

Staying the course

A relapse prevention plan to stay on track



#LetsTalk

For those who struggle with addiction – whether it’s food, substance abuse or a behavioural issue – a “relapse prevention plan” is one of the best ways to get back on track when lapsing into old behaviours.

But, a relapse prevention plan can also be helpful in combating stress and anxiety by prompting a return to the strategies that have helped in the past.

We’ve put together a number of pieces in support of #WorldMentalHealthDay that highlight how sleep, exercise, nutrition and mindfulness can help reduce stress and anxiety. But, when you find yourself lapsing back into stressful and anxious behaviour, a relapse prevention plan can be just what you need. Here’s a few pointers to get you started:



Your relapse prevention plan

An important step in this process is the actual writing of your own “Relapse Prevention Plan.” It’s a way of setting an intention for yourself -- a commitment to treating yourself kindly, looking to the future and improving how you cope with stress or anxiety over time. It should detail your stress or anxiety management goals and strategies for achieving them. Below is an example to help you get started. Once you’ve written your relapse prevention plan, put it somewhere you’ll see every day.

My relapse prevention plan (An example)

“I will be successful with _____ (your goal) if I _____ (your strategy) ”

Goals and strategies

I will:

- Reduce my anxiety by being mindful of my breathing
- Manage my stress by taking mindful movement breaks throughout the day
- Feel better with a relaxing bedtime routine and getting a good night’s sleep
- Be more in control when I communicate my needs and feelings to others
- Avoid stress eating and instead use mealtime as a way to relax and be nourished

(use this space to detail other commitments and techniques to help you achieve your goals)

Get support

Whether you’re an individual looking to reduce stress with self-care resources, or an organisation taking steps to lower employee burnout by helping your workforce develop resilience, there are programs and resources to help put people on the path to better mental and physical health.

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For more information check out [Mental health support resources](#) and [Aetna International’s stress-reduction services](#)

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Sources:
Aetna International clinicians