

Module # 5

Relapse Prevention

Part 3

By

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**NOTICE: You Do NOT Have the Right
to Reprint or Resell this Report!**

LEGAL DISCLAIMER: Disclaimer Last Updated: February 24, 2008 **DISCLAIMER:** This information is not presented by a medical practitioner, and is for educational and informational purposes only. The content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read.

Introduction

The creation of this Relapse Prevention Plan is meant to be an aid in your recovery. It is not the be all and end all, it is meant to be of assistance and not be your entire recovery plan.

Please listen up, **This Is Important:**

"The best plan in the world does not mean a thing unless you put into action"

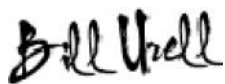
Sorry about that, I didn't mean to shout. There is a reality to be addressed here, though, and that is that a number of people relapse with a beautifully constructed plan that they never used or put into action.

Having a great plan that is not utilized, or acted on is the same thing as having no plan and all. No positive action occurs. You cannot help hearing at 12 step meetings the often repeated phrase, "This is a program of action". In fact, almost every single person who returns to 12 step meetings after relapse has this commonality, they almost universally say "I stopped going to meetings and working my program".

If you are not a big fan of 12 step groups, let me just reinterpret that last statement as saying "I stopped acting on a plan of action".

OK, I guess that's enough chest thumping, and browbeating, let's get on with the show...

Onward,



Relapse Prevention Plan

The first thing I'd like you to do is go to the PDF file labeled relapse Prevention Plan that was included in this week's package and print it out, in fact, make two copies. One can be your scratch sheet, and one will be the real deal.

To get started we should look at the various parts of our life that Addiction has affected. Sometimes addiction is referred to as a "bio-psycho-socio-spiritual disease". I know, I know, is there anything else they could have added on there to make it less understandable?

Let's break it down:

1. Bio=Biological

Addiction definitely affects us on a biological level. It affects just about every major system within our body, and can also alter our physical activity level.

2. Psycho=Psychological

We're definitely affected on a psychological level. It is becoming generally accepted that the majority of people with addiction have another co- occurring mental health diagnosis. In fact, there are whole groups of Mental Health diagnosis that began with "Substance induced". Take away the substance and sometimes you lessen mental health issues.

3. Social

Addiction affects us socially in many ways. I believe that addiction is a disease of isolation, and that in order to continue using, we break more and more family, friendship, and social ties. It wreaks havoc with our relationships.

4. Spiritual

Unfortunately, addiction affects us on a spiritual level as well. Many people who believe in a Higher Power admit that they feel they have become 'disconnected'. Another way of looking at how Addiction affects us spiritually, it is that we have started act against our moral principles and values. We are doing things we never would have imagined.

If we can agree that addiction affects us in these different life areas, then perhaps it makes sense to develop a plan that addresses each of them. We want to expand and explore concepts at a greater depth rather than simply relying only on "Just Say No" approach.

Let's get to the gettin'

Grab that relapse prevention Plan that you printed out and let's get to work. I will fill some in as examples for you as we go along, and provide some comments. You will want to have a clean copy to be working on.

Starting fresh on the next page...

Relapse Prevention Plan

Our starting point will to answer a couple of questions on recovery and sobriety:

1. Do you really want to get and stay sober? Are you ready to go to any lengths, to do what ever it takes, to get and stay sober?

Pay particular attention to the second part of this question. A lot of people have a desire to stay sober if it is convenient and not too hard, or does not require "giving up too much." Are you willing to make it the number one priority in your life with no "buts"

2. If you do not remain abstinence what will be the consequences of your return to using?

Think this all the way through, examine the short-term consequences and the long-term consequences. Thinking in terms of emotional consequences to yourself, the effects your actions will have on family and friends, and the toll it will take on you physically. How difficult will it be for you to read engage in recovery should you lapse or relapse?

Use those Relapse Warning Signs, and Relapse Trigger And Cues worksheets you did in the last two weeks to " you to answer the following questions:

3. Identify your top 5 relapse warning signs, put them in order of importance.

1. *I started withdrawing from people and getting lonely*

2. *I began asking myself "Is this all there is?"*

3.

4.

5.

4. For each of the items identified in the previous section, write out the problems they generated:

1. *Withdrawing from people - I stopped going to fun things and started to believe nobody understood me...*

2. *"Is this all there is?" I began to question if the amount of happiness that I had was worth all the effort.*

3.

4.

5.

5. Now for each of those problems identified in #3 previously, list some action you can take to prevent the problem from expanding and getting worse. It is important to make sure that your solutions are specific, achievable, time related, and measurable if possible.

1. Withdrawing from people - I can go visit my family this weekend. I can go to a 12 Step meeting at 8:00 p.m. tonight.

2. "Is this all there is?" I can write a list of 10 things that I am grateful for right now that I did not have when I was using. I can make a list of goals and see if there realistic...

3.

4.

5.

6. List any resources you may need to employ to deal with each of the problems, and set up any groundwork needed.

1. "I can go visit my family this weekend. I can go to a 12 Step meeting at 8:00 p.m. tonight" - I'll have to make sure that I have an open invitation to visit. I'll have to call the local AA office and find out where the local meetings are.

2. *"Is this all there is?" one of my goals is to take some courses the local community college so I call up and find out what the entrance requirements are and what courses are available*

3.

4.

5.

How did you do? I'll bet that was a little bit more difficult than you anticipated. Don't worry, or get discouraged, the idea is that your thinking, the emotions your feeling, and action you are taking, are all working together to develop a strong foundation for recovery.

OK, let's move on and look at the Prevention Plan or action plan that encompasses all the elements of addiction as a bio-psycho-socio- spiritual disease:

Physical Or Biological Area

One of the most basic needs that we have is to be well physically. There are certain areas that we can take a look at and things we can do to help our physical well-being. Do you need to address any of the following areas? If so, write down the action you will take to address it and the time frame you will have it done by.

A) Have you had a thorough physical checkup, including blood work with a hepatitis screen?

In my view, it is critical the get tested for hepatitis. It is not commonly included in a routine blood screening. I discovered I had hepatitis after being sober for 15 years. All my doctors missed it.

B) Are you eating in a healthy manner? Do you need to change your eating habits?

Drinking alcohol, or using drugs, for an extended period of time can severely interfere with the intake of vitamins, especially vitamin B. It is a great idea to take a multivitamin every day. Eat smarter, 'nuf said

C) Are you getting proper exercise?

We discussed the concept of "move a muscle change thought" when we discussed cravings, but physical exercise also releases natural 'feel good' chemicals in the brain.

D) Are your sleep habits regular?

If you are not sleeping regularly, you will obviously be tired (Duhhh) but, this can cause an inability to think clearly, and be more susceptible to depression and anxiety which are clearly relapse triggers. If you need help or suggestions for sleep; search on the Internet for the phrase " sleep hygiene" and look for a website that ends in .edu (those are generally universities are colleges) or.gov(those will be government sites).

E) Are you complying with any medications prescribed by your physician or psychiatrist?

There are two sides to kick around on this question. One thing that is not uncommon to hear from people who have relapsed when questioned about their medication compliance is "I started feeling really good so I stop taking my medication". So, keep taking it, it's working. Now the flip side is if the medication is not working, ask your doctor or psychiatrist to try new one. This is especially true

with the anti depressants, as the reality of the situation is there are many of them and not all of them work for everyone Sometimes it is a hit or miss situation to find one that will work for you.

Psychological Area

1. Is there a possibility you may benefit from a consultation with a psychologist psychiatrist?

It is more common than not for people with addiction to have, Co -occurring mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, or eating disorders. If this is the case, you may benefit from getting help with the mental health issues along with the Addiction issues.

2. Sometimes this situation may arise which will cause us to be temporarily depressed or anxious. List five things you can do to help with depression and anxiety.

Depression:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Anxiety:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Social Area:

1. Boredom and isolation have been identified consistently as being contributing factors to relapse. List 5 activities, or things you can do, to help with these problem areas, and when you will start them.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

2. There's a high probability that our relationships with our family have suffered. List for concrete actions you can initiate that may help repair family some relationships.

1.

2.

3.

4.

List three things you can do to protect yourself when you find yourself in social situation where alcohol is being served, or drugs are being used.

1. *Make sure I have away and out, drive my own car, or go with a friend so I can leave if I need to.*
2. *Practice a standard answer for refusing drugs or alcohol such as "no thanks" or "the doctor said I can't drink any more", whatever, be concise and direct in saying no.*
3. *Give them all a real good eye roll and say "That is soooo last year"*

Spiritual Area:

1. List any behaviors you have developed that need to be corrected that go against your sense of values or ethics when you were using are still with you. How will you correct them?

1. *I became sneaky and dishonest. I will stop doing things that I need to lie about. I'll take responsibility for my actions*
2. *My in action sometimes hurt people, Earl lot of things I did not do - stepped up to the role of being a man, husband, and father. Be less selfish with my time.*
- 3.

4.

5.

2. If you feel spiritually distanced from your Higher Power, ask yourself who moved? What concrete action steps can you take to move spiritually closer to your spirituality and/or Higher Power

1. I can start meditating and trying to connect by praying daily

2. I can try to go to church, or find one I like

3. I could try helping someone out

4.

3. How can I improve relationships with the following:

A) Myself

B) My family

C) My higher power

D) The community of people around me

Yeah! You Are Done!

Don't forget there is a clean copy that you can print off in a separate PDF titled relapse Prevention Plan

In Closing:

OK, we're done with our relapse prevention discussions and exercises. We have looked at the meaning of the *process* of relapse, relapse warning signs, and relapse triggers and cues. We have constructed an individualized Relapse Prevention Plan.

I hope this was of value to you

I'll say it again... Having a great plan that is not utilized, or acted on is the same thing as having no plan and all. No positive action occurs.

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