

Recovery Goals Beyond Abstinence

Choose an everyday change that would make life better for you. This sheet adds a practical goal to discuss alongside your substance-use and treatment goals; it does not replace or redefine those goals.

Keep completed notes private. Use short notes in each box; continue on another copy or separate paper when needed. Save the completed PDF on your device and reopen it to check your notes before closing.

Care can address more than a single symptom. SAMHSA's quality-treatment guidance includes support for other medical and practical life needs. The goal examples here are original planning ideas, not a validated measure of recovery. [1]

Make a broad hope small enough to act on

Hope	A possible next action	What I could notice
Feel more connected	Ask one person whether they would like to meet or talk.	I made the invitation; their answer is not under my control.
Keep up with care	Ask the office to clarify my next appointment and transport needs.	The date and travel arrangement are confirmed.
Feel less overwhelmed by paperwork	Choose one letter and ask someone to help me understand it.	I know what the letter asks and the next contact.
Make room for something enjoyable	Choose an activity and a realistic time to try it.	I tried it and can decide whether to do it again.

Original worked example

"Repair every relationship" is too broad for one plan. "Ask my brother whether he would be open to a short call" names an action you can take while leaving him a choice. You can decide what to do next after his answer.

My goal

What matters to me

Describe the part of life you would like to improve and why.

My next action and support

What I can do or ask for; who could help; one obstacle to discuss.

When I will look again

A date or occasion; what I will notice; how I could make the step easier or change it.

Use the review to learn

A missed step can show that the plan needs time, help or a different approach. This sheet does not award recovery points or decide whether care is working. Bring treatment-related concerns to your care team.

Sources and Further Reading

[1] SAMHSA: Finding Quality Treatment

<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-support/learn-about-treatment/finding-quality-treatment>

[2] SAMHSA: How to Ask for Help

<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-support/how-to-cope/how-to-ask-for-help>