



**Navigating Drug Courts:
A Manual for Drug Court Clients**

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Introduction

This manual is designed specifically for **YOU** the Drug Court participant. It is not meant to be read from cover to cover (although you certainly could), rather, it is meant to be used similar to how you would use a cookbook; look up the information you need when you need it. This manual contains tips and strategies you can use in a variety of situations (i.e. court, addiction treatment, communicating with family). It also contains the explanations or rationale for why each chapter may be important to you and your Drug Court success. This manual can be used to develop a personal recovery plan, educate your family and friends, increase your communication skills or simply as a cup holder. However you decide to use it, we hope you will find something that helps your Drug Court journey to become a successful one.

Chapter 1: Working with the Legal System

This chapter will provide you with information as well as tips on how to prepare for court hearings and how to work with your probation officer. Attending court hearings and meeting with your probation officer are required parts of Drug Court and how you present yourself and your progress will impact your Drug Court success. **This is probably the most important chapter you can read.**

Preparing for court

As a participant of a Drug Court program, you will be required to attend frequent court hearings throughout the program. You will be asked to present yourself to the judge during each court hearing for a review of your case and treatment progress. The meeting is usually brief (about 5 to 10 minutes) and may include one or more members of the Drug Court team standing next to you, such as your probation officer or counselor from treatment. The judge will ask you questions about how you are doing or progressing in treatment and if you are encountering any problems or barriers to recovery. The judge will also address any concerns raised about your program participation or any violations that you have made while in treatment (e.g. having a relapse or missing an appointment with your probation officer).

The judge is the cornerstone of the Drug Court program. The judge will ultimately determine your outcome in the program. The judge's rules and sentences are based on the laws of the State; nonetheless, he or she will consider your feedback as well as how you present yourself in the courtroom when determining an outcome. It is extremely important and beneficial for you to make a good impression with the judge or any other court personnel. Remember that you can make a difference by simply presenting yourself as someone who is motivated toward change and is willing to follow the procedures of the court. The judge will consider your attitude and behaviors when making a decision about you. Below are some tips on how to make a good impression with the judge and other court personnel.

*Remember it is normal to have feelings such as anxiety, nervousness or anger when you are attending court hearings. Knowing what to expect and how to behave can help diminish some of these feelings. The court will understand if you come across as nervous, but the court will not tolerate you acting angry or disrespectful.

Your appearance and communication skills

Always dress neatly and in clean clothes when entering the courtroom. You don't need to wear a dress or suit and tie, but select clothes that you would wear to church or to a job interview, such as slacks and a clean shirt. **How you dress does impact how you are perceived by others.** For example, showing up for court in your pajamas with uncombed hair may be perceived by others as *you do not care about your appearance or*

that you do not respect the court. Below are some dos and don'ts for the court room.

Do's

- Do be on time. Try to arrive early if possible. If you have an emergency notify your counselor, lawyer and the court immediately. Unexcused absences or tardiness will lead to sanctions.
- Do address the judge as "your honor", "sir" or "ma'am".
- Do speak only when addressed by the court.
- Do look directly at the judge at all times when he or she is talking to you (don't put your head down when the judge is addressing you directly). Looking at the judge will indicate that you are listening to what he or she has to say.
- Do use a calm, clear voice and speak loud enough to be heard.
- Do remove your hat when you enter the court room.

Don't s

- Don't wear clothing that is revealing or would be seen as "street" clothing (e.g., t-shirts or tank-tops that purposely reveal tattoos on your back or excessive jewelry).
- Do not wear clothes that display alcohol, drugs or drug-related slogans.
- Do not chew gum or eat in the courtroom.
- Don't interrupt the judge or other court personnel when they are talking. If you have a question, wait until the judge is done talking and ask permission first. (e.g. "Your honor, may I ask a question?"). Remember to be patient, the judge will ask you to talk and wants to hear what you have to say.
- Don't argue with the judge or other court personnel in the room. You will have a chance to give your side of an issue that has been raised in the court room, but it necessary that you remain calm and patient while waiting to report your side of the story. If you would like to correct something that was said, ask permission first. If permission is denied, don't argue. (e.g. "Your honor, may I clarify what happened?")
- Don't use slang or profane language (i.e. don't swear or use vulgarity in the court room). If you catch yourself swearing in front of the judge, try to correct your language and apologize for the slip (it is okay to apologize if you slip).
- Remain seated in the courtroom and do not talk or whisper to others around you while waiting for your case to be called.
- Don't lie in court. This is a serious offense called perjury. The best thing to do is to tell the truth and deal with the consequences. Willfully committing perjury can cause more problems for you and your case.
- Don't lose your temper. If you are angry, do not verbally or physically express it in the courtroom. Ask to talk with your counselor outside of the courtroom. Damage can be done to your case if you act inappropriately in the courtroom.

Talking to the judge

As noted in the dos and don'ts, the judge will want you to talk about yourself when you are asked to approach the bench. The judge wants to hear your opinions about how you are doing and any issues that are raised in the courtroom. Although you may feel nervous talking to the judge, it will be beneficial to you if you can communicate your views in an effective manner (see chapter 6 about learning assertiveness skills).

There are two common situations in the courtroom that will require you to talk about yourself: treatment progress and explaining a violation that has occurred. Below are some tips for addressing both topics.

Treatment Progress: You will be asked to report to the judge about your treatment progress. This is the most common situation that you will experience in the courtroom. The judge will receive reports about your progress from the probation officer and treatment provider (usually at the team meeting before the court hearing), but he or she will also want to hear from you about your progress.

- Always say something about your progress even when you are doing well or continue to follow all court requirements. Let the judge know about the little things that you are working on that will likely support your recovery. The judge is interested in hearing about your growth.
- Let the judge know what you are learning and how you are applying this knowledge. The judge cannot read your mind, so it will help if you can tell the judge how you are benefiting from treatment.
- Focus on how you will overcome barriers to recovery. Avoid complaining about things that you cannot control or criticizing elements of the program. The judge is interested in how you are learning to manage your life as well as your ability to take on the responsibility for changing your life. The judge will be impressed with an individual who is beginning to learn how to solve problems.

Discussing a violation of court rules: It will be within your control to avoid violating any rules of the DC program. However, most individuals will experience one or more violations of court rules. Violations can be minor in the court's view, such as showing late for a meeting. Violations can also be seen as major infractions of court rules, such as experiencing a relapse or missing a urine-testing appointment with notification. If you have committed a violation, the judge will likely ask you to talk about the behavior or provide your side of the story.

- Tell the truth when talking to the judge and be very clear (i.e. don't skirt the issue or avoid stating the facts). The judge may issue a harder sanction than if you simply told the truth. If the judge detects or suspects that you are lying or avoiding the truth (i.e., omitting information from your description).
- Always take ownership of your behavior. Avoid blaming other individuals for your behavior. The judge understands that you may

make mistakes in the process of recovery, but he or she also wants to know that you are capable of learning from your mistakes. Therefore, simply report what you did and how you can avoid making the same mistake in the future.

- Do not use any excuses for why your urine test was positive for alcohol or other drugs. Again, simply report that you used alcohol or other drugs and how you will avoid using these substances in the future. DC judges have heard a thousand excuses for why a urine test will show positive for alcohol or drugs. Most of these explanations will serve only to irritate the judge and other court personnel. Therefore, do not report that you may have taken an over-the-counter medication that had alcohol, were near someone who was smoking pot, or forgot to inform your probation officer about the medication you received at the emergency room.

Working with the DC Probation Officer (PO)

You will be assigned a probation officer when you enroll in the DC program. This individual will work with you throughout the course of your program. A probation officer is the community eyes and ears of the court. This individual will monitor your progress in the program, help you connect with needed resources in the community, evaluate the safety and security of your living environment, communicate with your employer, and serve as a bridge of communication between you and the court. The DC team relies significantly on the probation officer reports of your progress. In addition, the probation officer evaluates your ability to follow all court mandates and recommendations.

The probation officer can help you complete the program. Like the judge, the probation officer will be influenced by your attitude and behaviors regarding the DC program. The probation officer is an extension of the court, but is invested in seeing you complete the program. The probation officer will advocate for you before and during the court, but it will depend on how you work with this individual. Below are some tips for developing a positive and productive working relationship with your probation officer.

Do's

- Do talk to the PO about any questions you have regarding the DC program. Follow this simple rule: when in doubt, ask your PO.
- Do memorize the PO's phone number.
- Do attend all appointments with the PO on time. If you have a problem with transportation or are sick, call the PO in advance and reschedule. Schedule all appointments and have a family member help you maintain the appointments.
- Do keep the PO updated all the time about your living situation, phone numbers (e.g., if you change your cell phone number or the phone has been cancelled), or work. Don't worry about bothering the PO, keep him or her updated on everything and leave phone messages regarding any change in your living or working situation.

- Do tell the truth about your behaviors when the PO needs information. Like the judge, the PO will respond better to you if you tell the truth. The PO, like the judge, understands that you are human and may make mistakes. Let the PO help you overcome mistakes made in the program. Remember that the PO will advocate for you in front of the judge, but only if he or she thinks you are telling the truth.
- Do tell your PO in advance if you have a relapse. The PO will appreciate your honesty and can help you address the relapse with the judge. You will have more success in Drug Court if the PO is willing to advocate for you. The PO will also help you with your treatment options as well as your living situation.
- Do talk to your PO before you make any decisions about treatment. Keep your PO updated on your ideas, concerns, and treatment needs. Call your PO before deciding to leave treatment.
- Do call your PO immediately if you have an encounter with a police officer, even if it is for a traffic ticket.

Don'ts

- Don't use any excuses for a relapse. Again, talk to your PO the way you would talk to the judge; i.e., simply talk about the facts and leave out the excuses.
- Don't miss your appointments with the PO without calling him or her in advance (missed appointments can lead to a sanction).
- Don't hide your job or living situation from your PO.
- Don't miss an appointment for a urine test. Your PO will suspect that you are using alcohol or other drugs if you miss a scheduled urine test (a missed urine test can receive a sanction). Again, if you have legitimate problem preventing you from attending your appointment, such as lack of transportation, call your PO and see if he or she can pick you up.

Chapter 2: Preparing for Addiction Treatment

Whether you have been in treatment before or are starting out for the first time, beginning treatment can be scary. You may not know what to expect and may ask yourself questions like: What will treatment be like? Who will be in treatment with me? What will I have to do or say? This chapter will answer these questions and provide tips for succeeding in treatment.

Phases of addiction treatment

Not everyone in the Drug Court Program will go through the same type of treatment. Treatment is based on individual needs and some people may need to start in a residential setting while others begin in outpatient. Don't try and compare yourself to others in the Drug Court Program: **remember everyone's needs are different.**

Residential Treatment

If you begin treatment in a residential setting, you will live at one of our programs for anywhere from a few weeks to a few months. Residential programs are a combination of group and individual counseling sessions. You will be expected to attend group during the day (usually Monday through Friday) and you will also be assigned a counselor that you will meet with individually (the number of times you meet with your counselor is determined by your individual needs).

Residential programs have their own rules (separate from Drug Court rules). If you are in residential treatment the Drug Court staff expect you to follow their guidelines and rules, failure to do so may lead to sanctions within the Drug Court.

However, just because residential programs have their own set of rules; don't forget you need to also follow the Drug Court rules. For example, the drug court needs to approve any passes issued from the residential program (e.g. to visit a friend or attend an event). Always call your probation officer to ask permission. Better safe than sorry!

Intensive Outpatient Treatment (IOP)

Some individuals will begin their Drug Court treatment in an intensive outpatient program; others will transition from a residential program. IOP is a combination of group and individual counseling. Groups typically meet three nights each week for 3 hours per night. You will also meet with counselors individually to develop a treatment plan, address any issues that you are uncomfortable discussing in group, and review your progress over time.

You will be assigned a counselor in the IOP who will help you develop your treatment goals and help you complete the treatment requirements of the program. You will also be expected to completed goals of the court, such as maintaining employment and attending 12-step meetings.

The court expectations are outlined in the Drug Court Participant manual. You will be expected to actively work on your goals and report on progress during group and individual sessions. The harder you work, the faster you will be able to move to the outpatient phase of treatment.

Outpatient Treatment (OP)

Outpatient treatment is similar to IOP except not as intense. Group meets once a week and individual counseling is provided as needed. In OP, you will continue to address your treatment goals and requirements for the court. The outpatient phase of treatment is provided to help you develop a recovery plan as well as the tools to live your life without alcohol or other drugs. You can use the outpatient groups to discuss ideas, pilot new social activities, and modify your relapse prevention plan over time.

Continuing Care or Recovery Management

The final phase of treatment and the drug court program is referred to as either continuing care or recovery management. The final phase is more flexible based on your schedule and needs. The continuing care group, also referred to as the recovery-management check up group, meets weekly, but in different locations across the agency and in the Peoria community (the schedule will be posted in advance). You only need to attend two meetings each month, but you are welcome to attend weekly, if desired. The group meetings will be fairly open social events where you can discuss any issues or ideas related to living your life without alcohol or other drugs. We will provide food and drinks at the meetings or organize potluck meetings (i.e., people will bring food to the meeting). Your recovery coach will also call you weekly during the continuing care phase to see how you are doing and if you need assistance with employment, housing, school, or other aspects of your life. You can also continue to see your counselor during this phase based on your needs or request for services (individual sessions are not mandatory, but are available upon your request).

Other treatment participants

You can expect to meet a diverse group of individuals in all phases of treatment. Participants in treatment and in the Drug Court program come from various backgrounds (i.e. gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, economic status, legal history, life experience, etc.). The differences each individual brings are to be respected (and learned from). You can expect that you will be treated with dignity and respect by our treatment staff and other treatment participants. In return, it is expected that you also treat people in a respectful manner. Please talk to your counselor or recovery coach if you have any concerns or problems with other individuals in your treatment program.

Expectations of treatment participants

You are expected to actively participate in your treatment. This means developing goals, working on your goals, and being open and honest about your addiction and other difficulties. Your counselor will ask you to complete

many reading and writing assignments as well as activities for you to practice with friends or family members (e.g., learning how to ask for help, attending social functions without alcohol or other drugs). In the group setting some things you may be asked to do include: talking about your addiction, role playing, discussion of relationships, participating in sober activities, and giving/accepting feedback from other group members.

*If there are issues you do not feel comfortable discussing, tell your counselor! You should not be forced to disclose details about events or situations if you do not feel comfortable doing so (i.e. talking about traumatic events such as domestic violence, sexual/physical assault, death, or combat). Many of these issues can be worked on individually with your counselor or another professional.

Communicating with your counselor

Your counselor will make time to answer your questions and explain your treatment options. Because you may feel overwhelmed with questions here are some tips to help you communicate with your counselor.

- Consider writing your questions down in advance of a meeting to reduce your level of stress and pressure for time.
- Bring a notebook or a tape recorder to the appointment. During the appointment, write down the answers to your questions, or ask a family member or recovery coach to write them down for you. This way, you can read or listen to the information later.
- Tell your counselor if you are having trouble understanding an explanation, description, or unfamiliar words. Sometimes, they may be able to give an example to help you better understand.
- Be patient. It may take a few meetings with your counselor before you begin to understand each other.

Ask your counselor any and all questions you have about treatment or the drug court program. Your counselor will help you complete treatment and the drug court program. In addition, having information decreases anxiety and can lead to a better treatment experience. You can also use these tips when meeting with a medical doctor or a probation officer.

Ideas of questions to ask your counselor about your treatment:

- How long will treatment last?
- What are my responsibilities in treatment?
- How can I demonstrate I am working on my goals? (e.g. showing your counselor a list of places of jobs that you applied for or a copy of your job application)
- Who else will be involved in my recovery?
- Where can I find self-help information?
- Are there other options that are available for me? (e.g. if Drug Court does not work out)
- What should I do if I cannot make an appointment (or group session)?
- Who will have access to my treatment information?

About your counselor:

- What education and/or credential do you have?
- Are there areas you specialize in working with? (e.g. trauma, gambling)
- What hours are you available to see me?
- How often will we meet? How long will our meetings be?
- Who should I ask when I have questions or concerns and you are not available?

Connection of treatment and the court system

Because the Drug Court program is a unique type of treatment program, the counselors are also involved with some of the court monitoring procedures. The counselors for this program are involved with the toxicology testing for the Drug Court (urine tests). You will be called upon randomly to provide urine for testing at the request of the treatment team. These results are shared with the court.

The counselors will also be reporting to the court about your treatment progress. This means they will be reporting things such as your treatment attendance, your progress on goals (including employment), and your attendance at support meetings (you will have attendance sheets signed and provide to your counselor each week). For this reason it is important to let your counselor know when you are struggling, so they can provide assistance and let the court know you are working to overcome the barrier. The judge will be pleased to know you have asked for help rather than refused to work on your goal.

Managing your time during treatment

Managing your time is important to your success in addiction treatment and in Drug Court. Many new expectations will be placed on you. The Drug Court consists of mandatory treatment, court appearances, and other scheduled obligations. These new obligations can be difficult to manage without the use of a calendar or an organized schedule. Some individuals may find that managing their time can be challenging (since often using drugs did not require a set daily schedule).

Managing your time is also important for your recovery from drugs or alcohol. Using and abusing alcohol and other drugs required a substantial amount of your time. You may feel emptiness in your life after you stop using alcohol or other drugs. Your alcohol or drug use may have included most of your social and leisure activities. Thus, once you start your recovery from alcohol and other drugs, you have to also fill up your life with activities and social or leisure outlets that were once filled up by your drug of choice. A common relapse trigger for people in early recovery is boredom and the lack of stimulating activities that were once acquired through alcohol and other drugs. There will probably be gaps in your days that need to be filled with productive or enjoyable activities. Unfulfilled, these gaps can increase the likelihood of relapse. Replacing this time with healthy, enjoyable, activities is an important

part of recovery. Learning to manage your time can help you identify unplanned sections of your day where new activities can be added to help you overcome any feelings of boredom, isolation, and loneliness.

Another related challenge in early recovery is maintaining appointments, meetings, social engagements or other commitments that were rarely required when you were using alcohol and other drugs. Your alcohol and drug use patterns were probably unorganized and based on your finances, drive to get high, and energy level. Your life was probably disorganized and unstructured while you were abusing alcohol and other drugs. Drug dealers and liquor stores (and supermarkets or gas stations) are available at all hours and rarely require appointments or advanced notice for a meeting. Your drug using friends could be reached any time you wanted to get drunk or high. You may find recovery challenging, because it will require you to organize your schedule, maintain appointments, and meet your commitments. Part of the recovery process involves getting use to making and maintaining appointments again, getting up for work or school, or being on time for treatment or court-related activities.

Scheduling each day can help you stay on track for Drug Court and can help you reduce the likelihood of relapse. Writing out a schedule may help you better understand what you do with your time. It can also help you remember to keep appointments, stay organized, or keep busy. If you need help, please speak up! The treatment staff and the Drug Court staff want to help you succeed.

Tips for Time Management

- Keep a calendar/planner with you or in a frequently used space (in your purse, next to your bed)
- Consider travel time in your daily schedule, particularly if you will be riding the bus. For example, be aware of the bus schedule when planning on your meeting with a treatment counselor or your probation officer.
- Write down or store peoples' phone numbers in your cell phone. This will help you in case you are running late and need to call your probation officer or treatment counselor.
- Ask someone to help you maintain your appointment, such as a co-group member or a family member. You are more likely to complete a social activity if you involve another person in the activity, such as attending a 12-step meeting or a social outing.
- Keep a daily list of activities to complete for the day and check off as you complete.
 - Write down all activities that need to be completed.
 - Estimate the amount of time needed to complete each activity. (Include travel times, meals, and prep time).
 - Rate each activity by level of priority.
 - Have a strategy that works for you. For example, do tasks that you dislike first or complete easier tasks first so you feel like you have less to do.

- Delegate some activities to others if possible.
 - Break up big jobs into smaller tasks.
- Get 7 to 9 hours of sleep and stop consuming caffeine (soda or coffee) six hours before you want to sleep (it takes your body about six hours to burn off caffeine).
- Eat healthy and exercise (review tips in Chapter 7)
- Plan a rewarding activity each day or at the end of each day or week.

Chapter 3: Developing or Enhancing a Social Support System

Having a social support system is important for recovery from alcohol and drugs. Support systems help people remain dedicated to their recovery, assist with the development of activities and interests, and make recovery fun and rewarding. Social support systems vary from person to person and can come in many forms (i.e. family, friends, 12 step meetings, community groups, or a basketball league).

There are two types of individuals in your social network. The first type includes individuals who support your recovery from alcohol and other drugs, enjoy participating in activities with you that don't require alcohol or other drugs, do not want you to return to drinking or drugging, and usually avoid drinking or drugging around you. These individuals are considered your recovery support system or network. The second type includes individuals who support drinking or drugging with or without you, want to drink and drug with you, and participate in activities that promote alcohol and other drug use. Most of these individuals existed in your life while you were using alcohol and other drugs, but may remain in your life during recovery. Research has shown that you can increase your chances of recovery if your social network includes more recovery supports and fewer individuals who support drinking and drugging. Stated another way, you are less likely to sustain your recovery if most of your social contacts are with individuals who continue to drink alcohol or use drugs around or with you.

Types of Social Support that Promote Recovery

Family and Friends

Your family and friends may be a prime source of support for your recovery. Remember people who support your recovery DO NOT offer you alcohol or drugs or use alcohol or drugs when you are around. Supportive family and friends will listen to you, encourage you and help you when you are struggling.

Twelve Step Groups

A twelve step program is a support group for people in recovery from alcohol and drugs. The most common group is Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous. There are multiple other versions as well. You can ask your probation officer or counselor for a listing of 12-step meetings in your area. Twelve step programs also exist for people struggling with other areas of their life such as gambling or overeating. The main principles of twelve step include: admitting that one cannot control one's addiction or compulsion; recognizing a greater power that can give strength; examining past errors with the help of a sponsor (experienced member); making amends for these errors; learning to live a new life with a new code of behavior; and helping others that suffer from the same addictions or compulsions.

Twelve step group attendance is often emphasized and expected as a requirement for Drug Court. Your attendance at these meetings will be monitored (sign in sheets). There are many different types of meetings in the community (e.g. speaker meetings, open meetings, women only, gay, etc) every day of the week and at different times of the day. It may take a while to find a meeting that you like or feel comfortable with, keep trying out different locations and ask other Drug Court participants about their experiences to find a meeting or meetings that best meet your individual needs.

You can review information on 12-step organizations at the following websites (the list was organized by SAMHSA, 2008 and can be review in detail at

http://www.kap.samhsa.gov/products/brochures/pdfs/saib_spring08_v5i1.pdf

For People Who Have a Substance Use Disorder

- Alcoholics Anonymous: <http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org>
- Chemically Dependent Anonymous: <http://www.cdaweb.org>
- Cocaine Anonymous: <http://www.ca.org>
- Crystal Meth Anonymous: <http://www.crystalmeth.org>
- Heroin Anonymous: <http://www.heroin-anonymous.org>
- Marijuana Anonymous: <http://www.marijuana-anonymous.org>
- Methadone Anonymous: <http://www.methadone-anonymous.org>
- Narcotics Anonymous: <http://www.na.org>

For People With Co-Occurring Disorders

- Double Trouble in Recovery: <http://www.doubletroubleinrecovery.org>
- Dual Recovery Anonymous: <http://www.dualrecovery.org>

There are also non-12-step support groups for recovery in urban and suburban areas. These supports groups are similar in structure to 12-step meetings, but use a non-spiritual-based format. Individuals who are uncomfortable with the emphasis on spirituality in 12-step meetings, will likely find these non-12-step meetings to be easier for participation. These groups can include:

- Women for recovery at <http://www.womenforsobriety.org>
- SMART recovery <http://www.smartrecovery.org/resources/faghtm>
- Secular Organization for Sobriety/Save Our Selves (SOS) <http://www.sossobriety.org>
- LifeRing Secular Recovery: <http://www.unhooked.com>

Other groups or mutual-aid/help organizations that can provide support include:

- Support programs for PTSD
- 12-step and non-12-step groups for gambling or sex addiction
- Veterans Administration (VA) support groups
- Support from women's organizations, such as survivors of domestic violence
- Mutual aid organizations for individuals with depression (e.g., Mood Challenges)
- Mutual aid organizations for individuals with schizophrenia or other forms of serious mental illness (e.g., Schizophrenics Anonymous & GROW Inc.)
- Support groups for individuals with eating disorders

Many of these organizations provide information on the web, including meetings in your area as well as online meetings.

Additional information can be reviewing on the web at these locations:

- **Faces and Voices of Recovery:**
http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org/resources/support_home.php
- **Mutual Support Groups: What Everyone Needs to Know**
(webcast):
<http://ncadistore.samhsa.gov/catalog/mediaDetails.aspx?ID=266>
- **Recovery Community Services Program:**
<http://www.rcsp.samhsa.gov>
- **Self-Help Group Sourcebook Online:**
<http://mentalhelp.net/selfhelp>

Either 12-step or non-12-step support groups for recovery are extremely useful in sustaining your recovery. Research has consistently shown that individuals who actively participate in 12-step meetings or other recovery-based support groups are more likely to sustain their recovery over time compared to individuals who do not use these self-help programs.

Ask for help from your counselor if you are nervous about attending a 12-step meeting. You can bring friends or family members to open meetings or a friend in recovery to a closed meeting, such as a fellow group member who is familiar with a meeting. If you are unsure what to do in a meeting, ask for help from the speaker of the meeting. All 12-step meetings have speakers or someone who is organizing the meeting (e.g., a person who is in charge of coffee and snacks).

An important element of 12-step support program is having access to a sponsor who can help you learn and benefit from the 12 steps of AA/NA. A sponsor is an individual who is experienced in the 12-step fellowship and has been able to sustain his or her recovery for one year or longer. A sponsor is a person who can guide you through the 12 steps of the

AA/NA tradition as well as help you with your cravings or urges to use alcohol and other drugs. You can shop around for a sponsor who you think can help you in your recovery. A sponsor is

- Usually someone of the same sex as you
- Willing to work with you (you have to ask for help and the person is not obligated to say yes)
- Someone who you can call any time for help with cravings or urges to use
- Someone who can be temporary or long-term (you can select or change sponsors over time based on your needs and comfort with your sponsor)
- An individual who has sustained his or her recovery for more than a few months (it is better to ask someone who has more than one year of sobriety from all drugs)
- A person who can help guide you through some or all the 12 steps of the program

A sponsor is not:

- A therapist or counselor who can help you with non-12-step issues
- An expert on recovery, but simply knowledgeable about the 12 steps of AA/NA and how he or she used the 12 steps to sustain their own recovery
- Responsible for your recovery (a relapse is still your responsibility, but a sponsor can help you get back on the path of recovery)
- A boyfriend/girlfriend (it is okay to date someone from a 12-step meeting, but don't select the person to be your sponsor)
- Covered by insurance or trained by a professional organization (remember that the individual is like you, but further along in the recovery process)
- Mandated to work with you (you can select another sponsor, but your sponsor can also decide to not work with you)

Tips on selecting a sponsor:

- Be patient and shop around multiple meetings before you select a sponsor
- Ask one or more individuals to be your temporary sponsor (it is okay and expected that you will "try-out" individuals over time)
- Ask other AA/NA members for help in selecting a sponsor before you select an individual (get to know the person)
- Ask a potential candidate if he or she is currently sponsoring an individual and if the person has time to sponsor you
- It is okay if a person declines your request; many individuals will already be sponsoring one or more individuals, so it may take time for you to find someone you like and has time (your sponsor should have time to help you if he or she is willing to take on the responsibility of helping you)

- It is okay if you stop using your sponsor and select another one
- Once you select a sponsor, temporary or ongoing, be sure to call the person. A sponsor can help, but only if you let the individual help you.
- Remember that you are not a burden to a sponsor; the individual agreed to be your sponsor because he or she wants to give back to the fellowship that helped the person recovery. Your sponsor wants to help you or the individual would have declined your request.

Community Groups

Involvement in community organizations can also be a source of recovery support. Church groups, volunteer work and social clubs are examples of community systems. Again, remember that involvement in the community should support sobriety and not drug or alcohol use.

Another version of support can be acquired through recreational activities, such as playing chess or working with a non-profit theater group in your community or participating in sport leagues, such as basketball, volleyball, or softball.

It takes time to develop a supportive network. Don't be disappointed if you can't find something that fits for you right away. Keep trying different things and you will discover what works for your recovery.

Chapter 4: Finding and Maintaining Employment

Employment is an essential part of the Drug Court program. However, many Drug Court participants find there are challenges to finding employment. Maybe you have never had a job, have a spotty work history, poor work history, or extensive criminal record, all of which can make finding a job complicated. Not to mention that you are expected to tell your new employer about your involvement with the Drug Court! This chapter will provide some ideas about how approach some of these challenging situations.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, employment is one of the strongest indicators of success in addiction treatment. Individuals who have an extensive employment history, a job in Drug Court, and a job after treatment are more likely to graduate from Drug Court programs, complete all forms of addiction treatment, and sustain their recovery over time.

Resumes and job applications

The first step in finding employment is to develop a resume. A resume is an organized summary of your education, job experiences and skills. Many people develop a formal resume (printed version) that they distribute along with a job application. You may not need a resume for your job application; however, organizing all of the details ahead of time will help you to better answer questions on a job application (i.e. recall work history).

Resumes and job applications often ask for the following:

- Description of your formal education: highest level of education completed, the location of the school, year completed and emphasis if applicable
- Description of additional training or certifications beyond formal education (e.g. Certified Nurse Assistant)
- Work history: may include type of work, dates of employment, location, phone number, supervisor name, job responsibilities, any special recognition or achievement (e.g. employee of the month, increased sales), reason for leaving
- Special skills (e.g. computer, forklift driving)
- Hobbies and interests
- References and contact information (e.g. former employers, teachers, others who can speak to your character)

Problems you may encounter with building resumes or filling out job applications

No work history

Sometimes individuals may not have a work history. They may be young and never worked or they may have made their living through illegal sources and never held a regular job.

- Focus on your strengths and abilities

- Include activities in the past you participated in that demonstrate your strengths (e.g. “in high school I was president of a civic club and raised money for club activities”, “I provided daily care for my grandmother for two years”.)

Gaps in employment history

- Think about other activities you can use to fill up the time period (e.g. volunteer activities, community activities, education, raising a family)
- Eliminate months from your employment history if possible. Instead of using “December 2006-January 2007”, use “2006-2007”.
- If you were out of work because of personal difficulties (e.g. related to your drug or alcohol use), you may (depending on what you are comfortable with) want to explain to a potential employer in a face to face interview your circumstances

Poor work history

If you have been fired or quit several jobs, it can be difficult to explain on a job application.

- When filling out your reason for leaving, try and use a neutral term such as “involuntary separation” rather than fired.
 - Avoid saying anything negative about your former employer. Even if you quit because “your boss was a jerk,” try reframing it “to find a job that matched my skills” or simply write “will explain at interview”.
- Remember to never say anything negative about a former employer at an interview.** This is a red flag to potential employers.
- You may be able to call your former employer to find out what they will say if called for a reference. Sometimes they will only verify your dates of employment, not give details about your dismissal.
 - You don’t have to include every job you have ever had. Eliminate short term jobs if they are not relevant to the job you are applying for.

Criminal record (in addition to Drug Court)

Most job applications will contain a question about felony convictions (sometimes misdemeanors as well). It is important to give thought to how to answer these questions. Sometimes simply answering “yes” without explanation will prevent your application from further review.

- If possible, write something like “will explain further at interview”. If you plan to do this, think about how you will explain your conviction(s) in person. If your conviction(s) is/are related to your drug and alcohol use, are you willing to explain that you have a substance use problem and are in recovery?
- If so, think about how you have changed since being in recovery. Talk about how a job supports your new life and your personal goals.
- Having information about the Drug Court program on hand may be helpful. When an employer knows you are involved in an intensive program like the Drug Court, they may be willing to work with you. They may also feel more comfortable knowing that your probation officer will be monitoring your progress and keeping in touch with them

Other helpful hints:

- Obtain letters of recommendation to attach to your application. Letters could come from former employers, co-workers, teachers, church, or community leaders.
- Remember to check back (by phone call or drop in) on the status of your application. Employers like to know you are interested.
- Don't give up. Remember employment is a requirement of the Drug Court and other participants may have faced similar difficulties, but eventually found jobs.
- Wear nice clothing even when you are picking up or submitting a job application; you could be observed by a manager as you enter the employer's building. Always look like you are ready for an interview. In addition, you may be interviewed on the spot as you submit your application, so be prepared to be interviewed even when picking up a job application (this frequently occurs with small companies or restaurants).
- Always ask for the manager in charge of hiring when you drop off an application; otherwise, you may hand your application to a person who may not care if your application is delivered to the right person (or you may hand your application to a temp-employee who is trying to obtain the same job that you are applying). You should deliver your resume to a person who will connect your name and face by asking for the manager in charge of hiring. Again, look good when you submit your application.

Preparing for a job interview

Preparing for a job interview is similar to preparing yourself for court. You want to be dressed appropriately, be ready for any questions you may be asked, and know what you are going to say about yourself. Practicing your interview skills ahead of time can help you feel more confident about yourself. Your employment specialist, recovery coach or counselor can help you practice your skills. If available, ask to be videotaped in a mock job interview. You can review the interview and refine your presentation. Watching yourself in video can help you pinpoint non-verbal behaviors (e.g. shaking leg, fidgeting hands, poor eye contact) as well as improve your verbal answers.

Tips for interviews

- Arrive on time
- Be friendly to receptionist and other employees
- Introduce yourself and shake hands
- Use the names of the people you meet ("Nice to meet your Mr. Brown")
- Maintain eye contact with your interviewer and all other employees you encounter through the job interview
- Watch your body language (sit up straight, don't fidget, don't talk too fast)
- Take time to think before you answer a question
- Write down at least 5 questions you have about the job & bring to the interview.

- Find out as much as you can about the company & the job (internet or ask to others). Share your knowledge with the potential employer & why you want to work in that particular field and they will be impressed.

Commonly asked job interview questions

We have included a list of commonly asked questions you can use to prepare. Sometimes it is helpful to write down the answers to these questions while you are practicing or have a friend or counselor role play the questions with you.

- Tell me about yourself
- Why do you want to work here?
- What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?
- Why did you leave your last job?
- What would your last employer say about you?
- What special skills or abilities do you have?
- What sets you apart from others who may be applying for this job?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- Describe yourself in one word.
- How do you relieve stress?
- Do you prefer to work alone or in a group? Why?
- What kind of manager do you like to have?
- What did you dislike about your last manager?
- What did you dislike about your last job?
- Are there any tasks that you will not do?
- Have you ever had a conflict with a boss or co-worker? How did you handle it?

*Don't forget to send a letter or thank you and/or call to follow-up after a job interview.

Telling your employer about Drug Court

One of the requirements of the Drug Court program is that you tell your employer about your involvement with the program. This means telling them that you are enrolled in the program and that you are monitored by a probation officer. Your probation officer will contact the employer to check on you. Although this may sound damaging, most employers will actually like that you are involved in an intensive program and will be monitored. They tend to feel more secure in hiring you (e.g. you will likely be on time for work and be a good employee).

Chapter 5: Overcoming Difficulties

Life is full of challenges. While in Drug Court, you are likely to experience urges to use substances. You may be faced with decisions and realities you may not have considered or just ignored when you were drinking or drugging. This chapter provides some simple tips for overcoming difficulties you may face. Remember though, you are in treatment and there are counselor and peers available to help you- always pick up the phone!

Managing Urges to Use and Avoiding Relapse

Urges to use substances may come on suddenly, without warning. You may not be able to predict when they will strike, the best thing you can do is prepare. Plan what you could try in case an urge does strike you (even if you think it will not happen to you).

- Identify the triggers of using alcohol and other drugs. The first step in a recovery plan is identifying the triggers or situations that may lead you to drinking or drugging. Triggers can include people, situations, events or social gatherings, or anything in your past that you associate with drinking or drugging. You don't have to avoid all these situations, but it may help to list the triggers that are most likely to lead you to a relapse. By listing the triggers, you can develop a plan for avoiding, preventing, or modifying a situation that you may encounter. Examples of triggers can include:
 - Attending family gatherings that includes heavy drinking or drug use.
 - Going out with friends who like to drink and drug.
 - Driving through a neighborhood where you use to purchase your drugs.
 - Staying involved with an ex-girl or boyfriend who likes to use alcohol or other drugs with you (and wants you to use with them).
 - Hanging out in a bar with friends even though you are not planning on drinking.
 - Going with co-workers to dinner after work with the knowledge that your co-workers like to drink or use drugs.
 - Answering the phone when your drug dealer calls (they are probably not calling you to see how your recovery is going!).
 - Attending a rock concert, sporting event, or other events where you used alcohol or other drugs.
 - Feeling angry, depressed, or anxious and avoiding getting help for these emotions (not talking to friends or counselors, or missing appointments with your doctor).
 - Isolating in your house or feeling bored and avoiding doing something about it (e.g., getting in a rut or sitting on the couch).
 - Feeling overwhelmed and not asking for help.

- Experiencing a panic attack or extended anxiety and not getting help.
 - Not taking your medication as prescribed.
 - Feeling guilty about what you did in the past as a result of your alcohol or drug use and allowing your feelings of guilt to undermine your progress (you may struggle to separate the mistakes you made in the past as result of your addiction from the positive changes you are making now in your life).
 - Waiting for someone to help you (as opposed to you asking for help) or hoping that individuals will learn how to read your mind and provide you with help.
 - Feeling that you are not worthy of help or that you don't deserve the good things that come with recovery.
- Change the situation. Think about what event or situation is triggering your urge to drink or use, then think about how to change or prevent these triggers.
 - Plan ahead to prevent avoidable triggers. Don't go to parties or places where you know alcohol is served or drugs are accessible. Plan sober activities for Friday and Saturday nights, if those times are triggers.
 - Escape the situation. If you find yourself in a situation that give you an urge, leave; go to a safe place or person, then use your skills to bring your urge down. After leaving many situations, especially conflicts, your urge will continue for a while, so it is important to learn how to change your thoughts about drinking or using drugs.
- Change your thoughts about drinking or using drugs.
 - Challenge your thoughts. For example, "I can't have just one drink and then stop," "Is it worth the risk to test myself? Or "I don't have to smoke pot to unwind after work; I can watch TV or take a walk instead," or "I can still have good times without cocaine".
 - Think about all the benefits of sobriety.
 - Ask yourself how "good" the drug will be before you drink, smoke, or inject the drug. You may find that the perceived "high" that you could get from the drug is based on past experiences, but probably won't occur now. Most people will report that the "high" was not as good as you had remembered in the past. Therefore, ask yourself, is the drug going to solve your problems or give you a good high, or are you responding to a memory that will remain in the past. If the drug is not that good, you may be less likely to use it in the future.
 - Think about the negative consequences of the relapse. Make a list of negative consequences and read it over slowly three or four times when you feel the urge to use. Walk yourself through the relapse, including what will happen after you are done smoking, drinking, or injecting the drug. Most individuals who relapse, don't think about what will happen after the relapse. You may find that

your drive for the drug will decrease once you think about the consequences that will follow the relapse.

- Ask yourself how much jail time you will serve after you relapse
- Delay the decision. Put off the decision to use for 15 minutes. Most urges go away if you do not drink or drug; they do not remain as strong after a little time has passed. Remind yourself that the urge will decrease in strength if you just wait awhile.
- Do something else. Distracting activities can be pleasurable (like playing basketball or watching a video) or involve a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction (like getting the bills paid or the shopping done). When urges are particularly strong or persistent, it helps to involve a sober person as a support in the activity. Activities should occur in a safe place (e.g., don't go bowling in a place that serves beer) and occupy your mind enough that you will be distracted from the urges. Once you are involved in another activity, urges are likely to decrease rapidly.
- Sober support. Call someone who, in the past, had been helpful talking you through problems or urges to drink. It is important that the person be helpful. Consider individuals such as your AA sponsor or a sober friend. Acquire phone numbers in advance and program the numbers in your phone.

Developing an emergency plan

Another option is to write out a detailed plan for coping with situations that could pose a high risk for relapse. Be specific about each possible coping strategy (ex. which meeting you would attend, how you would get there). Remember to have a Plan B in case your Plan A falls through. Some questions to consider when writing your plan are:

- What can you do to handle the problem? (e.g. I can use breathing techniques, think about my kids)
- Consider who you can call for support. (e.g. I will call my sponsor, if my sponsor is not available I will call my mom, etc)
- Consider where you can go for support (e.g. AA meeting, sister's house)
- Think about how to manage your emotions (e.g. I will use the techniques I learned to control my anger, such as...)
- Think about pleasant activities that could counteract your negative feelings (e.g. I will go for a fast paced walk).

Reporting a relapse

You can prepare and plan, but sometimes your plan isn't foolproof and you use drugs or alcohol. The first thing you can do is tell someone, whether it is your friend, counselor or probation officer, think about who will be supportive and help you take the next steps. Remember, a relapse in Drug Court should ultimately be reported to the court. See Chapter 2 for tips on reporting your relapse to the court system.

Tips for reporting a relapse

- Decide who you would like to talk to. Which person (or people) do you feel comfortable around and who will be supportive?
- Be direct. Don't beat around the bush. Tell the person what has happened and that you would like their support.
- Describe the situation and circumstances. Do not make excuses. But do emphasize that you are asking for help this time (this is different from past experiences).
- Be sure to also give yourself credit for the things that you have been doing recently to keep your sobriety intact (attending groups, working, etc).
- Ask the person to help you figure out how to prevent entering into similar high-risk situations in the future.
- Thank the person for his or her assistance.

Problem-Solving

Expected or unexpected issues arise that require us to make decisions (sometimes more quickly than others). Whether we know it or not, problem solving is a process. We may not always follow the same process for solving our problems (e.g. we just do what our intuition tells us, rather than think it through), but nonetheless, we do. The steps below are guidelines for effectively solving unexpected or expected problems. Organizing our problems in this fashion can help specify and clarify our difficulties, preferences and options.

Before proceeding, consider these examples of problems that may arise. What would you do if one of these problems occurred while you were in drug court?

- You lose your job unexpectedly (fired or laid off) after five years and have no idea how you will find a new job.
- You do not have enough money to cover your rent and your landlord is threatening to throw you out (or your apartment building has been sold).
- Your ex-girlfriend or boyfriend wants to see you, but you know that he or she is likely to drink alcohol or smoke marijuana around you.
- You don't have enough time to complete a course in college while completing the requirements of treatment and the court, but it is too late to drop the course.
- You don't have easy access to transportation and you are required to attend four AA/NA meetings every week (and your probation officer has warned you that you will receive a sanction if don't make at least 4 meetings next week).
- You are having a difficult time with your new roommate at the YWCA and you don't know how to deal with her, but you have no other housing options at this time.
- You want to see members of your family or friends, but you don't want to tell them that you are in a drug court program and you know they will want to offer you alcohol when you see them.

- It is near the end of the month and you don't have enough money to cover the cost of your cell phone, which you need to have for court, and other needed items, such as food and cigarettes.
- You need to complete 20 hours of community services each week in addition to meeting all the other requirements of the drug court program in addition to working at your job.
- You are overwhelmed with raising your two children while trying to make all your drug court appointments and you are not getting any assistance from family or your ex-husband.
- You just received notice that you are to begin paying child support payments and your drug court judge wants you to begin making payments as a condition of completing Phase II of the court; however, you don't think you have enough income to cover the cost of living and child support payments.
- The judge or your probation officer has warned you that you will receive a jail sanction if you don't have a job by the end of the month and it is now the 15th. You are unsure if you want to take an undesirable job, such as fast food or working in a factory.

Many of these situations have occurred in the drug court program

A. Defining the Problem

1. Define the problem as specifically as possible.
2. Separate out any secondary or related problems.

B. Generating Alternatives

1. Use brainstorming to generate potential solutions.
2. Do not criticize any of the suggestions offered.
3. Go for quantity; the more potential solutions, the better!
4. Stay within the problem area.
5. State solutions in specific terms.

C. Deciding on a Solution

1. Eliminate any solutions that you would not feel comfortable attempting. No explanations are needed.
2. Evaluate the feasibility of each remaining alternative while identifying its probable consequences.
3. Decide on one solution and describe exactly how you will carry it out.
4. Consider possible obstacles to enacting the solution.
5. Generate "backup" plans to circumvent these obstacles.
6. Commit to trying the selected solution an agreed-upon number of times before the next session.
7. Decide whether to attempt a second solution as well.
8. Go through steps 2-6 of Deciding on a Solution for each subsequent solution considered.

D. Evaluating the Outcome (done at beginning of next session)

1. Review the outcome at the next session and give a satisfaction rating.
2. Modify the solution if necessary.
3. If an entire new solution is required, repeat the problem-solving procedure.

One more guideline to follow: ***Don't wait to discuss the problem***

Chapter 6: Communicating With Family, Friends and Significant Others in Your Recovery

Being in Drug Court impacts many areas of your life and of course, is going to impact your relationships and your communication with family and friends. When you don't use alcohol and drugs, you may find that the relationships you have will change (for better or for worse). You may find that some of your friends or family members are not supportive of your recovery or not supportive of your involvement with the legal system (e.g. they continue to offer you alcohol or drugs or refuse to give up these activities when you are around). You may struggle when faced with these types of situations. Often times, people with substance use disorders have avoided needed conversations or discussions with loved ones. This chapter will give you tips on how you can effectively communicate and advocate for your recovery.

Refusing alcohol and drugs

It is unlikely that you will go through the Drug Court program (or the rest of your life) without someone asking you to drink or use substances. Preparing yourself to say no in these situations can make you feel in control when the situation does occur.

Think of the many potential situations where you may be asked to use alcohol or drugs. Alcohol, for example, is readily available everywhere. Not only that, it is a socially acceptable substance. You may be dining out and a waiter may ask if you would like a glass of wine, or a glass of champagne may be poured for you at a wedding, or even your boss (or a co-worker) could offer you a drink at a work related event. Offers to use drugs may come from old friends who don't know you are in recovery (or don't care), from strangers (e.g. someone passes you a joint at a concert) or from people selling drugs on the street. Drugs and alcohol may also be offered by loved ones and friends. Some offers may be more difficult to turn down than others.

Tips for refusing alcohol and drugs

- Say No. No should be the first thing you say. Sometimes a simple "No, thank you" is enough (i.e. to a waiter or waitress), other times you may want to disclose your difficulties with alcohol or drugs. The choice is yours whether or not you want to give an explanation. No matter what the situation, **you have the right to refuse alcohol and drugs.**
- Avoid using excuses. Using an excuse such as "No thanks, I am not feeling well" or "I am on medication" opens the door for that individual to ask you in the future.
- Use appropriate body language. Make good eye contact; look directly at the person. Your expression and tone should clearly indicate that you are serious.

- Offer an alternative. If you want to do something else with that person offer an alternative that is incompatible with drug or alcohol use such as going for a walk or getting a cup of coffee.
- Change the subject. Don't get into a long discussion or argue about saying no. Change the topic to something else.

*Refusing drugs and alcohol is not always easy. Some people will not stop asking at a simple "no" and others may continue to pressure you to use. This can be extremely difficult, especially if you want to drink or drug. Remember that those persons who offer you drugs or alcohol are **not** thinking of your best interests. **If your attempt(s) to decline are not working, leave the situation.**

Assertive Communication

Using assertive communication is important in many areas of your life, including when you are saying no to alcohol and drugs. Using assertive communication can help you better communicate with others, resolve difficulties, meet your goals and help you be in control of your life.

An assertive person decides what they want to accomplish, plans how they will interact with others and then carries out their plan. They communicate directly (i.e. not beating around the bush) and state their wants, needs and feelings clearly.

Tips for using assertive communication

- Decide what you want to communicate and what you are trying to accomplish.
- Plan the most effective way to make your statement.
- Be as specific as possible when describing your needs and any changes that you are asking for
- Balance the negative with the positive. Try not to place blame on others, but if you must, try expressing something positive first. For example, "I know you have really tried to be supportive and understanding of my problem in the past, but lately I feel like you have been on my case constantly."
- When expressing your feelings or needs, try to use "I" statements. For example, you could say "I am angry because I feel like no one listens to me;" instead of "You make me feel invisible." When you express feelings with "you" statements, the other person may become defensive.
- Pay attention to your body language.
- Speak loudly and firmly.
- Respond quickly.
- Look at the other person when you speak and when you listen.
- Your body gestures and facial expressions should be consistent with your message. For example, don't smile if you are angry.
- Try to understand the other person's point of view and acknowledge the other person's and feelings.
- Be willing to compromise and try to find a way both parties can benefit.

- Restate your positions if you feel you are not being heard.

Making a Request

In life, and in recovery, we have to ask for others to help us, make accommodations for us and for things that we want. Sometimes, this can be easy (e.g. “please pass the salt”), other times, the things we are asking for are big and may require major changes of another individual (e.g. “I would like you to help me take care of the cleaning”- to someone who has never helped in the past).

Tips for making a request

- **State What You Really Want**
 - Write down what you would like to say in a brief sentence
 - Practice saying the statement before making the request
 - Avoid referencing past issues when making the statement
 - Start your statement with “I”, such as “I would like you to...
 - Look at the person when making the request
 - Stop talking after you make the request and be careful not to repeat the request more than once.
- **Take the Other Person’s Point of View**
 - Before making your request, let the other person know that you understand their point of view (it shows that you are listening to him or her); e.g., I know you are busy at this hour...., I know you are tired when you come home from work..., or I know it is difficult for you to spend time with my family...
 - Avoid blaming the person or indicating that he or she is responsible for completing the task.
 - Inspire the other person when making the request; let the person know how helpful they can be and why he or she is the best person to help.
- **Take Partial Responsibility**
 - Let the other person know that both of you are part of the problem as well as the solution (remind the person that you see him or her as a partner, not someone who owes you).
 - Let the other person know that your request is partly due to your needs and that the other person is not solely responsible for your needs.
- **Offer to Help**
 - Offer to help the other person when you make your request (e.g., offer to help the person free up his or her time to accomplish the task).
- **Always Try to Say Yes, If Possible**

- Remember that effective relationships are built on compromises; therefore, start off any response with a yes to something that your partner has asked.
 - When receiving a request, start off by saying yes to some part of the request and then offer a compromise. For example, if your wife ask you to do the dishes tonight, but you need to finish some work, try yes with a qualifier, such as “Yes, I can help you out with the dishes, but would you mind if I finish my report first and then complete the dishes?”
 - Saying yes, even if it is yes to a limited part of the person’s request, will sound more encouraging and engaging than starting off with no.
- Look for Compromise, If Necessary
 - After you say yes, it is okay to talk about how to compromise over the request.
 - It is okay to compromise as long as both of you are involved in discussing the compromise.
 - Practice compromising simple request first and avoid, if possible, discussing difficult or emotionally sensitive topics (get use to compromising on simple things first before taking on challenging issues).
 - Allow each other to make a request and a compromise and, again, practice with easy request first (ask each partner to select requests that he or she is willing to discuss).

General tips for improving communication

- Be polite. (e.g. talk to your loved one like you would a co-worker)
- Express positive feelings. Tell them what you like about something they have done or said. Spend more time or at least as much time on positive things instead of negative. (e.g. “I liked it when you said...it made me feel...”)
- Do something nice without being asked or without expecting something in return.
- Think before you complain- is it worth complaining and potentially arguing about this? Is now the best time to bring this up? (e.g. your spouse had a bad day at work) What do you want to get out of the complaint?

Chapter 7: Eating Healthy and Exercising

You have probably heard this over and over right? “Eat healthy and exercise.” Your doctors, your teachers, your counselors, your family have all probably said this to you at one time or another. Of course, it makes sense, but it is not always that easy. Also, we don’t usually think about the “why?” Besides just being healthy in general, there are many reasons why you should consider your diet and physical activities.

Food is what fuels are bodies AND our minds. Ever had trouble remembering things, trouble concentrating or staying awake? Although these symptoms can be caused by various medical conditions, diet can also be the culprit.

Tips for eating healthy

- Eat at least 3 meals each day. Skipping meals can cause your blood sugar to drop and leave you feeling irritable and tired. Eat small amounts during each meal. If you have time, eat four or even five small meals a day separated by 2 to 3 hours.
- Don’t skip breakfast or any other meal in the day. Skipping a meal can actually lead to weight gain, not weight loss. Skipping a meal can cause your body to store more calories when you do it; therefore, you actually increase your caloric intake at lunch or dinner, even though you are eating less food over the course of the day. Eating a meal every 3 to 4 hours will maintain or even increase your body’s metabolism and decrease the body’s tendency to store food (the body gets use to having calories available every 3 to 4 hours, thus, not needing to store calories for the long haul).
- Avoid eating foods with a lot of added sugar, particularly in the morning. Sugar is absorbed into the bloodstream quickly and eating sugar causes an initial “pick me up” but it wears off quickly and can cause you to feel fatigued. High sugar intake has been known to increase stress levels.
- Healthy choices such as whole grains, beans, fruits & vegetables are absorbed slower than sugary processed foods and will help keep your mood more even.
- Acquire your energy/pick-me-up through natural foods that provide your body with fuel. These foods can include:
 - Peanuts and nuts (almonds, cashews, brazil nuts & hazelnuts are the best)
 - Bran cereals
 - Bananas
 - Leafy greens (e.g., spinach and any dark/green leaf lettuce) and avoid iceberg lettuce, which provides no nutritional value
 - Fish, such as salmon and halibut
 - Citrus fruit
 - Fiber from whole grains (whole grain breads or cereals), whole fruits and vegetables

- Water and other unsweetened drinks at regular intervals throughout the day (avoid concentrated fruit juice, such as apple, cranberry cocktail or concentrated orange juice that contains high concentrations of sugar)
- Avoid using chemical energy boosters, such as power drinks (e.g., Red Bull), candy/chocolate and all sodas (all these food sources can cause mood swings, anxiety, and energy crashes). In addition, nearly all these products, particularly soda and power drinks are high in calories, which leads to weight gain.
- Healthy choices contain more nutrients and vitamins, again helping to keep your mood more even
- Excessive weight loss or gain can impact your mood. Avoiding meals or an improper diet can deprive your brain of nutrients that will help control your mood. Not eating properly places increased demands on your body.
- Drink enough water. Not drinking enough fluids (or drinking too much caffeine which can also dehydrate your body) can cause irritability, poor concentrations and slower mental capability
- Caffeine can increase blood pressure, increase symptoms of anxiety and depression and interfere with sleep (mimics the effects of adrenaline). If you need caffeine to get you started in the day, drink coffee or tea in the morning and early afternoon, but stop consuming caffeinated products by the late afternoon. Your body needs about six to eight hours to burn off caffeine in your blood stream; therefore, give your body enough time to eliminate caffeine before you attempt to sleep. In addition, even if you fall a sleep, caffeine can still disrupt your sleep patterns without you being aware of it (of course, you are aware of it when you wake up exhausted even though you were in bed for eight or more hours).
- Avoid nicotine in the evenings for the same reasons you need to avoid caffeine. Nicotine and caffeine are both stimulants.
- Try not to eat on the run. Eat slowly and enjoy your food. When you eat quickly, you tend to eat more and often don't put much thought into what you are consuming (e.g. fast food)
- Avoid saturated fats and transfats that are found in fried foods, prepared foods (e.g., fast foods, frozen meals, canned meals or TV dinners), and junk food (e.g., snacks, chips, & candy).
- Read the nutritional label on the foods you plan on purchasing. Look for indications of high saturated or trans-fats, sodium, or sugar. Again, try and avoid process foods that contain high amounts of these ingredients.

Eating healthy on a budget

Eating health does not have to cost more; in fact, you can actually save money (e.g. not eating fast food, buying the ingredients to make several meals at once)

- Cook several portions of a dish and freeze
- Cut down on purchases of soda and sugary snacks and use the money you save to purchase healthier options
- Buy frozen fruits and vegetables

Exercise

Why do people groan when they hear the word exercise? Sounds like work? Might wear you out? Not true. Although exercise can be work, it will ultimately make you feel less tired and improve your overall functioning.

Exercise:

- Releases endorphins (feel good chemicals) that improve your mood
- Provides structure and purpose
- Exercise can provide us with a “feel good” effect, both physically and mentally
- Exercise can help reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety
- Exercise is a healthy alternative that can be used to replace drinking and drug use
- Exercising regularly can help you feel better about yourself (internally and externally) increasing your self esteem and confidence.

Tips for starting an exercise plan

Going from no exercise to some exercise is a major change. A common mistake that people make is setting their expectations too high. Don't expect that you can start off running a mile if you haven't run in several years. Many people will decide to exercise and set their goal to exercise everyday, when they are unable to live up to this lofty goal, they call it failure and quit.

- Start small. Set one goal for your self and make it achievable (e.g. I am going to walk to the grocery store instead of drive)
- Think of the little things you can do to increase your physical activity (e.g. taking the stairs instead of the elevator, parking your car at the back of the parking lot). Although these types of things may seem small at first- they do make a difference.
- Plan activities with a friend. It is much harder to back out (or talk yourself out) of doing something if you have made a commitment with a friend. (e.g. If you had a long day at work, you may tell yourself, “not today”, but if you have to meet your friend at the gym, you may have a tougher time backing out)
- Exercise is not all or nothing. Just because you miss a day or change your schedule doesn't mean you should give up. Remember something is better than nothing!
- If you think you don't have time to exercise- think again. Remember the small things you can do (e.g. taking the stairs) and be creative (e.g. do some sit-ups while watching television or do some stretching while you are reading your assignments)
- Keep a log of your week. Notice when you have downtime in your schedule and use these times to exercise or keep track of opportunities to increase activity and reduce tension and anxiety (e.g. on Mondays when I meet with my probation officer, I often feel anxious so I will go 10 minutes early and walk a few blocks before our meeting)

Chapter 8: Taking Time to Relax

With all your Drug Court requirements, you are probably thinking to yourself “Relax? How will I possibly have time?” It may be the case that you have to make time to relax; nevertheless, this will be important to your recovery. Some individuals find relaxation an easy task, but many people struggle and as a result suffer from effects such as lack of sleep, feeling anxious, poor health, poor concentration etc etc. This chapter will provide you with ideas you can try on your own or with the help of a counselor or friend.

Relaxing at bedtime

Do you find yourself wide awake when it is time to turn in for the night? Maybe thinking of everything you need to do, worrying about your job, or you just can't get comfortable? There are many things that you can try.

- Establish a nighttime routine. You can actually train your body to respond to cues that it is time for bed (e.g. take a bath, read a book) if you consistently do certain activities before you go to sleep, your body will learn to respond.
- For a person who is a worrier or often feels anxious, try establishing “worry time”. Allow yourself a few minutes (this requires discipline so set a limit) to focus on what you are worried about (or you can make a list), then agree to put your worries “away” until tomorrow. You can also make a “to do” list for the next day, but then put it and your thoughts away for tomorrow.
- Alternatively, you could make a list of all your accomplishments for the day. Give yourself credit and allow yourself to unwind.
- Take a hot shower or a bath. Warm water relaxes you physically and can calm your mind.
- Read a book, but not a cliffhanger that will keep you won't be able to put down. If this is a barrier allot a certain amount of time to devote to reading each night (e.g. put my book away at 10pm)
- Give yourself a massage (or have your partner give you one). Rub your feet, legs and hand to remove tension.
- Get comfortable for bed. Put on your pajamas and curl up with a soft blanket.
- Use aromatherapy. Many scents such as lavender can actually promote relaxation. Spray some on your sheets, or use a scented lotion on your body.
- Drink something warm (but not caffeinated). You may want to do this a little while before actually going to bed (or you may have to get up in the night)
- Avoid caffeine late in the day or altogether. Caffeine interferes with sleep and can increase symptoms of anxiety.
- Limit your television.

Relaxing anytime

Bedtime is not the only time to relax. You can relax when you arrive home after a long day, before you head out for the day, or in the middle of the

afternoon. You can try experimenting with different ideas and different times of the day (e.g. after lunch, take a walk by yourself). You may find that scheduling your relaxation time may be necessary.

- Use your senses- touch, taste, hearing smell & sight
- Look at a relaxing image or scene. This could be artwork, a fish tank, a sleeping child or pet- whatever you enjoy.
- Listen to music, but avoid loud music or forms of music that are not soothing, such as hard rock or techno.
- Light a candle, use fragrance spray or lotion and enjoy the smell. The flickering of a candle can also be enjoyable.
- Use breathing techniques. Deep, rhythmic abdominal breathing can slow down you body and help you focus.
- Use positive imagery. Think of your favorite place, a peaceful scene, your favorite person etc. Pretend you are experiencing this scene.
- Stretch. Your muscles hold tension. Take some time to stretch your neck, shoulders, arms and legs. Yoga can also be an excellent tool.
- Meditate. This can mean different things to different people (e.g. Some people meditate in silence, sitting a certain position, on an object etc.)
- Write. Some people like to write stories, some like to write in a diary
- Draw. Paint. Sculpt, Create
- Take notice in your daily activities. Is there something you “have to do” that you find relaxing? (e.g. folding laundry, cooking, etc). Plan that activity as part of your relaxation time.
- Progressive muscle relaxations. This is a technique of flexing your muscles and then releasing the tension. Your counselor can help you try this technique.

Chapter 9: Developing Your Treatment Plans

This chapter outlines some written tools that you may be asked to complete (typically with your counselor or recovery coach) to develop your treatment plans while in Drug Court. Even if you are not asked to complete these forms, you may find them useful. The forms explore your using behaviors, develop relapse prevention plans and also help you think about setting goals.

Functional Analysis

When you hear the words “functional analysis”, you might feel intimidated or think it sounds complicated. But a functional analysis is not as fancy as it sounds. Think about the definition of each of these words. Think about the word “function”, what does it mean? If something has a “function”, it serves a purpose, right? Now think about the word “analysis.” When you *analyze something*, you think about how the smaller parts that make up the bigger picture (like solving a puzzle or a math problem). Well, your drinking and/or drug use is a problem to be solved isn't it? And drinking and drug use serves a purpose for you doesn't it? (If it didn't, then you wouldn't do it!). So the functional analysis is as simple as that, a look at all of the pieces of your drinking/drugging behaviors and thinking about what those behaviors do for you (e.g. makes me feel good, forget my problems, be more social, etc.)

You can use a functional analysis with any behavior you want to increase or decrease (not just drinking and drug use).

A sample functional analysis is located on page 45. The form is adapted from

- Meyers, R.J., & Smith, J.E. (1995). *Clinical Guide to Alcohol Treatment: The Community Reinforcement Approach*. New York: The Guilford Press.

The instructions below can be used to begin completing your FA. Your counselor will help you work on this assignment.

How to complete the FA

Step One:

Define a behavior or goal that you want to work on or “target”. A target behavior or goal can be something that you want to:

- decrease, such as smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol, watching TV, losing control of anger (e.g., arguing with a partner), or eating junk food;
- increase, such as exercise, reading books or time devoted to homework, paying attention in class, or social involvement

Step Two:

You break down the target behavior into four parts.

1. a description of the behavior
 - a. quantity (how much)
 - b. what type (what is the behavior you are doing)
 - c. how long does it last (i.e. I start drinking around lunchtime and usually pass out by 9 or 10)
2. the context or circumstances under which the behavior occurs
 - a. who you are with (i.e. sister, boyfriend, friend)
 - b. where you are when it occurs (i.e. bar, home, friend's house)
 - c. when or at what time of the day (i.e. evenings, before work)
3. your thoughts and feelings about the behavior
 - a. What are you thinking before the behavior occurs (i.e. I need a drink, I had a crappy day)
 - b. what are you feeling physically (i.e. my hands are shaking, I can't sit still)
 - c. what are you feeling emotionally (i.e. anxious, excited, depressed)
4. the rewards and punishments or negative attributes of the behavior.(examples of rewards could include: I feel better about myself, I am less shy, etc., examples of negative attributes could include: I can't control myself, I get a hangover, etc.)

Goal setting

There is more you can get out of the Drug Court program than just resolution of your legal difficulties. Although, getting through Drug Court and staying sober are both goals for you to accomplish, additionally you probably have personal goals you would like to accomplish (e.g. get your GED, finish college, improve your relationships, pay off debts, find better housing, etc). Goals can be short term- "I want to clean my apartment today" or they can be long term- "I want to learn how to speak Spanish". Think about some of the goals you would like to accomplish.

It may sound simple, but accomplishing our goals isn't always easy. Think about the example of cleaning your apartment. This could be an easy goal to accomplish; you may be able to start cleaning right now and in a few hours your goal is complete OR you may want to start cleaning, but also need to get to work, go grocery shopping, attend meetings, call your sponsor and get some rest. Accomplishing your goal may take more planning- you may have to break it down into more manageable tasks in order to complete it (e.g. sweep the floors before you go to work, wash the dishes when you get home, and clean the bathroom after you take a nap).

In the example above, there were barriers to accomplishing your goal (other obligations) that were easy to identify. Think for a moment about what resources or strengths you have that may help you accomplish your goal.

One resource may be that your roommate or significant other could help you either clean your apartment or perhaps pick up your groceries. Maybe you are very good at multi-tasking and are able to talk to your sponsor on the phone while you are sweeping the floors.

The goals and aspirations/recovery plan worksheet shown below may help you develop your goals. The purpose of the worksheet is to help you uncover and organize your resources and help build your recovery through your goals. The recovery plan is organized into three categories and eight life domains.

Sample Individual Goals and Aspirations Recovery Plan

Individual's Name _____
 Recovery Coach _____

Individual Goals and Aspirations: Recovery Plan

_____ Date: _____

Life Domains	Individual Goals and Aspirations What do I want?	Resources, Strengths, and Skills What do I have access to or what have I used in the past?	Barriers and Problems What barriers or issues do I need to remove or overcome to achieve my goals?
(1) Recovery from substance use or abuse			
(2) Living and financial independence			
(3) Employment and Education			
(4) Relationships and social support			
(5) Medical health			
(6) Leisure and recreation			
(7) Independence from legal problems and institutions			
(8) Mental wellness and spirituality			

The three categories of the form include:

(1) Individual goals and aspiration: The first column is used to record your goals, dreams, or aspirations within each life domain. These goals or aspirations can be immediate (e.g., I need to get a job when I get out of IOP) or long-term (e.g., I would like to return to college and get a bachelors degree in business). Write down any goals, desires, or dreams that you have, even if you are not ready to pursue them, such as finding a partner or having children in the future.

(2) Resources, strengths and skills: The second column is used to record your resources and assets that you have now or have used in the past. Present assets can include wide range of personal attributes, resources and skills, such as having a part-time job, living independently, having a sense of humor, being a quick learner, being friendly, having a supportive partner, friend or family member, attending AA meetings, or attending church services every Sunday. This column can also be used to record any past experiences or

behaviors that can be used or reacquired to achieve your goals listed in the first column.

(3) Barriers and problems to achieving goals: The third column is used to list any barriers or problems that could prevent you from achieving the goals listed in the first column. Barriers and problems are not deficits, per se, but specific issues that have been identified by you that prevent you from achieving your goals. For instance, having a mental illness is not, in itself, a barrier to getting a job, but being unable to afford or otherwise acquire medication needed to manage the symptoms of the illness while working is a barrier. Or, being in recovery from a heroin addiction is not a barrier to acquiring federally supported housing, however, having one or more felony convictions as a result of the addiction, is a barrier to getting access to HUD funded housing. Finally, having a limited income is not a barrier to getting into addiction treatment, but not having access to reliable transportation, public aid, or an indigent treatment slot are clear yet removable barriers to treatment

Eight categories are provided to help you organize and prioritize your goals as well as to help you understand that recovery requires a holistic approach that will impact all dimensions of your life.

Functional Analysis of Target Behavior (decreasing a behavior)

Describing the Target Behavior	External Context	Internal Thoughts and Feelings	Short-term rewards of the target behavior	Long-term unpleasant consequences of the behavior
1. What is the target behavior?	1. Who are you with when the behavior occurs?	1. What are you thinking when the behavior occurs?	1. What do you like about the behavior (who)?	1. What are the unpleasant consequences with relationships (family, friends, or significant others)
2. What is the quantity of the target behavior?	2. Where are you when the behavior occurs	2. What are you feeling physically when the behavior occurs?	2. What do you like about the behavior (where)?	2. What are the unpleasant physical feelings?
			3. What do you like about the behavior (when)?	3. What are the unpleasant emotional feelings?
			4. What are the pleasant thoughts you have with the behavior?	4. What are the unpleasant thoughts?
			5. What are the pleasant physical feelings you have with the behavior?	5. What problems with school or a job are linked to the behavior?
3. How long does the target behavior occur?	3. When does the behavior occur?	3. What are you feeling emotionally when the behavior occurs?	6. What are the pleasant feelings you have with the behavior?	6. What financial problems or other issues are linked to the behavior?