



A CHARS CONSULTING GUIDE

RECOVERY

Building a Life Worth Staying Sober For

A workbook for building meaning, connection, and stability in recovery.

Getting sober is hard. Staying sober is harder, though not because willpower runs out. An empty life is a dangerous place to be sober in. Recovery lasts when there is something worth staying well for. This workbook is a series of prompts to help you picture, and start building, that life. Take it slowly. There are no wrong answers.

Call 236-881-2600

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Educational resource — not a substitute for professional or emergency care. In crisis, call 911.

How to use this workbook

This is not a test and not a journal you have to fill in perfectly. It is a set of honest questions, meant to be returned to over days or weeks. Write in the margins, skip what doesn't fit, come back to what does.

Keep it somewhere private but reachable. The point is to actually use it on the ordinary and the hard days alike.

Sobriety is more than the absence of a substance. It is the presence of a life you don't want to escape from. Everything here is aimed at building that presence.

Part 1: What matters most

Before the how, the why. When cravings come, a clear sense of what you are protecting is one of the strongest anchors there is.

The people who matter most to me, and why:

The person I want to be in one year:

Three values I want my life to stand for:

What I've already lost to addiction that I want back:

What becomes possible for me if I stay well:

Part 2: Know your triggers

Triggers are the situations, feelings, people, and places that raise your risk. You cannot avoid all of them, but you can see them coming and have a plan ready before they arrive.

The feelings that most often put me at risk (e.g. stress, loneliness, anger):

The places and situations I need a plan for:

The people who are hard for my recovery to be around:

My early warning signs that I'm slipping:

A plan for each

For every trigger above, write one small, specific thing you will do instead. "Call my sister" beats "try to resist." A plan you can actually follow at 2am is worth more than a perfect one you can't.

When I feel [trigger], instead I will:

When I feel [trigger], instead I will:

When I feel [trigger], instead I will:

Part 3: Build your support

Isolation feeds addiction; connection heals it. Recovery is not a solo sport, and needing people is not weakness. It is the design.

Three people I can call in a hard moment, and their numbers:

One group, meeting, or community I can lean on:

One professional or service that supports my recovery:

Who I will tell about my recovery so they can help me protect it:

"The list of people I could call at 2am was three names long. On the worst night of my first year, that list is the only reason I'm still here."

— Person in recovery

Part 4: Daily anchors

Grand plans are fragile; small daily routines are not. A few steady anchors give each day a shape that recovery can grow inside of.

One thing I will do every morning to start well:

One form of movement or time outside I can commit to:

One way I'll wind down at night instead of numbing:

One thing I'll do each week that brings me joy or meaning:

The little and often rule

Consistency matters far more than intensity. Ten honest minutes a day, kept up, will do more for your recovery than an occasional heroic effort. Choose anchors small enough that you'll actually keep them.

Part 5: When things get hard

Hard days are not a sign that recovery is failing. They are part of it. What matters is having decided, in advance, what you'll do when they come.

The first three steps I'll take if I feel close to using:

What I want to remind myself in that moment:

Who I'll reach out to, no matter how ashamed I feel:

A slip is not the end of your recovery, and it is never a reason to give up on yourself. If it happens, reach out the same day. Recovery is not a straight line. It is a direction you keep choosing.

Part 6: Looking forward

Recovery is not only about avoiding a return to the old life. It is about walking toward a new one. Let yourself imagine it.

Something I want to try or learn now that I couldn't before:

A relationship I want to repair or build:

What I hope to be able to say about this year, a year from now:

Come back to these pages often. The life you're describing is not a fantasy. It is a set of small, real choices, made one day at a time. You are already making them by being here.

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- [Aftercare Planning](#)
- [Relapse Prevention](#)
- [Health and Wellness](#)
- [Meditation Therapy](#)

If you or someone you love is in immediate danger, call 911. Talk Suicide Canada: 1-833-456-4566 (call, 24/7) or text 45645. Chars Consulting: 236-881-2600 for confidential guidance and a clear next step.