

# Understanding Mental Health Relapse

Use this worksheet to take control of your recovery journey. By preparing when you are feeling well, you may be able reduce the possibility of a relapse. Share this with your treatment team and support network and create a relapse plan together.

## Monitoring Symptoms

Sometimes, your regular symptoms may become more severe, increase in frequency, or last longer. This can be the beginning of a relapse.

### Ask yourself these questions:

What symptoms do I have more often than usual when experiencing a relapse?

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Which symptoms get stronger and more difficult to ignore when I am experiencing a relapse?

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What symptoms last longer than usual when I am experiencing a relapse?

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## Recognizing Early Signs of Relapse

Many relapses occur gradually, with changes in behavior called **warning signs**. By learning to recognize your warning signs, you can get help early and avoid a more serious setback.

### Check off signs that you have experienced before a relapse:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Too much or too little sleep   | <input type="checkbox"/> Stopping medication or not taking it regularly                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling tense, nervous, hostile  | <input type="checkbox"/> Social withdrawal or isolation   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increase in paranoia, hallucinations, hearing voices, or risk-taking behaviors (spending money, using alcohol/drugs) | <input type="checkbox"/> False beliefs or delusions (people are against you, overconfident in your abilities) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confusing or nonsensical speech  | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in personal hygiene   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____  |

**If you notice any warning signs of relapse or any changes in your symptoms, talk to your doctor and treatment team right away.**

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## Identifying Triggers

Triggers are situations or behaviors that can lead to a relapse and are different for everyone. A common cause of relapse is stopping medication; however, relapses can happen even when a person is taking his or her medication as prescribed.

Difficult life events, like losing a family member, can be stressful. But it is important to know that even positive life events—like getting a new job or starting a new relationship—can also be stressful.

### Check the situations that may be triggers for you:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moving to a new apartment/house                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Having money problems                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Starting a new job or relationship                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Using drugs and alcohol                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being fired from a job                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Having an illness or death in the family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being invited to a party                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Fighting with a friend or family member  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stopping medication altogether                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Being bored during the day               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having difficulty taking medication, as prescribed | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                              |

## Strategies to Reduce Relapse

During periods of stress or change, you may stop doing things that help you stay healthy. Make a list of activities that help you stay well.

### Check the activities that can help you stay healthy.

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|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Find activities that reduce stress (listening to music, breathing exercises, meditation) | <input type="checkbox"/> Use supportive treatments and services (psychotherapy or peer counseling) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to my appointments regularly  | <input type="checkbox"/> Get support from my family, friends, or treatment team                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be involved in making decisions about my medications and supportive treatments           | <input type="checkbox"/> Eat healthy and nutritious food   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take medication regularly, as prescribed   | <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise (walking, gym, yoga)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____   |

For more information and free recovery resources, visit  
[www.ChoicesInRecovery.com](http://www.ChoicesInRecovery.com)