

Preventing Setbacks Worksheet



As you continue to practice your skills in the months ahead, remember that recovery is a gradual process and setbacks are common. During a holiday or special family occasion, missing a loved one who died may make you feel sadder. Strong feelings may be evoked, and family members may be anxious because usual routines are thrown off course. Use this worksheet to identify these difficult days and ways to cope with them.

1. **Identify “Early Warning Signs” or Difficult Days.** Write down three stressful situations or triggers (changing jobs or school, financial problems, news reports about a similar disaster, the anniversary of the event) you expect in the future.

2. **What can you do to help yourself feel better?** List the skills that will help you before, during, and after these difficult days or stressful situations.

3. **Other things to keep in mind on these difficult days:**

- **Use your worksheets and handouts.** Review the materials to remind you of the skills you learned and what you have accomplished.
- **Increase self-care.** Maintain healthy routines, such as normal sleeping, eating, and exercise routines.
- **Spend time with others.** Let friends or family members know how they can be of support before, during, and after these difficult days or situations.
- **Do fun or meaningful activities.** Distract yourself by engaging in hobbies, helping others, and participating in satisfying activities.
- **Beware of using alcohol or drugs.** Alcohol and other drugs—while they seem to help in the short term—always make things worse in the long term.
- **Don’t be too hard on yourself.** Remember that everyone has a bad day and that “My progress is NOT all blown.”
- **Call a counselor for help.** If your reactions continue or increase, contact the program for further assistance.