

Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery



Client Workbook

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About the Author

George A. Parks, Ph.D. is a clinical psychologist licensed in the State of Washington. Dr. Parks served the University of Washington for over 30 years as faculty member, student counselor, research scientist or administrator. George was a founding member the Addictive Behaviors Research Center in the Department of Psychology directed by his friend and colleague, G. Alan Marlatt, Ph.D. He has conducted research on college drinking and on relapse prevention for clients in substance abuse treatment and under criminal justice supervision as well as on Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention (MBRP) and Vipassana Meditation as treatments for substance use disorders. Dr. Parks currently serves as a trainer, technical advisor, and consultant on evidence-based alcohol and drug prevention (BASICS and CASICS) and Relapse Prevention Therapy (RPT) for numerous private and public colleges and universities, substance abuse treatment centers, mental health centers, correctional facilities as well as State, Provincial and National Government Agencies in the U.S., Canada, Malta and Chile.

Dedication

*To Those On the Road To Recovery
From Addiction to Freedom*

Acknowledgments

The main reason I wrote *Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery* was to address my own struggles with drug use, mental health and criminal conduct. I use the ideas and relapse prevention strategies offered here myself everyday to stay clean and sober and to create a good life that will not only benefit me and my family, but also my friends, my clients, my colleagues and my community. I hope this *Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery Client Workbook* will serve you well on your *Road to Recovery* helping you to stay sober and create the *Good Life* you desire and deserve.

Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery is a product of my long collaboration and friendship with Dr. G. Alan Marlatt, the originator of a cognitive-behavioral model of relapse that provides the treatment platform for Relapse Prevention Therapy (RPT). Alan's inspiration as an innovator in the development of *compassionate* and *pragmatic* prevention and treatment programs for alcohol and drug abuse has guided my work for many years.

I would also like to acknowledge fellow psychologists Edward F. Chaney, Ph.D., Judith R. Gordon, Ph.D., Claudette Cummings, Ph.D., Susan J. Curry, Ph.D., William H. George, Ph.D., Dennis M. Donovan, Ph.D., Dennis C. Daley, Ph.D., John S. Baer, Ph.D., Lisa J. Roberts, Ph.D., Linda A. Dimeff, Ph.D., Mary E. Larimer, Ph.D., Karen K. Chan and Katie Witkiewitz Ph.D., for their important contributions to the development and evaluation of *Relapse Prevention Therapy*.

Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery is an evidence-based psychosocial treatment for substance use disorders, mental disorders and criminal conduct integrating *Motivational Interviewing* (MI) developed by Dr. William R. Miller and Dr. Stephen Rollnick and *Relapse Prevention Therapy* (RPT) developed by Dr. G. Alan Marlatt and his colleagues.

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Prologue

Come As You Are

*Come again, please come again
whoever you are
worshipper, wanderer or lover of leaving,
it doesn't matter.*

*Even if you promised a hundred times,
and a hundred times you broke your promise.*

*This door is not the door
of hopelessness and frustration.
This door is open for everybody.*

Come, come as you are.

Rumi

Chapter 1

Understanding and Preventing Relapse

This *Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery Client Workbook* was created to support your participation in substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment or a correctional program supervised by a Drug Court or by a Probation or Parole agency. You can also use this *Workbook* as a self-help resource, if you are not enrolled in a treatment or criminal justice program or have recently completed one.

Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery can address addictive behaviors; mental disorders or criminal conduct because these behaviors are interrelated, “chronically relapsing conditions.” You may have experienced this when after a period of sobriety and improvement you “fell back” into old patterns that eventually led to using alcohol or drugs, to committing crimes or to increased suffering from a mental disorder. Preventing relapse will help you to reduce or eliminate the harm caused by drinking or drug use, to experience improved mental health and to live the *Good Life* you desire and deserve.

The *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration* (SAMHSA), the U.S. Government Agency that supports substance abuse and mental health treatment programs defines *Recovery* as: “A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.”

The *Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery* Program was designed to help you in your recovery by developing the 1) *motivation*, 2) *knowledge*, 3) *coping skills* and 4) *social support* needed to *prevent relapse*.

Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery is a highly structured program that may include *individual* or *group* sessions. This *Client Workbook* is a vital part of the program giving you all the information and exercises from the session in one place.

While this program is compatible with participation in 12-Step Fellowships such as Alcoholics Anonymous, if you are choosing another path of recovery, this *Client Workbook* was written for you, too.

This *Workbook* was designed with three purposes in mind:

1. To provide you with the *knowledge* you need to prepare for and to increase the power of your program sessions and to *document* the information discussed with your counselor and peers.
2. To give you a resource to *write down* the exercises you and your peers will participate in during and between the sessions.
3. To allow you to take information and exercises from the session home for *review* and *study* to prepare for your next session and as a *reminder* of what you learned in the prior one.

By the end of the *Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery* Program, the completed exercises and information in your *Workbook* will contain the knowledge and coping skills you have learned and practiced during the program as well as be a lasting resource and inspiration for your recovery.

Making good use of the *Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery* Program is as much about what you do in-between your sessions and after the program ends, as what you do during the sessions. The individual or group sessions can provide you with a doorway to a new way of being beyond dependence on alcohol or drugs. You are invited to walk through this doorway on your path toward recovery and healthy living. However, the program sessions won't magically help you prevent relapse, rather it's how you apply the lessons learned and the skills practiced in the program that will determine your personal destiny and your impact on others.

Research on addictive behaviors, mental health and criminal conduct has shown that clients are far more successful when they really "work their program." That is, the more you apply the knowledge and skills you acquire *between* the sessions and *after* they end, the better your chances are of maintaining change and preventing relapse. Each week you'll have an exercise to complete in your *Workbook* at home as *in-between session practice*. You will bring your workbook with the completed exercise to the next session to discuss and to consolidate what you have learned before moving on the topic focus for that session. Please read and use this workbook often and bring it to all your *Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery* Program sessions.

And so, a new journey begins.

"Be yourself, you are bound to be successful."

Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery Program Overview

The *Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery* Program consists of both *Motivational Enhancement* and *Coping Skills Sessions*. The *Motivational Enhancement Sessions* allow you to: 1) get acquainted with your counselor (and peers) and form a strong collaborative relationship, 2) to better understand the relapse process and how it applies to your experience, 3) to explore your attitudes and motivation related to drinking or drug use, 4) to review your past use of alcohol or drugs and its impact on your life and 5) to create a *Change Plan* to develop specific goals for your *Coping Skills Sessions*.

The *Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery Coping Skills Sessions* are designed to help you gain the *knowledge; skills and support* you need to *manage* and eventually to *prevent* alcohol or drug *relapse*. *Coping Skills* covered in the program include:

1. Creating a *social support system* of people who care about you and your recovery.
2. Understanding how you *learned* to drink and use drugs.
3. Analyzing in detail *when, where and how* you have used alcohol or drugs in the past.
4. Learning to engage in *alternative activities* that give you a sense of pleasure and satisfaction.
5. Identifying *triggers* and *coping with urges and craving*.
6. Understanding and anticipating *high-risk scenarios*.
7. Developing and executing a *Relapse Prevention Plan* to *PACE* *Your Recovery* by *Planning Ahead, Avoiding, Coping or Escaping high-risk scenarios* without drinking or using drugs.
8. *Reducing availability* of alcohol and drugs and *learning to refuse offers* to drink or use drugs.
9. *Working skillfully with thoughts and feelings* related to alcohol or drug use.
10. *Managing lapses*, if they occur, and revising your *Relapse Prevention Plan* to cope more effectively with high-risk scenarios without having a lapse.

In the *Coping Skills Sessions*, you'll have a chance to *learn* and *practice* these *Recovery Skills* and get *feedback* and *guidance* from your counselor and your peers, if you are in a group, on applying them to first *managing* and then *preventing relapse*. Between sessions you'll practice these coping skills in real life situations and review your experiences each week with your counselor or group. After the your sessions end, you'll continue to practice and master these skills to create the *sobriety* that makes your *recovery* and your ability to live a *good life* possible.

Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery Topics

Chapter 1 Understanding and Preventing Relapse

The goal of this initial *Motivational Enhancement Session* is to develop rapport with your counselor and your peers, if you're in a group. Key themes addressed in the session are gaining an understanding of the relapse process and apply it to your experience. During this session the entire *Preventing Relapse on the Road to Recovery Program* will be reviewed and discussed.

Chapter 2 Enhancing Motivation

This *Motivational Enhancement Session* is about increasing your understanding of motivation by reviewing the *Stages of Change Model* at the beginning of *Chapter 2* in the *Client Workbook*. After discussing how to apply the *stage of change model* to your life, you will complete a *Decisional Balance Exercise* designed to clarify your attitudes about changing your alcohol or drug use habits. Finally, you will rate the *importance* of changing your alcohol or drug use and related concerns and how *confident* you are that you can change them on a series of *Motivational Rulers*.

You will be asked to read *Chapter 3* in your *Client Workbook* prior to the third session and to complete the *Alcohol and Drug Use Profile* in that chapter. Although taking an honest and thorough look at yourself is difficult and may be disturbing in some ways, knowledge is power and the first step in the change process. Be as honest and accurate in the self-assessment as you can be.

Chapter 3 Self-Awareness and Change Planning

The third *Motivational Enhancement Session* is designed to discuss your *Alcohol and Drug Use Profile*. This will happen in a conversation called a *Personal Reflective Summary* designed for you to gain greater awareness and clarity about your past addictive behavior and how it has impacted your safety, health, relationships, legal status and success. After this discussion, you will develop a *Change Plan* to guide you to identify and achieve the goals you have for the program.

Chapter 4 Creating a Social Support System

In this first *Coping Skills Session*, you will explore how to create and use a *social support system* of caring and health relationships to help you prevent relapse and support your recovery. Topics in this session include developing a social support, sustaining your current relationships and extending your social support system. During this session you will also develop a *Social Support Plan*.

Chapter 5 Breaking Addictive Behavior Habits

In this *Coping Skills Session*, you will explore how drinking or drug use can be understood as *learned behaviors* or *bad habits*. Alcohol and drug use are learned by 1) observing models such as parents, other family members, peers, sports stars, celebrities, etc., 2) through the reinforcement or rewards (pain relief and pleasure) and 3) by conditioning that links cues or triggers like your thoughts and feelings as well as people, places and things to drinking or using drugs. Like all habits, drinking or drug uses are *behaviors we do over and over again* and with constant repetition over time become on *automatic pilot*. *Breaking addictive behavior habits* requires moving from *automatic pilot* to *awareness* and *choice* by learning a self-observation technique called *Functional Analysis*.

Chapter 6 Coping with Urges and Craving

Urges and *craving* are common experiences for people trying to abstain from alcohol and drugs. This *Coping Skills Session* focuses on helping you describe your urges and craving and on understanding them as *triggers* for drinking or drug use. Several strategies to *cope with craving* will be discussed. During the session, you will learn and practice a coping skill called *Urge Surfing* during an in-session exercise.

Chapter 7 Identifying High-Risk Scenarios

Risky people, places and things that make it difficult to abstain from alcohol or drugs are called *High-Risk Scenarios*. In this *Coping Skills Session*, you will complete the *High-Risk Scenario Survey*. Use the results you will create an individual *Relapse Risk Profile* that identifies your three most difficult high-risk scenarios. This will help you anticipate when a lapse is likely to occur.

Chapter 8 Coping with High-Risk Scenarios

Coping with *High-Risk Scenarios* is introduced using the acronym **PACE** (**P**lan Ahead, **A**void, **C**ope and **E**scape). In this *Coping Skills Session*, you will create a *Relapse Prevention Plan*. You will learn to anticipate high-risk scenarios by planning ahead each week and using your counselor, peers and other supports to help you prevent relapse.

Chapter 9 Developing Alcohol and Drug Refusal Skills

The key themes covered in this *Coping Skills Session* are *managing the availability* of alcohol and drugs and *refusing offers to drink or use drugs* by developing your *assertiveness*. You will learn how *aggressive* and *unassertive* communication styles are associated with greater relapse risk. An in-session exercise focuses on specific steps to reduce the availability of alcohol and drugs.

Chapter 10 Coping with a Lapse

Developing strategies for coping with a lapse is the focus of this Coping Skills Session. A *lapse* or *slip* is a major *crisis in recovery*. *Lapses* do not have to escalate into a *full-blown relapse*. *Lapses* can be managed if you apply emergency procedures you have learned and practiced in advance. To decrease the chances of lapse becoming a full-blown relapse, you will also learn how to manage your emotional reactions to a lapse or the *AVE (Abstinence Violation Effect)* with positive self-talk and social support. In this session, you will also develop an *emergency plan* to cope with a lapse.

Chapter 11 Working Skillfully with Thoughts and Feelings

Relapse is often triggered by *painful and difficult emotions*. In this *Coping Skills Session* you will learn the “A-B-Cs” of how your thoughts and interpretations of events influence your feelings and may increase your relapse risk. Then, apply the *A-B-C model* of emotions to relapse prevention, you will do an exercise called the *Core Beliefs Process* that can help you work more skillfully with thoughts and painful and emotions rather than *self-medicate* with alcohol or drugs.

Chapter 12 Creating a Good Life

In this final *Coping Skills Session*, you will get an opportunity to review your experiences in the program and consolidate the “lessons learned” about *Preventing Relapse On the Road to Recovery* into a vision of the *Good Life* as you aspire to live it. After reviewing a list of *Human Goods* that enrich and make life enjoyable and meaningful, you will be asked to write out your vision for the *Good Life* as you continue *On the Road to Recovery*.