

# Navigating Substance Use

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A resource guide for parents, guardians, and the community.



A Behavioral Health Treatment Program For Teens

# THE FIRST STEP IS ALWAYS THE HARDEST.....BUT WE CAN HELP

You have unlimited potential.

Your actions now are laying the foundation for your future self.

Half the battle is showing up.

You can and will move through your urges to use. ALL cravings ARE temporary

Your thoughts matter.

YOU can survive this.

You control the narrative of your life and you can change that narrative!



## Creating RELAPSE PREVENTION PLANS

Tools & Strategies

# What is Relapse Prevention

01

Aimed at building the capacity for you and your support system to maintain change

02

Provides a framework for you to understand your personal circumstances that may hinder your recovery process and put you at risk of relapse

03

Helps you and your support team learn to view relapse and lapse in judgement as a mistake you can learn from rather than a behavior to be judged or punished.

04

Reminds you and your support team that while relapse is common, it is not inevitable.

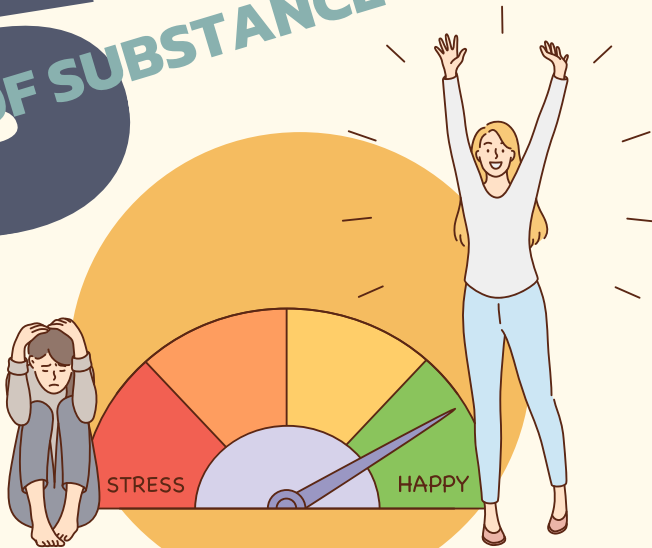
05

Your relapse prevention plan is a contingency plan -- clear and carefully developed by you and your support, rehearsed and relevant to the teen

06

The tools and strategies in this resource guide is only one aspect of recovery and prevention. Partnering with a treatment center while establishing a relapse prevention plan is recommended.

# 5 SIGNS OF SUBSTANCE USE



## Shifts in Mood and Personality

Sullen, withdrawn or depressed, less motivated, silent or uncommunicative, hostile, angry, uncooperative, unable to focus, a sudden loss of inhibitions or hyperactive and unusually elated



## Behavioral Changes

Changed relationships with family members or friends, absenteeism or a loss of interest in school, work or other activities, avoids eye contact, locks doors, disappears for long periods of time, makes endless excuses, uses chewing gum or mints to cover up breath, has periods of sleeplessness or high energy, has cash flow problems or has become unusually clumsy.



## Hygiene & Appearance

Smells of smoke or other unusual smells on breath or on clothes, messier than usual appearance, poor hygiene, frequently flushed cheeks or face, burns or soot on fingers or lips, track marks on arms or legs, wears long sleeves in warm weather to hide marks



## Physical Health

Frequent sickness, unusually tired or lethargic, unable to speak intelligibly, slurred speech or rapid-fire speech, nosebleeds and/or runny nose not caused by allergies or a cold, sore spots around mouth, sudden or dramatic weight loss or gain, skin abrasions/bruises, frequent perspirations, seizures and/or vomiting in severe cases



## Mental Health

Substance Use interferes with the body's development of its natural reward system increasing the risk of depression.



# THREE MAIN SIGNS OF RELAPSE

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## (1) Emotional Relapse

“ what happens before  
your start to think  
about using  
”

EMOTIONAL RELAPSE WARNING SIGNS  
anxiety, anger, keeping your feelings to  
yourself, not participating in treatment,  
poor eating and sleeping habits

## (2) Mental Relapse

“ when part of your  
brain wants to use and  
part of your brain  
doesn't  
”

MENTAL RELAPSE WARNING SIGNS  
thinking about people you used to use  
with and places and things that remind  
you of when you used, glorifying past use,  
lying, thinking you can use just once and  
planning a relapse

## (3) Physical Relapse

“ When the negative emotions  
overwhelm you and  
unhealthy coping has led to  
unhealthy justification to use  
again.  
”

PHYSICAL RELAPSE WARNING SIGNS  
this is typically the stage that people refer  
to when talking about relapsing. DON'T  
GIVE UP. Get help immediately and BE  
HONEST about your relapse.

# Early Relapse Prevention

## a step-by-step guide



### Preventing Early Emotional Relapse

#### Practice Self-Care

The most important thing you can do to prevent relapse is to take care of yourself. Think about why you use. To escape, relax, or reward yourself. Relapse can occur when you don't take care of yourself and create situations that are mentally and emotionally draining that make you want to escape.

### Preventing Early Mental Relapse

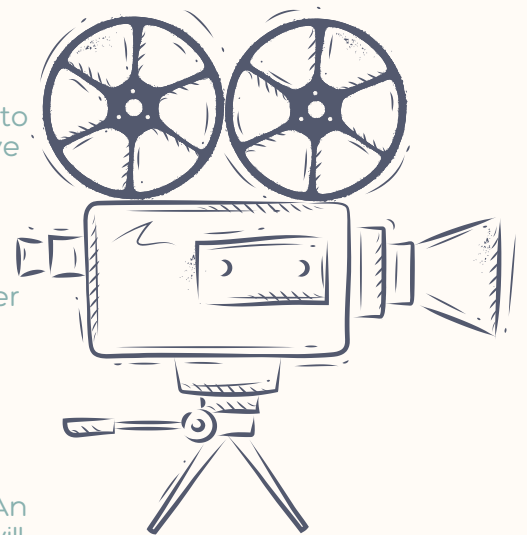
#### Play the Movie Through & Distract Yourself

When you start to lie to yourself and believe you have the ability to control your drug and/or alcohol use THIS time...that you'll just have one drink....and then you can totally stop. **PLAY THAT MOVIE THROUGH.** One drink usually leads to more drinks and more destructive behaviors leading you down the path of relapse.

Identify a list of support people; friends and family, that will answer your phone call, text, email when you're having urges to use.

When you think about using, have a list of activities already available and attached to your relapse prevention plan that will occupy your time and mind.

Wait for 30 minutes. Most urges last for less than 15-30 minutes. An urge can feel like an eternity, but the urge will not last forever. It will end. **PLAY THAT MOVIE THROUGH**



### Physical Relapse

#### Once you start thinking about relapse...

It doesn't take long for you to actually relapse. It's hard to stop the process of relapse once you start using again. That's not where you should focus your efforts in recovery. **FOCUS** on recognizing the early warning signs. Identifying your triggers. **AND** creating your relapse prevention plan.

As always, seek help from a professional if you or someone you know needs help with substance use and relapse prevention.

# A RELAPSE PREVENTION STORY

## WHEN DID I START USING?

**Think back to the first time you used alcohol  
and/or drugs and answer the following questions**

**Who introduced you to using?**

**Why did you decide to use?**

**Do you still use for the same reasons? If not, how have your reasons changed?**

**How has your use changed since you first started?**

**Now, identify a trusted support person: an adult in your life and share with them what you wrote. This will provide you support, accountability, and set you on the right path towards lasting change.**

**I shared my story with (support person name name):\_\_\_\_\_**

# A RELAPSE PREVENTION PLAN

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**TIMES I AM AT HIGH RISK OF RELAPSE:**

**MY INTERNAL TRIGGERS (THOUGHTS, EMOTIONS)**

**MY EXTERNAL TRIGGERS (SITUATIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, SENSES))**

**MY EARLY WARNING SIGNS FOR EMOTIONAL RELAPSE:**

**MY EARLY WARNING SIGNS FOR MENTAL RELAPSE:**

**WHAT IS MY PLAN FOR CHALLENGING MY WARNING SIGNS AND TRIGGERS  
(HINT: DAILY DISCIPLINES--THINGS I NEED TO DO ON A DAILY BASIS TO PREVENT RELAPSE)**

# A RELAPSE PREVENTION PLAN

## **coping strategies**

(Hint: things I can do on my own when in a crisis--look at the end of this resource for several coping strategy examples and instructions)

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- 

## **My Primary support network**

(names and phone numbers)

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

**3 REASONS I WANT TO  
STAY CLEAN AND SOBER**

**IF I DO RELAPSE, 3 WAYS I CAN KEEP  
MYSELF SAFE AND GET BACK ON TRACK**

**GIVE A COPY OF YOUR RELAPSE PREVENTION PLAN TO YOUR PRIMARY SUPPORT TEAM (ADULTS, FAMILY, SOBER FRIENDS) TO HELP HOLD YOU ACCOUNTABLE AND KNOW HOW TO HELP YOU WHEN IN A CRISIS**

# Grounding Techniques

Grounding is a way to deal with overwhelming emotions. It's another way to practice staying in the present moment, not focusing on the past or the future.

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**LOOK.** Look around for five things that you can see and say them out loud

4

**FEEL.** Pay attention to your body and notice four things you can feel and say them out loud.

3

**LISTEN.** Listen for three sounds and say them out loud.

2

**SMELL.** Say two things you can smell out loud.

1

**TASTE.** Say one thing you can currently taste out loud.

## GROUNDING SELF-TALK

IF YOU ARE BY YOURSELF, FEEL FREE TO TALK OUT LOUD. IF YOU'RE WITH OTHER PEOPLE, YOU CAN DO THIS IN YOUR HEAD. NOTICE THE ENVIROMENT AROUND YOU AND FOCUS ON WHERE YOU ARE RIGHT NOW. WHAT DO YOU SEE, HEAR, SMELL AND FEEL? FOCUS ON TINY DETAILS.

## 5-4-3-2-1 GROUNDING

TAKES YOU THROUGH YOUR FIVE SENSES TO HELP REMIND YOU OF THE PRESENT. THIS IS A CALMING TECHNIQUE THAT CAN HELP YOU GET THROUGH TOUGH OR STRESSFUL SITUATIONS.

# Deep Breathing Exercises

These exercises are meant to help you calm down and relax when faced with stressful or overwhelming situations.

## STEP 1

Inhale through the nose to a count of four, lungs should be completely full of air.

## STEP 2

Hold the air in your lungs for a count of four.

## STEP 3

Exhale through the mouth to a count of four, all of the air should be out of the lungs.

## STEP 4

Hold the lungs in an empty state for a count of four.

## STEP 5

Repeat steps one through four for a total of at least 5 minutes. If ready, you can increase to a count of 8.



## volcano Breaths

PRETEND YOUR HANDS AND ARMS ARE LIKE LAVA FLOWING. START WITH YOUR HANDS IN FRONT OF YOUR HEART, WITH PALMS TOUCHING. KEEPING YOUR HANDS TOGETHER, REACH STRAIGHT UP AND BREATHE IN. SEPARATE YOUR HANDS AND MOVE YOUR ARMS DOWN TO YOUR SIDES AND BREATHE OUT.

## Explosion Breaths

INVOLVES MOVING YOUR BODY UP AND DOWN AS YOU DO DEEP BREATHING. START IN A STANDING POSITION. BREATHE IN AS YOU CROUCH DOWN. THEN, JUMP UP, SPREADING YOUR ARMS AND LEGS AS YOU BREATHE OUT.





# Progressive Muscle Relaxation

*Dim the lights and turn off any distracting screens. Sit down or lie down in a comfortable position. If you feel comfortable, close your eyes. During this exercise, you'll be instructed to tighten muscles and then release the muscles to learn what it feels like being tense versus relaxed. If you feel uncomfortable, take a break and focus on your breathing.*

**First, begin by taking a deep breath and notice the feeling of air filling your lungs. Hold your breath for a few seconds.**

(Brief pause)

**Release the breath slowly and let the tension leave your body.**

**Take in another deep breath and hold it.**

(Brief pause)

**Again, slowly release the air.**

**Even slower now, take another breath. Fill your lungs and hold the air.**

(Brief pause)

**Slowly release the breath and imagine the feeling of tension leaving your body.**

**Now, move your attention to your feet. Begin to tense your feet by curling your toes and the arch of your foot. Pretend you're standing in sand, and you want to make deep footprints. Hold onto the tension and notice what it feels like.**

(5 second pause)

**Release the tension in your foot. Notice the new feeling of relaxation.**

**Next, begin to focus on your lower leg. Tense the muscles in your calves. Hold them tightly and pay attention to the feeling of tension.**

(5 second pause)

**Release the tension from your lower legs. Again, notice the feeling of relaxation. Remember to continue taking deep breaths.**

**Next, tense the muscles of your upper leg and pelvis. You can do this by tightly squeezing your thighs together. Make sure you feel tenseness without going to the point of strain.**

(5 second pause)

**And release. Feel the tension leave your muscles.**

continued on next page





**Begin to tense your stomach and chest. You can do this by sucking in your stomach. Squeeze harder and hold the tension. A little bit longer.**

(5 second pause)

**Release the tension. Allow your body to go limp. Let yourself notice the feeling of relaxation. Continue taking deep breaths. Breathe in slowly, noticing the air fill your lungs, and hold it.**

(Brief pause)

**Release the air slowly. Feel it leaving your lungs.**

**Next, tense the muscles in your back by bringing your shoulders together behind you or all the way up to your earlobes. Hold them tightly. Tense them as hard as you can without straining and keep holding.**

(5 second pause)

**Release the tension from your back. Feel the tension slowly leaving your body, and the new feeling of relaxation. Notice how different your body feels when you allow it to relax.**

**Tense your arms all the way from your hands to your shoulders. Make a fist like you're holding a stress ball and squeeze all the way up your arm. And hold it.**

(5 second pause)

**Release the tension from your arms and shoulders. Notice the feeling of relaxation in your fingers, hands, arms, and shoulders. Notice how your arms feel limp and at ease**

**Move up to your neck and head. Pretend to smell something terrible; wrinkle your nose and scrunch all the muscles in your face. Tense your face and your neck by distorting the muscles around your eyes and mouth.**

(5 second pause)

**Release the tension. Again, notice the new feeling of relaxation**

**Finally, tense your entire body. Tense your feet, legs, stomach, chest, arms, head, and neck. Tense harder, without straining. Hold the tension.**

(5 second pause)

**Now release. Allow your whole body to go limp. Pay attention to the feeling of relaxation, and how different it is from the feeling of tension.**

**Begin to wake your body up by slowly moving your muscles. Adjust your arms and legs.**

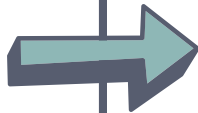
**Stretch your muscles and open your eyes when you're ready.**

# Positive Self-Talk

It's so very easy for kids and adults to fall into the trap of talking negatively to ourselves. Sometimes we might say to ourselves, "this is awful. I'm not good at this. I'll never learn how to do it. or I stink." How we think and talk to ourselves influences the way we look at life. When you catch yourself thinking negatively, tell yourself to stop. Take a deep breath. Then change that negative self-talk into something positive.

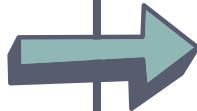
## Negative to Positive Statements

This is awful.



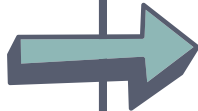
Let me focus on things that I can control and the things that are going well.

I'm not good at this.



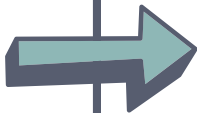
I'm just learning how to do this.

I'll never learn how to do it.



I haven't gotten it yet, but with practice I know I will learn how to do it.

I stink.



I just need to keep trying. Everyone struggles in the beginning.

Try using a journal -- jot down your negative self-talk, and then replace that negative self-talk with something more positive or realistic to your current situation.

# DISTRESS TOLERANCE

The goal of Distress Tolerance is to survive crisis situations without making them worse and to accept reality as it is in the moment.

## STOP SKILL



### **S**<sub>TOP</sub>

Do not just react. STOP! FREEZE! Do not move a muscle! Your emotions may try to make you act without thinking. Stay in control!

### **T**<sub>AKE A STEP BACK</sub>

Take a step back from the situation. Take a break. Let go. Take a deep breath. Do not let your feelings make you act impulsively.

### **O**<sub>BERVE</sub>

Notice what is going on inside and outside you. What is the situation? What are your thoughts and feelings? What are others saying and doing?

### **P**<sub>ROCEED MINDFULLY</sub>

Act with awareness. In deciding what to do, consider your thoughts and feelings, the situation, and other people's thoughts and feelings. Think about your goals. Which actions will make it better or worse?

# Coping Skills Checklist

## CALMING SKILLS

*Designed to Help You Relax*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deep breathing  | <input type="checkbox"/> Carry a small object  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Explosion breaths   | <input type="checkbox"/> Make a fist and then release the fist; repeat for two minutes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volcano breaths   | <input type="checkbox"/> Progressive muscle relaxation                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a mindful walk   | <input type="checkbox"/> Positive self-talk  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yoga  | <input type="checkbox"/> Drink cold water  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Imagine your favorite place   | <input type="checkbox"/> Block out sounds with noise-cancelling headphones             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have a mindful snack  | <input type="checkbox"/> Create a zen garden   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 54321 grounding technique   | <input type="checkbox"/> Trace a pattern   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grounding self-talk about the present                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Name five things you notice with your senses                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Say the alphabet slowly   | <input type="checkbox"/> Run water over your hands                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Remember the words to a song you like and then write down the song. | <input type="checkbox"/> _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> _____   |

## DISTRACTION SKILLS

*Designed to Distract You from Focusing on a Certain Stressor*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write a story                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Design your own game                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crossword/Sudoku/Word find puzzles   | <input type="checkbox"/> Plan a fun event for the future          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bake or cook with a friend or parent | <input type="checkbox"/> Start a new hobby or learn something new |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do random acts of kindness           | <input type="checkbox"/> Find ways to laugh                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read a good book                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Your favorite things                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clean                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Sort/organize something                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play with a pet                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Spend time in nature                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play a board game                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Go to a museum                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play video games                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Do a crafting project                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distraction by a screen              | <input type="checkbox"/> Start a garden                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hang out with friends or family      | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____                                | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____                                |   |



# Coping Skills Checklist

## PHYSICAL SKILLS

Designed to Help You Rebalance Your Energy

- ☐ Squeeze something
- ☐ Use a stress ball
- ☐ Shred paper
- ☐ Use bubble wrap
- ☐ Use a sand tray or use kinetic sand
- ☐ Jacob's ladder
- ☐ Hold a small stone
- ☐ Shuffle cards
- ☐ Make something
- ☐ Use a fidget
- ☐ Walk
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Exercise
- ☐ Dance
- ☐ Punch a thick pillow
- ☐ Play at the park
- ☐ Make an obstacle course
- ☐ Swing on a swing
- ☐ Jump on a trampoline
- ☐ Jump rope
- ☐ Do stretches
- ☐ Yoga
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

## PROCESSING SKILLS

Designed to Help You Work Through Thoughts and Feelings and Challenging Situations

- ☐ Write down and name your feelings
- ☐ Match my feelings to a color
- ☐ Understanding triggers
- ☐ Write in a journal
- ☐ Challenge my negative self-talk
- ☐ In a perfect world....
- ☐ Write songs, poetry, music
- ☐ Draw
- ☐ Talk to someone I trust
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Create a playlist
- ☐ Write down what's bothering you and then crumple
- ☐ up the paper and throw it away
- ☐ Comic strip: what happened/what can I do next time
- ☐ I wish.....
- ☐ Write a letter to someone
- ☐ Use "I Statements" to tell someone how I feel What I can control vs. what I can't control
- ☐ Make a worry box...healthy and helpful things I can do when I start to feel anxious or stressed
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

# My Safety Crisis Plan

Recognize My Warning Signs and Use My Coping Skills to Keep Myself Safe and Healthy

## Triggers and Stressors

Behaviors, situations, and circumstances  
that put me at emotional risk

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## Warning Signs

My behavior signals that show me I'm  
growing more and more at risk

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 call someone for help

## Things to do...

healthy choices and behaviors

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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4. 

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## People to contact...

911

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline  
[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)  
**1-800-273-TALK(8255)**

Doctor's name and number:

BasePoint Academy: 972-325-2633

## My Coping Skills

Ways I can remain calm and safe  
IN THE MOMENT:

My support person can help me by:

## Reminders

- Remove all unsupervised access to prescription medications, weapons, lethal medications, and other means of self-harm
- Take a deep breath and then react
- Take medications as prescribed -- do not change the dose or time unless directed by your doctor
- Don't hesitate to ask for help
- Don't isolate myself and/or stay away from people who care about me
- Don't stay in a high-risk situation

Name: 

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 Date: 

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Support Person Name: 

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 Date: 

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## **Understanding and Helping Individuals in Recovery**

### **Adapted from Terrence T. Gorski's Warning Sign Identification Process (2019)**

#### **Signs and Symptoms**

- Post-Acute Withdrawal: I start having problems with one or more of the following: thinking difficulties, emotional overreaction problems, sleep disturbances, memory difficulties, becoming accident prone, and/or starting to experience a serious sensitivity to stress.
- Return to Denial: I stop saying what I'm thinking and try to convince myself or others that everything is all right, when in fact it is not.
- Avoidance/Defensive Behavior: I start avoiding people who will give me honest feedback and/or I start becoming irritable and angry.
- Starting to Crisis Build: I start to notice that ordinary everyday problems become overwhelming no matter how hard I try.
- Feeling Immobilized (stuck): I start believing that there is nowhere to turn and no way to solve my problems. I feel trapped and start to use magical thinking.
- Becoming Depressed: I start feeling down-in-the-dumps and have very low energy. I may even become so depressed that I start thinking of suicide.
- Compulsive and/or Impulsive Behaviors: I start using one or more of the following—food, sex, caffeine, nicotine, work, gambling, etc. often in an out-of-control fashion. And/or I may react without thinking of the consequences of my behavior on myself and others.
- Urges and Cravings (Thinking About Drinking/Using): I begin to think that alcohol/drug use is the only way to feel better. I start thinking about justifications to drink/use and convince myself that using is the logical thing to do.
- Chemical Loss of Control (Drinking/Using): I find myself drinking/using again to solve my problems. I start to believe that "it's all over 'till I hit bottom, so I may as well enjoy this relapse while it's good." My problems continue to get worse.

#### **The Ten Most Common Relapse Dangers**

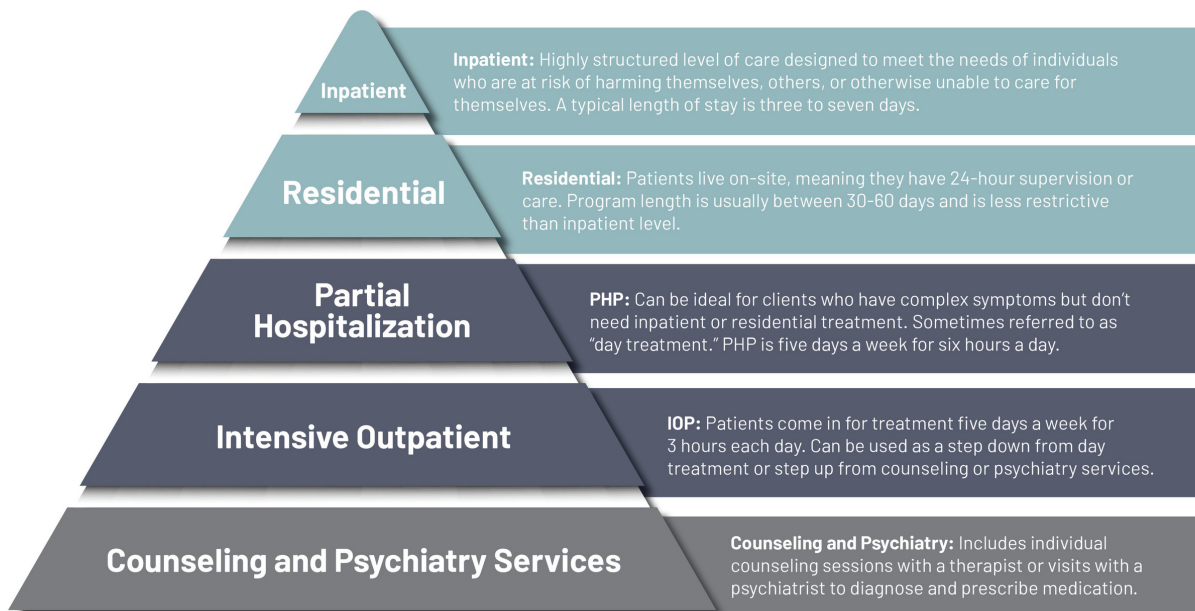
1. Being in the presence of drugs or alcohol, drug or alcohol users or places where you used or bought chemicals.
2. Feeling we perceive as negative, particularly anger; also sadness, loneliness, guilt, fear, and anxiety.
3. Positive feelings that make you want to celebrate.
4. Boredom.
5. Getting high on any drug.
6. Physical pain.
7. Listening to war stories and just dwelling on getting high.
8. Suddenly having a lot of cash.
9. Using prescription drugs that can get you high even if you use them properly.
10. Believing that you no longer have to worry (complacent). That is, that you are no longer stimulated to crave drugs/alcohol by any of the above situations or by anything else – and therefore maybe it's safe for you to use occasionally.

The Brain's rising tolerance levels for drugs/alcohol are the driving force behind addiction. Brain tolerance levels drop significantly during the detox process. Once a person completed treatment; lower tolerance levels place recovering addicts at high risk of overdose. Someone who relapses after detox will likely attempt to ingest the same dosage amount used prior to detox. With the decreased tolerance level; this can be very dangerous for the individual and likely result in accidental overdose.



## Levels of Care in Mental Health

BasePoint  
ACADEMY



## Offering Complimentary Same Day Assessments



### Contact:

**Direct Line: 972-325-2633**

**Email: [admissions@basepointacademy.com](mailto:admissions@basepointacademy.com)**

**Fax: 972-675-7868**



### Locations:

**713 W Broad St. Suite 200, Forney, TX 75126**

**4733 Medical Center Drive, McKinney, TX 75069**

**3900 Arlington Highlands Blvd. Suite 237, Arlington, TX 76018**