Relapse Prevention and Wellness Plan

Depression and Anxiety: Relapse Prevention

This plan helps you stay well after depression or anxiety has eased, and act early if it starts to come back. Make it with your therapist while you are feeling better, so it is ready if you need it. The idea of learning your own early warning signs and planning what to do comes from relapse prevention work, including mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, developed by Zindel Segal, Mark Williams and John Teasdale.

1 What keeps me well

Think about what has helped you feel better. Include small things, like a walk, a regular bedtime or a call with a friend.

Things I do most days	Things I do each week

What I learned in therapy that I want to keep using:

2 My early warning signs

Early signs are the small changes that showed up before you felt at your worst last time. Everyone's are different.

Where I notice it	My early signs
In my thoughts	
In my mood and feelings	
In my body and sleep	
In what I do or stop doing	
What other people notice	

Why does this work? *Depression and anxiety can come back, even after you have felt well for a while. Spotting the first signs gives you time to act while things are easier to turn around. In trials, people with past depression who took mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, which includes this kind of plan, were less likely to relapse over the next year.*

**This worksheet provides information but is not a substitute for therapy. It works best with guidance from a professional.*

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3 My action plan

Times that could make it harder to stay well:

Example: Dark winter months, a busy season at work, a hard anniversary

If I notice early signs, I will:

Example: Go back to my morning walk, tell my partner, and book a check-in with my therapist

If things keep getting worse for more than a week or two, I will:

If you take medicine for depression or anxiety, keep taking it as prescribed, and talk to your doctor before you stop or change it.

4 People who can help

Name	How they can help	Phone
My therapist		
My doctor		

5 A note to myself

Write a few words to read on a hard day. What would you want to remember?

If you are in crisis or thinking about harming yourself, call or text 988 to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

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