

The Recovery Zone System

		RED ZONE	YELLOW ZONE	GREEN ZONE
FOCUS		Stop. Activate your recovery. Stop everything you are doing and save your life. Focus entirely on survival and your recovery.	Proceed with caution. Build your life. Maintain your foundation of sobriety and strong recovery. Build your new life.	Go. Celebrate your life. 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"> Do you have an honest and ongoing desire to stop drinking or using drugs? Are you ready to focus exclusively on recovery? Are you ready to save your life? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have a strong and stable recovery? Has the fog lifted? Have you completed initial treatment? Do you have a relapse prevention plan? Are you still involved in a recovery fellowship? Have you completed steps 1–9? Are you ready to start steps 10–12? Have you seen the promises of the <i>Big Book</i> come true? Are you ready to rebuild your life? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have a strong and stable recovery, and a fulfilled and content life? Are you still involved in a recovery fellowship? Have you completed steps 1–12? Have you rebuilt your life (relationships, recreation, education, career, finances)? Have you restored your health? Are you ready to help others find recovery?
RECOVERY ACTIVITIES	RECOVERY TREATMENT	Start professional treatment, if needed, with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detox Inpatient or outpatient treatment Guidance to address issues such as trauma 	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.