

THINK AHEAD

Organizing your thoughts and taking steps to feel better can be tough when you're weighed down by mental illness. That's why it's important to think ahead. At a time when you're feeling well and able, use this worksheet to prepare or plan ahead.

SUPPORTS

Think about the people in your life who can offer the positive supports you need. Thinking about specific things they can do to help you feel better will provide guidance during tough times. Some examples might include: someone you can call who will just listen, someone to hang out with even though you have low energy, or someone to take a slow walk with.

PERSON I CAN TURN TO	HOW THEY CAN HELP
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_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

When symptoms become serious, it's helpful to identify an emergency contact and list specific actions they can do to help you get back on track. Use the back of this worksheet to help identify when things get serious.

MY EMERGENCY SUPPORT PERSON

WHAT THEY CAN DO TO HELP (For example: call your treatment provider, is there a hospital you prefer to go to, do they need to know about your medications or medical background.)

CONTACT INFO FOR TREATMENT PROVIDER (Have you signed a release for this person?)

TOOLS

MONITOR YOUR SYMPTOMS

Screening tools can help you to monitor the severity of your symptoms. Visit mhascreening.org every so often to take a screen and "check-in" on your mental health.



www.mhascreening.org
Anonymous • Free • Confidential

FIND YOUR LOCAL MHA AFFILIATE

Mental Health America has over 200 affiliates in 40 states that can help you with programs and services to support your recovery. Find the affiliate closest to you by entering your ZIP code at: mentalhealthamerica.net/find-affiliate.

FIND TREATMENT PROVIDERS

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has an online treatment locator that can help you find a variety of mental health professionals at findtreatment.samhsa.gov.

FIND PEOPLE TO TALK TO

Warmlines are numbers that you can call (usually during business hours) to find someone to talk to if you are struggling with your mental health. Find a warmline in your area by visiting warmline.org.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255), go to your local Emergency Room or call 911.

THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR

Triggers are people, places, words, or situations that increase negative feelings. They can make it difficult to cope with mental health symptoms. When you're well, it can be helpful to work on exposing yourself to triggers so that negative experiences are lessened when you're stressed. For example, if going to the grocery store or crossing bridges is scary – take small steps to expose yourself to these situations. There are some triggers, like yelling, or abusive relationships that you might consider avoiding all together. Identify some triggers that you can work through. And identify if there are triggers that you should avoid.

MY TRIGGERS

Early warning signs are personal changes in thoughts or behaviors that signal that things are getting worse. The sooner you intervene when these signs occur, the better. Use the lines below to think about your early warning signs. Some examples might include: withdrawing for more than two days, feeling so agitated you haven't slept for three or more days, or finding it difficult to get out of bed. When these signs occur, it's helpful to list out your next steps for seeking help. This might include calling your treatment provider, or calling your emergency contact.

MY EARLY WARNING SIGNS

STEPS TO INTERVENE

ACTIONS TO TAKE

Stress can creep up on you when it seems like you have so much to get done and not enough time to do it. Or sometimes when symptoms of mental illness come back, normal every day activities become stressful. When stress comes, it often affects sleep. Use the lines below to identify steps you can take to reduce stress. You can use the list below to get started.

THINGS THAT MAKE ME FEEL BETTER

1. Make a routine.
2. Stand up and stretch.
3. Take 4 slow, deep breaths.
4. Do a puzzle or color.
5. Talk to someone who is a good listener.
6. Give yourself a pep talk ("I can do this.")
7. Close your eyes and listen to sounds around you.
8. Look at animal pictures. Who doesn't like a puppy?
9. Watch a funny video.
10. Take a brisk walk.
11. Read a magazine.
12. Watch the sunrise or sunset.
13. Massage your temples.
14. Do a good deed or random act of kindness.
15. Listen to music.