

# The Recovery Zone System

|                     |                                     | RED ZONE   | YELLOW ZONE  | GREEN ZONE  |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|
|                     | FOCUS                               | <b>Stop. Activate your recovery.</b><br>Stop everything you are doing and save your life. Focus entirely on survival and your recovery.  | <b>Proceed with caution. Build your life.</b><br>Maintain your foundation of sobriety and strong recovery. Build your new life.  | <b>Go. Celebrate your life.</b><br>Live a long, healthy, sober life. Help others find recovery.   |
|                     | TIMELINE                            | First commitment to 1.5–3 years in recovery.   | 1.5–3 years in recovery to 4–6 years.  | 4–6 years to the end of your life.  |
|                     | ARE YOU READY?                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you have an honest and ongoing desire to stop drinking or using drugs?</li> <li>Are you ready to focus exclusively on recovery?</li> <li>Are you ready to save your life?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you have a strong and stable recovery? Has the fog lifted?</li> <li>Have you completed initial treatment? Do you have a relapse prevention plan?</li> <li>Are you still involved in a recovery fellowship? Have you completed steps 1–9? Are you ready to start steps 10–12?</li> <li>Have you seen the promises of the <i>Big Book</i> come true?</li> <li>Are you ready to rebuild your life?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you have a strong and stable recovery, and a fulfilled and content life?</li> <li>Are you still involved in a recovery fellowship? Have you completed steps 1–12?</li> <li>Have you rebuilt your life (relationships, recreation, education, career, finances)?</li> <li>Have you restored your health?</li> <li>Are you ready to help others find recovery?</li> </ul> |
| RECOVERY ACTIVITIES | RECOVERY TREATMENT                  | Start professional treatment, if needed, with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detox</li> <li>Inpatient or outpatient treatment</li> <li>Guidance to address issues such as trauma</li> </ul>                           | Professional treatment, if any, should focus on growth in relationships, career, and emotions, and healthy living practices.   | Maintain a relationship with a professional for help as needed.   |
|                     | MUTUAL-SUPPORT FELLOWSHIP           | Start intensive participation in mutual-support activities. Complete steps 1–3 (decision steps) and 4–9 (action steps).  | Continue mutual-support activities. If you want to cut back, talk to your sponsor. Welcome leadership and service opportunities. Start steps 10–12 (maintenance).  | With your sponsor, find your best level of participation. Continue to practice step 12. Make sponsoring, service, and leadership priorities.  |
|                     | SPIRITUALITY                        | Your brain is too foggy for much spiritual growth. Focus on acceptance, preparation.   | Develop and practice spiritual attitudes and activities.   | Be available to guide others.   |
|                     | LIVING SOBER AND PREVENTING RELAPSE | Learn about cues and triggers that can lead to relapse. Develop a plan to deal with cravings. Your living environment is structured enough to keep your focus on recovery.   | Continue to be watchful of cues and triggers. Review your plan for cravings often. Do Recovery Zone ReChecks regularly. Your living environment is supportive of your personal goals.  | Continue to be watchful of cues and triggers. Review your plan to deal with cravings often. Do Recovery Zone ReChecks regularly. You are strong enough to live wherever you want.   |
| LIFE PLAN           | RELATIONSHIPS                       | Put relationships on hold and work on yourself. Lay the groundwork for later repairs.  | Rebuild or start new relationships with your partner, family, friends, and others.   | Relationships should be healed, content, and growing. Address and prevent addiction in your extended family.  |
|                     | RECREATION AND SOBER SOCIALIZING    | Recreation and socializing are low priorities. Learn how to socialize sober.   | Explore recreational and social activities.  | Participate regularly in recreational and social activities.  |
|                     | EDUCATION, CAREER, FINANCES         | Put education, career, and finances on hold as much as possible. Learn to handle work stress.  | Build or rebuild your education, career, and finances.   | Career and finances should be stable.   |
| HEALTH PLAN         | PHYSICAL HEALTH                     | Focus on survival. Take care of immediate needs. Learn about the risks of drugs in health care.  | Stabilize your health. Find a primary care provider and address neglected issues. Avoid all mood-altering medications.   | Achieve your best health. Focus on preventive care. Avoid all mood-altering medications.  |
|                     | DIET                                | Eat to avoid relapse and relieve cravings.   | Learn about nutrition and improve your diet.   | Establish good dietary habits.  |
|                     | EXERCISE                            | Do some exercise, but be sure it is not goal-oriented or isolating.  | Find forms of exercise you enjoy.  | Set and meet exercise goals.  |
|                     | MENTAL HEALTH                       | Symptoms may be due to addiction. Unless they are life-threatening, usually the best approach is to continue your focus on recovery.   | Focus on quality of life issues.   | Focus on quality of life issues.  |