

Psycho-Education for Patients and Family Members

# **Session 7: Roadmap for Recovery (1)**

# Recovery Stages

Stage 1: Withdrawal  
(1-2 weeks)

Stage 2: Early Abstinence or “Honeymoon”  
(following 1 month)

Stage 3: Protracted Abstinence or “the Wall”  
(following 3-4 months)

Stage 4: Adjustment/Resolution  
(following 2 months)

## Question:

- *After stopping substance use, how have your feelings and physical conditions changed over time?*

# Stage 1: Withdrawal (1-2 weeks)

## Characteristics

- Physical detoxification
- Cravings
- Depression/anxiety
- Low energy
- Irritability
- Exhaustion
- Insomnia
- Paranoia
- Memory problems
- Intense hunger

# **Stage 1: Withdrawal (1-2 weeks)**

## Relapse Risk Factors (for those in outpatient treatment)

- Powerful cravings
- Paranoia
- Depression
- Fear of withdrawal symptoms
- Disordered sleep patterns
- Unstructured time
- Proximity of triggers

# **Stage 2: Early Abstinence or “Honeymoon” (following 1 month)**

## Characteristics

- Increased energy and optimism
- Overconfidence
- Difficulty concentrating
- Continued memory problems
- Concern about weight gain
- Intense feelings
- Mood swings
- Other substance use
- Inability to prioritize
- Mild paranoia

# **Stage 2: Early Abstinence or “Honeymoon” (following 1 month)**

## Relapse Risk Factors (for those in outpatient treatment)

- Tiredness and stress due to “Workaholism”
- Discontinuation of structure (including treatment)
- Overconfidence
- Secondary drug or alcohol use
- Resistance to behavior change

# Stage 3: Protracted Abstinence or “the Wall” (following 3-4 months)

## Characteristics

- Low energy
- Return of cravings
- Return to old behaviors
- Continued lifestyle changes
- Positive benefits from abstinence
- Anger and depression
- Emotional swings
- Paranoia or suspicion
- Unclear thinking
- Isolation
- Weight gain
- Family adjustment and conflict



# **Stage 3: Protracted Abstinence or “the Wall” (following 3-4 months)**

## Relapse Risk Factors (for those in outpatient treatment)

- Increased emotionality
- Breakdown of structure
- Behavioral “drift”
- Interpersonal conflict
- Decreased ability to feel pleasure
- Loss of motivation
- Insomnia
- Low energy/fatigue
- Paranoia
- Secondary drug use
- Relapse justification

# Stage 4: Adjustment and Resolution (following 2 months)

## Characteristics

- Feelings of accomplishment
- Continued lifestyle and relationship change

*People in this stage need to shift from learning new skills to:*

- Maintaining a balanced lifestyle
- Monitoring for relapse signs
- Accepting that recovery is a life-long process
- Developing new areas of interest

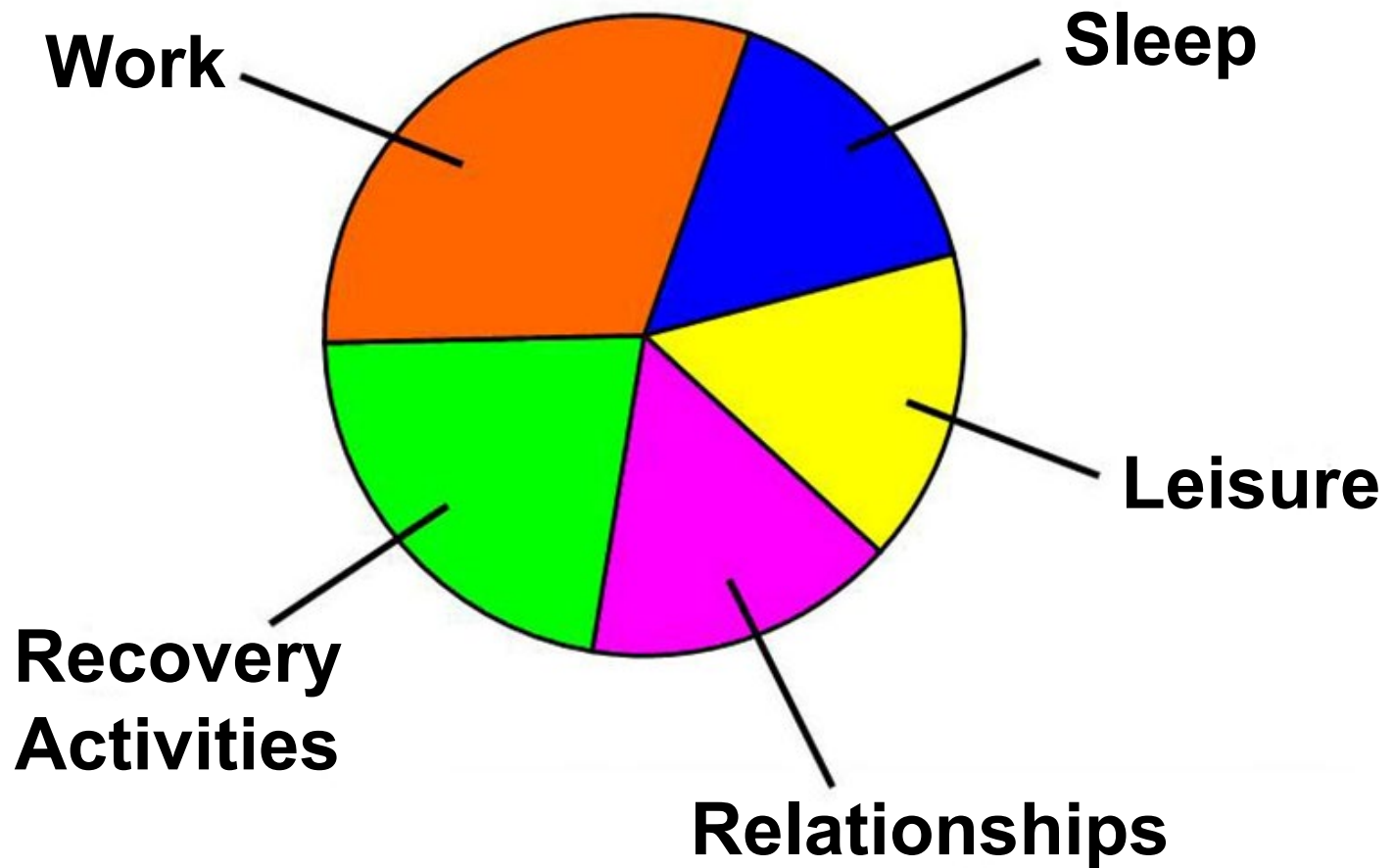
# Stage 4: Adjustment and Resolution (following 2 months)

## Relapse Risk Factors

- Secondary drug or alcohol use
- Feeling “cured” and relaxing vigilance for relapse signs
- Relaxation of structure
- Return to relationships with people who use substances
- Neglect recovery activities, losing the momentum of recovery
- Neglect exercise and other self-care activities

# Stage 4: Adjustment and Resolution (following 2 months)

## Necessary Lifestyle Balance



## Question:

- *Why is it important to have a structured lifestyle in the process of recovery?*

# Structured Lifestyle

Self-designed structure:

- Helps eliminate avoidable triggers
- Makes the concept of “one day at a time” concrete
- Reduces anxiety
- Counters the drug-using lifestyle
- Provides a basic foundation for ongoing recovery

# Structured Lifestyle

## Building Blocks of Structure

Treatment Activities		Recreational/Leisure Activities	
12-Step/Self-Help Meetings		School	
Sports	Activities With Friends Who Are Drug Free		
Time Scheduling		Exercise	
Work	Family-Related Events	Community Activities	
Spiritual Activities		Island Building	

# Structured Lifestyle

## Scheduling Pitfalls

- Unrealistic schedules
- Unbalanced schedules
- Imposed schedules
- No support from significant others
- Holidays, illness, and other changes

