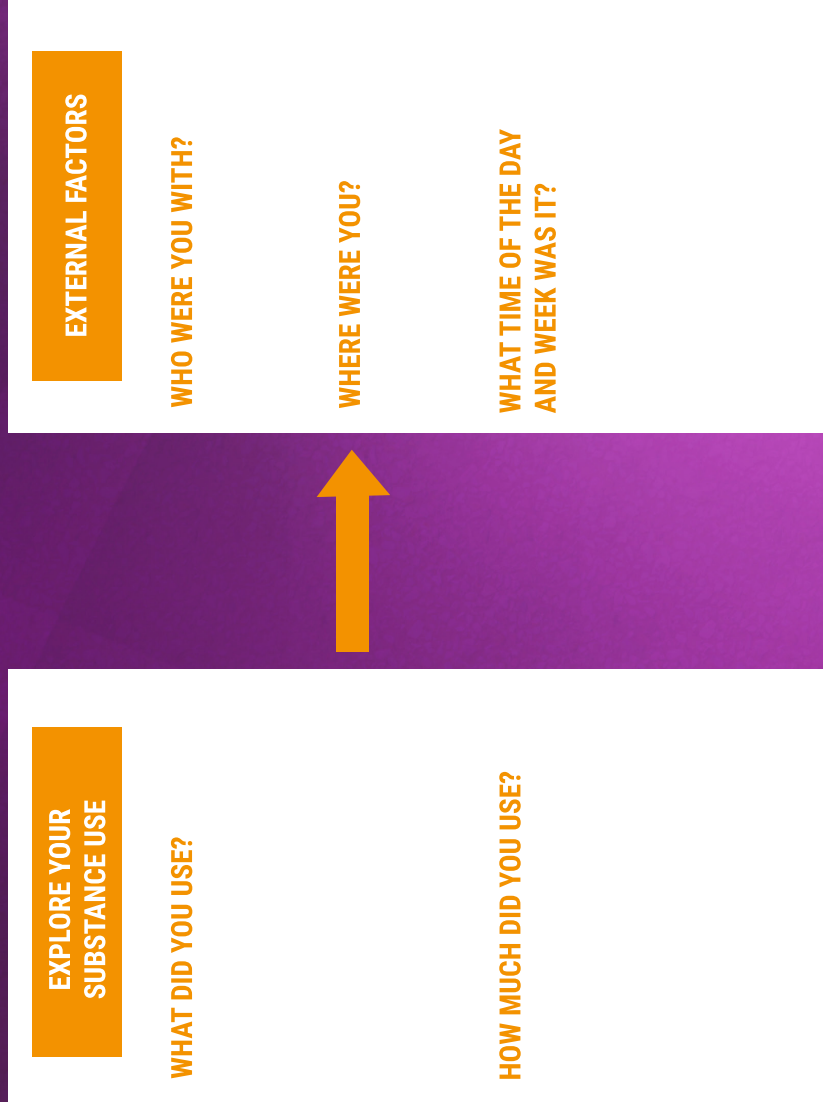
SUBSTANCE USE PATTERNS: this section will ask you to recall a typical spell of using and asks you to map out what you used (what type of drink and/or drugs), how much and over what period of time.

EXTERNAL FACTORS: in this section, we look at the context – who you were with, where you were and what time of the day or week your use occurred.

INTERNAL FACTORS: As well as circumstances, it is also important to think about what was going on inside of your head and body at the time of use – you will map these factors in this section of the map.



AVOIDING RELAPSE – EXPLORING YOUR DRUG AND/OR ALCOHOL USE



INTERNAL FACTORS

**WHAT WERE YOU FEELING
EMOTIONALLY?**

**HOW WERE YOU FEELING
PHYSICALLY?**



HOW LONG DID YOU USE FOR?

MANAGING CRAVINGS

The next map is about coming up with suggestions for what to do if you start to crave alcohol or drugs. Doing this is about preparing strategies and techniques for dealing with these feelings when they arise. This map is split into three categories:

THINGS I CAN TELL MYSELF: the kind of things that you might consider are that “craving is a normal part of the change process” and that “these feelings will pass”

WAYS OF DISTRACTING MYSELF: one way of distracting yourself is by trying to think of positive things. You might also find someone to talk to, or you could distract yourself by doing things that will take your mind off your craving such as watching TV or preparing food.

WAYS OF RELAXING MYSELF: this will include things like taking a bath or learning to do breathing exercises. Another approach that you could take would be to speak to friends in recovery about planning pleasant events and activities.

As with the previous map, the main purpose of this activity is to make sure that when you start to feel cravings coming on, you don't try to fight them or see them as a sign of weakness but learn how to 'surf' over the cravings by doing things that will reduce your anxiety and focus you on other things.

There are many techniques for distraction or relaxation that you need to be aware of and you should consider what will be most appropriate for you, including those things that you can focus on in the short-term while the worst of the craving feeling passes.

RELAPSE PREVENTION – MANAGING A LAPSE

It is useful to be prepared if it does happen and to make plans. A lapse or relapse, however, is not inevitable and many people will never have a slip in their **RECOVERY JOURNEY**.

The purpose of this map is to provide you with the protection and the ammunition just in case you do lapse or if you think you may be about to lapse. The map builds on the previous techniques by getting you to think about methods for coping with craving and avoiding the **INTERNAL** and **EXTERNAL** pressures that are likely to make you want to use.

In the earlier relapse prevention maps, you were asked to consider what the triggers are both inside of you and in terms of the other people and places that make you more likely to use. You have also considered ways of distracting yourself and relaxing to help you manage your craving more effectively. The map overleaf will be the final map in this sequence. In this map you will be bringing those things together to help you prepare for if and when these situations arise.

You will start by making a note of who you are with and when and where you are when you typically use (**EXTERNAL**). You will then discuss and note how you feel and what you are thinking (**INTERNAL**) at these times. You then complete the box about what your **CRAVING** feels like.

Once you have noted these things, you will be ready to think about how you can **AVOID** both the internal and the external triggers.

When you have discussed and made note of this, you will then be able to discuss and note the techniques you have learned for **COPING WITH CRAVING**.

And most importantly, what you are going to do if you do use and how you can make sure that it is only a diversion from your **RECOVERY JOURNEY** and not the end of it.

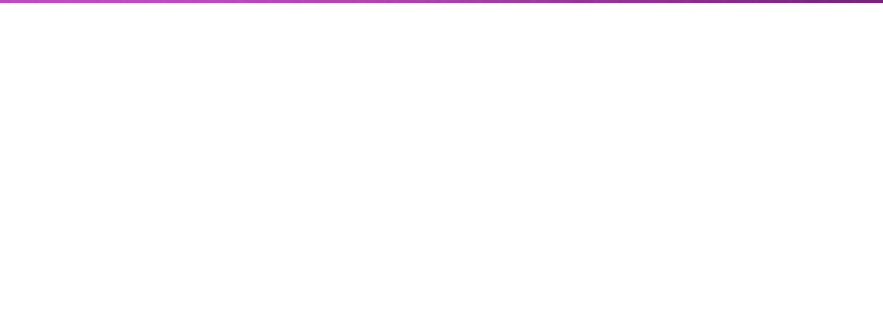
MANAGING CRAVINGS

HOW CAN I DEAL WITH
MY CRAVINGS?

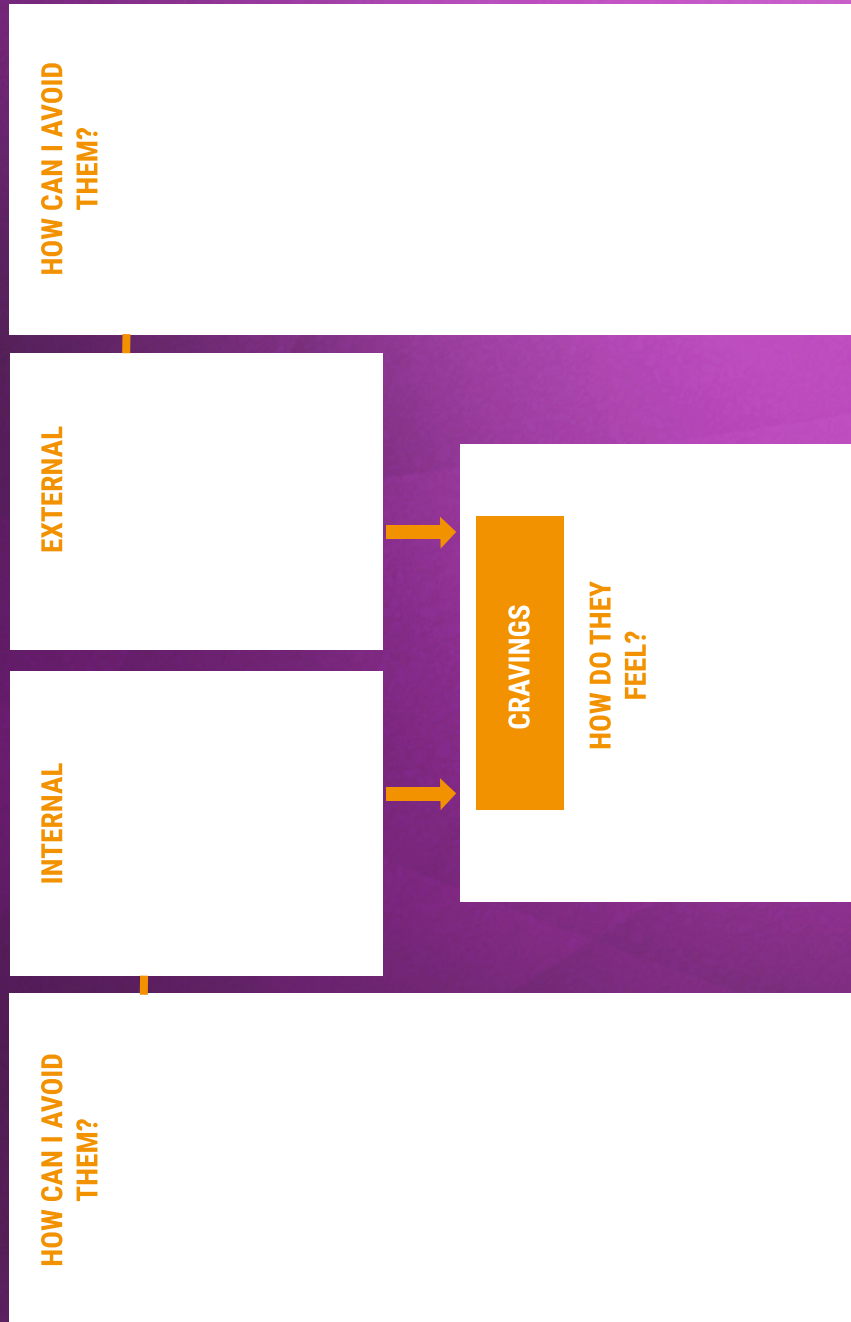
THINGS I CAN TELL
MYSELF

WAYS OF DISTRACTING
MYSELF

WAYS OF RELAXING
MYSELF



RELAPSE PREVENTION – MANAGING A LAPSE



WHAT DO I DO IF I LAPSE?



LAPSE

HOW CAN I COPE WHAT
DO I DO IF I LAPSE?
WITH CRAVINGS?

SECTION 6 – BUILDING A RECOVERY FUTURE – SOCIAL NETWORKS AND SUPPORT

One of the most important things about planning recovery is the sense of hope that it should provide about a future that is not only free from alcohol and drugs but is also fulfilling and positive and exciting. And it is to that future that we will turn to for the last three maps.

The maps look at:

- Social networks

- Mutual aid groups and communities

- Planning your long-term recovery future

For the first map, you should be clear now that recovery is almost always a social process and that among the most important **STRENGTHS** and **ASSETS** you can build are the supportive peers who are there to help you.

There will be other individuals or members of your community who are also in recovery and they can help you to build the ties and links for your support journey.

This is an inventory of the people who are important to you and who can help you (and who you can help, in turn) in your recovery progress. They are the people who you can turn to in times of crisis for support and solace, but they should also be people that can rely on you in turn.

You should make a list of these people – and add extra pages if you need to – and then you should decide what makes each of the people you have listed important and what role they have to play in your **RECOVERY JOURNEY** as it progresses.

You might also want to add a column yourself about how you will support them in turn.

YOUR SOCIAL NETWORK

YOUR
NETWORK OF
PEERS

PEOPLE WHO ARE
IMPORTANT TO
ME

WHAT MAKES THIS
PERSON IMPORTANT
TO ME?

HOW WILL THIS
PERSON SUPPORT MY
RECOVERY JOURNEY?

BUILDING A RECOVERY FUTURE – ENGAGING WITH MUTUAL AID AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

There are going to be many personal relationships you have that will help you in your **RECOVERY JOURNEY** and will enhance your life and make you feel better about yourself. But there is also a great deal of benefit and pleasure to be had from engaging with others in a group format.

What the evidence tells us is that people who engage with **MUTUAL AID GROUPS** (Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous and SMART Recovery) do better in terms of managing their drinking and/or drug use in the long term. What the research also tells us is that the more you engage with these groups and the more actively involved you are, the better the outcomes are. For a list of meetings and groups, see Appendix 3.

But you are not restricted to groups that focus on overcoming drinking and/or drug use problems. There are recovery groups across the UK that are about having fun and getting outdoors to do things with other people. Some of these are also listed in Appendix 3. Your local service can tell you more about the groups and meetings local to you – and hopefully they will be able to take you along to some of them!

Even if you have had a bad experience with groups in the past, you should try to give them a go! All groups are different and it makes things much easier if someone else can go along with you to show you the ropes.

It is also good to 'shop around' with groups. As they are all different, it is worth going along to a few so you can find one that is not only the most convenient for you but where you also think that you will fit in and have the best experience.

What the map overleaf does is it provides you with a way of exploring these groups so that you can start to think about how you can get involved with them.

BUILDING A RECOVERY FUTURE – ENGAGING WITH MUTUAL AID AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

WHAT ARE THE GROUPS?

WHAT ARE MY EXPERIENCES?

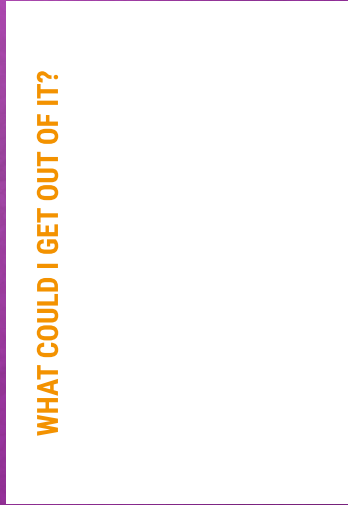
WHO DO I KNOW THAT GOES?

LOCAL RECOVERY
GROUPS

WHAT DO THEY DO?



WHAT COULD I GET OUT OF IT?



WHY DO PEOPLE GO?



So from your point of view there are two big questions – what is out there in your community that would inspire you and help your recovery journey, and what can you do to make things move forward around things you are interested in. The types of recovery support that are particularly relevant are:

Recovery mutual aid groups – including AA, NA, CA, SMART and other groups of individuals in abstinent or maintained recovery – but the purpose of the groups are explicitly to maintain each other's recovery

Vocational groups – this will include projects targeting education and training, but will also include volunteering projects and other initiatives where groups of people in recovery meet to support and develop their interests and skills

Interest groups – this will be more typically sport or hobby groups such as football teams, hill-walking clubs or dramatic arts such as music evenings and theatre groups

All of these groups will have a significant role to play at different points in your recovery journey. The main benefits of engaging with both recovery based and community groups are that they:

- Help people with urges to use or drink

- Provide support and understanding if setbacks occur

- Provide a place to share and hear success stories –

- Help to fill up spare time

- Introduce individuals to new people and ideas –

- Helps people to develop a supportive peer network of others in recovery

- Provide an intense experience of acceptance and belonging

- Build esteem through identification with a large organisation

- Provide a belief system through which shame and defeat can be transformed into victory

- Provide a vehicle for the safe discharge of powerful emotions

- Provide a consistent set of rituals that facilitate emotional release and value-focusing

- Provide a forum for consultation on daily problem solving

- Provide rituals that allow the group to celebrate success

PLANNING YOUR LONG - TERM RECOVERY FUTURE

The world of recovery is exciting and full of opportunities and possibilities for you to carve out a new identity for yourself whilst being supported by other people who are committed to helping you and to also helping themselves.

But each person's **RECOVERY JOURNEY** is unique and yours will be an ongoing process of discovering and reinventing yourself as you find out about the **RECOVERY YOU**. You need to remember that what helped you at the start of the **RECOVERY JOURNEY** will not always be enough. You must continue to think about what you want and need. To do this you must remember to also think of the skills, strengths and supports that you have developed in the course of your journey and have mapped in this guide.

To complete the map overleaf you need to be clear about what it is that you actually want and when you want to achieve it.

This is a map that you may wish to return to as you go on with your journey.

The next question is to work out what the **ASSETS** you have are that will help you and what the **SUPPORTS** are that you will need from other people. It is also useful to think about what might get in your way or go wrong – but you should now have the strength and the understanding to help you to **OVERCOME OBSTACLES**.

PLANNING YOUR LONG-TERM RECOVERY FUTURE

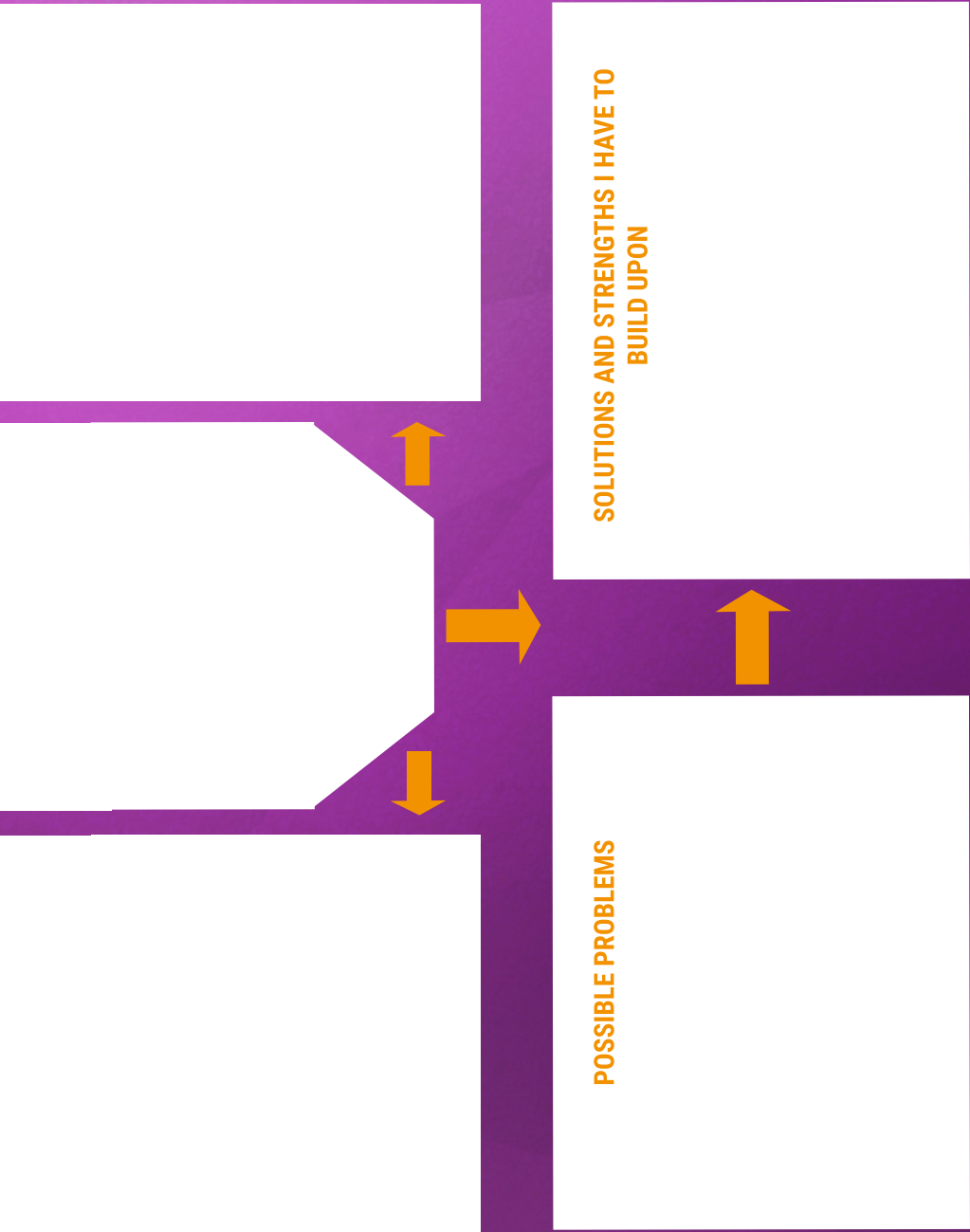
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL?

WHEN

STRENGTHS I NEED TO HAVE

MY NEXT GOAL

HELPFUL PEOPLE & USEFUL THOUGHTS



IMPROVING YOUR WELLBEING IN RECOVERY

The aim of this table is to encourage you to think about how to look after yourself physically, psychologically and socially. Our ability to cope with stress and to handle stressful situations is influenced by how good we feel and how well we take care of our bodies. Below are some basic tips for promoting your wellbeing:

#1: Get plenty of rest and sleep – sleep problems are common during recovery – learning good sleeping habits is a big priority both for stress management and for staying in recovery. It is beneficial to:

- Eliminate consumption of caffeine and closely regular nicotine intake
- Avoid napping during the day
- Engage in some form of aerobic exercise
- Eat a snack before bedtime
- Use relaxation techniques to lower the levels of physiological arousal

#2: Pay attention to nutrition – food is fuel. Some foods help reduce the risk of certain diseases and cancer. Try to eat more grain products like rice and bread, more beans and pasta, and more fresh vegetables. Go easy on fats and oils, and eat smaller amounts of animal products like meat, cheese, eggs and butter. Focus on giving up smoking if you can or switch to vaping – as well as the risk of cancer and heart diseases, smoking may reduce your body's ability to utilise certain vitamins effectively. Try to drink about eight glasses of water a day.

#3: Exercise regularly – the standard recommendation is about 30 minutes of moderate exercise three or four times a week. It helps if your exercise involves doing something you like. Regular exercise is a proven stress-buster. Most people find that regular exercise increases energy, self-esteem, confidence and stamina. Walking is a really good form of exercise. It is best to start slowly and then build up from there.

#4: Relax, unwind and have fun – taking time to relax and unwind each day is refreshing and it will give you an edge when situations turn stressful. The key to relaxing is to clear your mind of the day's events and troubles – you should try to find at least 30 minutes each day. Having fun is really important and will reduce stress – this includes laughing and joking and relaxing with friends

#5 Look after your physical and mental health. Attend all your GP/Hospital appointments and manage any long-term health conditions as best you can. If you have asthma or COPD, use your inhalers and medications as prescribed. If you are prescribed medication for mental health conditions – make sure you take them properly. Well-managed physical and mental health will help you to sustain your recovery.

Area of recovery	Could this be better (Y/N)	What can you do and when?	What are the immediate tasks?
Sleep			
Diet			
Exercise			
Relaxation			
Socialising			
Physical Health			
Mental Health			

WHERE DO YOU GO FROM HERE?

By the time you have reached this point, you should know yourself much better. You will also have embarked on a journey of discovery and exploration.

Other people will have had similar experiences – and hopefully you have learned from some of them – but nobody has done what you are doing. Ultimately, the decisions and choices are yours.

There is nothing in this booklet that promises you miracles or cures. Recovery is an arduous, demanding and difficult process but what it offers – a better life; a life of pride and dignity and respect – makes it worthwhile

Even if you have filled in every map and made all of the transitions through the recovery space, this is part of your recovery transformation and you may want or need to go back to see what you did and how you managed.

You are very lucky to be undertaking this journey and there are many inspirational people and groups to help and support you. However, if you have made it this far, then success is yours.

Good luck and thank you.

Appendix 1: ARC Assessment of Recovery Capital

Please tick if you agree with any of the following statements

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Having a sense of purpose in life is important to my recovery journey | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I am able to concentrate when I need to | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I am actively involved in leisure and sport activities | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I am coping with the stresses in my life | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I am currently completely sober | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I am free from worries about money | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I am actively engaged in efforts to improve myself
(training, education and/or self-awareness) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. I am happy dealing with a range of professional people | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. I am happy with my personal life | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. I am making good progress on my recovery journey | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. I am proud of my home | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. I am proud of the community I live in and feel a part of it | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. I am satisfied with my involvement with my family | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. I cope well with everyday tasks | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. I do not let other people down | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. I am free of threat or harm when I am at home | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17. I am happy with my appearance | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18. I engage in activities and events that support my recovery | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19. I eat regularly and have a balanced diet | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20. I engage in activities that I find enjoyable and fulfilling | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21. I feel physically well enough to work | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 22. I feel safe and protected where I live | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 23. I feel that I am in control of my substance use | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 24. I feel that I am free to shape my own destiny | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- 25. I get lots of support from friends ☐
- 26. I get the emotional help and support I need from my family ☐
- 27. I have a special person that I can share my joys and sorrows with ☐
- 28. I have access to opportunities for career development
(job opportunities, volunteering or apprenticeships) ☐
- 29. I have enough energy to complete the tasks I set myself ☐
- 30. I have had no 'near things' about relapsing ☐
- 31. I have had no recent periods of substance intoxication ☐
- 32. I have no problems getting around ☐
- 33. I have the personal resources I need to make decisions about my future ☐
- 34. I have the privacy I need ☐
- 35. I look after my health and wellbeing ☐
- 36. I make sure I do nothing that hurts or damages other people ☐
- 37. I meet all my obligations promptly ☐
- 38. I regard my life as challenging and fulfilling without the needs
for using drugs or alcohol ☐
- 39. I sleep well most nights ☐
- 40. I take full responsibility for my actions ☐
- 41. It is important for me to contribute to society and/or be involved in
activities that contribute to my community ☐
- 42. In general I am satisfied with my life ☐
- 43. It is important for me to do what I can to help other people ☐
- 44. It is important to me that I make a contribution to society ☐
- 45. My living space has helped to drive my recovery journey ☐
- 46. My personal identity does not revolve around drug use or drinking ☐
- 47. There are more important things to me in life than using substances ☐
- 48. What happens to me in the future mostly depends on me ☐
- 49. I have a network of people I can rely on to support my recovery ☐
- 50. When I think of the future I feel optimistic ☐

Appendix 2: Mutual aid and community recovery groups

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)

AA is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other so that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement is a desire to stop drinking.

National helpline: 08457 697 555

www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Cocaine Anonymous (CA)

CA is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other so that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from their addiction. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using cocaine and all other mind-altering substances.

CA Helpline: 08006 120 225

www.cauk.org.uk

Narcotics Anonymous (NA)

NA is a non-profit fellowship of people for whom drugs have become a major problem. Regular meetings allow members to share their personal experiences with each other. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using drugs.

UK NA Helpline: 03009 991 212

www.ukna.org.uk

SMART Recovery

When trapped in an addictive behaviour it is possible to become isolated and you may be thinking that no one else understands what you are going through. At a SMART meeting you will find people who will understand and have experience and success in dealing with these difficulties.

SMART Recovery Meeting Overview

All SMART Recovery meetings are run by trained facilitators and follow a standard structure. They are usually held weekly and last for 90 minutes (check individual meeting details). New participants are welcome to just observe if they are not yet comfortable discussing their own issues or contributing to the meeting.

<https://smartrecovery.org.uk/>

Appendix 3: Online Recovery Support/Blogs

1. The Fix

Daily website for alcohol and drug addiction recovery news and information. Your source for addiction recovery news, rehab reviews and sober living tips. Follow this blog to get News, Drug Policy, Culture, Resources and Rehab Reviews.

Frequency: about 2 posts per week.

Blog: thefix.com/blog

2. SMART Recovery Blog | Self Help Addiction Recovery

SMART Recovery is the leading self-empowering addiction recovery support group helping people recover from addiction to harmful substances and behaviors.

Frequency: about 1 post per week.

Blog: smartrecovery.org/blog

3. Addictionblog.org

Addiction Blog is a review of current trends in behavioral and chemical addictions and about the discoveries in the treatment of addiction. Their mission is to connect families and individuals struggling with addiction to necessary and appropriate treatment options.

Frequency: about 6 posts per week.

Blog: addictionblog.org

4. Recovery.org

From addiction recovery support to expert input, our blog provides the tools and inspiration you need to thrive in long-term sobriety. Sharing hope, encouragement, and support to help people bounce back from substance abuse & behavioral addictions.

Frequency: about 1 post per month.

Blog: recovery.org/voices

5. Cathy Taughinbaugh | Treatment Talk

Cathy Taughinbaugh's focus since the beginning has been to have a resourceful site where people can gain the support they need as well as find valuable information about addiction and recovery.

Frequency: about 2 posts per month.

Blog: cathytaughinbaugh.com/blog

6. Reddit | Addiction

Get popular updates and articles on Addiction shared on Reddit. The term addiction is used in many contexts to describe an obsession, compulsion, or excessive physical dependence or psychological dependence, such as: drug addiction, video game addiction, crime, money, alcoholism, work addiction, compulsive overeating, problem gambling, computer addiction, etc.

Frequency: about 84 posts per week.

Blog: reddit.com/r/addiction

7. Addiction and Trauma Treatment Blog

The Meadows inpatient treatment center is the most trusted name in treating unresolved emotional trauma, along with its effects on individuals, including alcohol and drug addiction, love addiction; panic and anxiety disorders, PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), codependency, depression, and bipolar disorder along with co-occurring conditions.

Frequency: about 1 post per week.

Blog: themeadows.com/blog

8. Psychology Today - Addiction

Recent posts about Addiction at Psychology Today.

Frequency: about 8 posts per week.

Blog: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/topics/addiction>

9. The Addiction Center Blog

Addiction affects nearly everyone, and it's no longer taboo to talk about it. With society's increasing acknowledgement of addiction comes great opportunities for those battling theirs to locate professional help and support. Helping to spread awareness and recovery information to everyone in need.

Frequency: about 1 post per week.

Blog: addictioncenter.com/community

10. Opiate Addiction Support

Opiate Addiction Support is a comprehensive online resource dedicated to helping people recover from opiate addiction. It is aimed at serving people who are addicted to opiates and want to quit, those that have stopped and want to live an extraordinary life free of addiction, and anyone else wanting to learn more about opiate addiction.

Frequency: about 2 posts per week.

Blog: opiateaddictionsupport.com/blog

11. AA Beyond Belief

We are a community of agnostics, atheists and freethinkers in AA who gather together to share our experiences with each other. We publish articles of interest to the secular person in AA. We also have a podcast where we discuss all things related to recovery from alcohol and drug addiction.

Frequency: about 2 posts per week.

Blog: aabeyondbelief.org

Appendix 4: UK Advocacy Groups

Release UK

Release is the national centre of expertise on drugs and drugs law. The organisation, founded in 1967, is an independent and registered charity.

Through our services the team provides free non-judgmental, specialist advice and information to the public and professionals on issues related to drug use and to drug laws.

The organisation campaigns directly on issues that impact on our clients - it is their experiences that drive the policy work that Release does and why we advocate for evidence-based drug policies that are founded on principles of public health rather than a criminal justice approach.

Release believes in a just and fair society where drug policies should reduce the harms associated with drugs, and where those who use drugs are treated based on principles of human rights, dignity and equality.

<https://www.release.org.uk/>

Favor UK

We are a national charity, made up of individuals in recovery, their friends and families and Community Recovery Organisations.

We are a policy advocacy movement that is taking on issues of discrimination, social justice and service access. A public and professional education movement, intent on challenging stigma.

<http://www.facesandvoicesofrecoveryuk.org/>

Favor UK organise a national recovery walk every year which is a fantastic event celebrating recovery. Follow their facebook page for details of the next walk;

Faces & Voices of Recovery UK

MY EXPERIENCES



Kaleidoscope Project

With special thanks to Professor David Best and the recovery peer mentors of North Wales for sharing the content from their 'Mapping Your Recovery Journey Manual'