

My Support and Safety Plan

A clear response plan for moments that feel less manageable

A difficult moment does not mean recovery has failed. This plan is for both the early signs that you are beginning to struggle and situations where you need urgent support. Its purpose is to reduce the number of decisions you have to make when you are tired, anxious, lonely, or experiencing cravings. Fill it in while things feel steady, and keep it somewhere easy to find.

People I can call

Name	Who they are	Phone	Best time to reach

Think of your therapist or counsellor, doctor, sponsor, a peer in recovery, and trusted family or friends.

When I am most likely to need support

For example: evenings alone, weekends, after difficult conversations, payday, or passing certain places.

What kind of support actually helps me

Be specific. This helps the people who support you. Examples include listening without giving advice, sharing a meal or walk, helping with a practical task, or reminding me why I am doing this.

Early Warning Signs

Struggle rarely arrives without notice - it usually sends signals first

Noticing a warning sign is not a problem - it is the plan working. The earlier a signal is noticed, the smaller the response that may be needed.

Common early changes

Sleep -	sleeping much more or less, or dreading bedtime
Eating -	skipping meals, losing appetite, or eating on autopilot
Mood -	feeling more irritable, flat, restless, or overwhelmed than usual
Isolation -	cancelling plans, avoiding calls, or going quiet
Routines -	letting anchors slip - wake time, meals, movement, or meetings
Cravings -	becoming more frequent, more intense, or harder to redirect
Thinking -	"just one", "I can handle it now", or "no one would know"

My personal signs

The signs the people close to me would notice first.

A difficult day

Uncomfortable, but my plan and daily anchors are still enough to carry me through it.

For me, this looks like:

I need more support now

Signals are stacking up, anchors are slipping, and managing alone is getting harder. It is time to use page 3.

For me, this looks like:

What I Will Do

Decided in advance, so the difficult moment holds fewer decisions

1

First steps I can take on my own

For example: slow breathing, changing rooms, taking a shower, going for a walk, or using urge surfing for 20 minutes - while keeping support within reach.

2

People I will contact

Start with the person I can reach most honestly and easily - not the person I am least willing to worry.

3

Places I can go

For example: a recovery meeting, gym, library, community space, trusted friend's home, or another place I have already identified as supportive.

4

Professional support I can access

Therapist or counsellor, aftercare group, doctor, treatment centre, or local support service.

What I will avoid doing when distressed

For example: making big decisions, testing myself around triggers, isolating, keeping the struggle secret, or going somewhere where alcohol or drugs are easily available.

Urgent Support

For moments that need more than this plan

Sometimes a moment is bigger than anything on the previous pages. If you are worried about your immediate safety, or feel close to acting on urges you cannot manage alone, hand the decision to someone else. Using urgent support is using the plan - not abandoning it.

Act now if you cannot stay safe

If you may harm yourself or someone else, have taken a dangerous amount of alcohol, medication, or drugs, or cannot remain safe, contact local emergency services or go to the nearest emergency department now. Do not stay alone.

My urgent contacts

Local crisis line

Emergency services number where I live

My treatment centre or aftercare team

A trusted person who knows this plan exists

Ask someone you trust to help keep your home environment supportive during difficult periods - for example, by keeping alcohol or substances out of the house. Making things easier for yourself is not weakness; it is good planning.

After a difficult moment

- **Rest.** Difficult moments are physically exhausting, even when nothing shows on the outside.
- **Tell someone what happened.** The moment loses power when it is not a secret.
- **Review the plan.** Whatever happened is information, not a verdict. Adjust anything that would make it easier to use next time.
- **Share this plan.** A safety plan works best when at least one other person knows it exists.
Keep this plan easy to reach and share it with someone you trust.