Creating a Portable Program for Travel

Whether you are in a relationship or not, travel can threaten your recovery program. If you are in a relationship, please see our other guide, *Travel Guidelines for Recovery and Relational Safety*. That guide will help you think through a portable recovery plan for both your recovery and for your relational healing.

However, if you are currently separated from your partner or divorced/divorcing, or if you'd like further resources to help you build a program while you travel, please complete the following guide. Once you've finished it, bring it to your recovery team (e.g., therapist, sponsor, accountability partner, etc.) for their feedback. We've found that travel can throw off your recovery program. A change of location brings new routines, new triggers, new opportunities, and less supports.

So take some time to think through the following questions. That way you can prepare a portable program to take with you as you travel.

1. We often find it helpful to check-in with your recovery team while you're away. For example, "bookending" the day with connection to your recovery team at the beginning and end of the day can be a helpful way to anchor your day and keep you focused on your recovery. Talk to your sponsor, therapist, accountability partner or other member of your recovery team. What will check-ins look like with them while you are away?

   ● Who will you check in with: _____

   ● If that person isn't available, who else can you check in with during your time away? _____

   ● What time of day: _____

   ● Frequency of your check-ins: _____

   ● Method (e.g., phone call, facetime/skype, etc.): _____

   ● Any specific things you (or your recovery team) would like to check in with while you are away to keep you accountable (e.g., lies/secrets, limiting access to

media in hotel rooms, limiting alcohol content, eliminating 1:1 interactions with potentially triggering individuals, support around specific places / events / time of day, etc.)? _____

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2. What healthy recovery routines can you take with you as a part of your portable program (e.g., meditation, prayer, recovery reading, journaling, calling others in your recovery team, going to meetings, etc.)?

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3. Are there any other recovery routines that you can take with you if they are modified? For example, depending on your schedule, location of travel, etc. you may have limited access to certain recovery routines. Yet this isn't the time to abandon your recovery! What pieces of your recovery routines can you adapt for this trip?

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4. What other recovery behaviors (i.e., "outer circle" activities) will you add to your program while you are away to maintain the safety of your program? For example, if you are in a 12-step program, look ahead of time to find 12-step meetings in the area where you are traveling. If there are no meetings available in person, you can always join a meeting via phone or online:

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5. Now that we've looked at some healthy outer-circle coping while you're away, let's look at how to limit problematic behaviors or vulnerabilities while you're away. What are your boundaries around your problematic (i.e., inner circle) behaviors? For example, how will you manage, limit, or restrict after-hours meetings alone with female colleagues, drinking alcohol, pornography use, etc. while you are away? Talk with your recovery team if you need help with boundaries around your inner circle while you are away.

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6. What middle circle triggers or vulnerabilities do you anticipate while you're away? For example, is there anything about the location you will be traveling, what it stirs up for you mentally or emotionally with traveling, certain access to acting out that you wouldn't have had before traveling, etc. that you need to be mindful of?

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7. Look back through your answers to question 1-4 above. Now that you've thought through your middle circle triggers / vulnerabilities, do you need to add more outer circle coping resources to help you better cope while you're away? Write down any more resources you can use while away:

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8. Create a schedule for while you're away, including when you will use the resources you've been describing. Being proactive will aid you in following through with your outer circle coping plan. Share this schedule with your sponsor, therapist, and/or recovery team. Did you create and share a schedule with someone in your recovery team?

       ◘ *YES*
       ◘ *NO*

If no, why NOT??

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9. App boundaries: Determine boundaries around which applications are off-limits, internet filter(s) needed to block out any access to inappropriate material and/or accountability software to verify phone / internet activities:

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10. Contact hotel in advance to see/limit access to mini-bar if needed:

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11. Contact hotel in advance to see/limit access to TV, internet and/or adult content on hotel TV:

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12. What is your plan for violation of any rules or boundaries? Any consequences? How will you communicate any violation of your plan to your therapist, sponsor, and/or recovery team? NOTE: this is not because a violation is expected, this is purely to have a plan for worst case scenario.

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13. Even though you are currently separated or divorced/divorcing, your partner may have requests for you around travel safety. Especially if you are separated, your partner may want to know information about your travel to build and maintain relational safety. If you have children with your partner, you may also need to communicate with your partner / family while you are away. What is your plan around communication with your partner while you are away? What boundaries do you or your partner need to have in place around communication while you are away?

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14. Ask your therapist, sponsor, and/or recovery team to give you input on your plan. Write their feedback here:

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15. After answering all of the questions above, and getting feedback from your supports, are there any other boundaries or safety needs that you need to consider before you travel? Write down any additional safety boundaries as a part of your portable program here:

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