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## Preparation for AODA Counseling at Shorehaven

*You have valuable recovery assets!*

Three recovery assets you may not have thought about are:

- 1) Your awareness that your compulsive or addictive problem, alcohol abuse, or drug abuse is indeed a problem.
- 2) Your motivation to get help to recover and your persistence in committing your time and energy to your well-being and that of your family.
- 3) Your choice to come to Shorehaven, where our team approach helps your therapist provide you with effective help.

You have this opportunity to start treatment. In order to benefit, commit YOURSELF to coming to every session. Once you start treatment, FOLLOW THROUGH. Quit Using – Don't quit coming for help.

If you are thinking about stopping therapy, remember this is a critically important chance in your life for you to turn things around. Treat yourself like you are worth it, and this is a special opportunity for you. Tell us if you are thinking about skipping days or stopping, so we can help with your motivation or apply for an extension of the time limit; but keep on coming.

Research shows that long-term participation in therapy leads to the largest chance at long-term recovery. Persist and succeed.

## **START YOUR RECOVERY AT SHOREHAVEN**

We're Glad You Came to the Right Place.

You came to Shorehaven to get help for your chemical dependency or other compulsive problem. We all applaud you for that. We have

many years of experience helping people like you to work your way out of addiction and dependence. You've come to the right place.

### Counseling Can Help.

Remember that counseling can help you, whether your problems are big or small, recent or long-standing. About 80 to 90% of the people who seek help achieve moderate-to-considerable improvement. Our clinic is a place where you go to talk, in confidence, with someone who has special professional training to help understand you. We use our understanding of your feelings, thoughts, behavior, lifestyle, and addiction in order to help to solve your problems.

The people who come here for help are a lot like you. They are here to resolve problems and to make changes in order to improve their lives.

During Sessions. During your counseling sessions, it is very important that you discuss your problems openly, honestly, and completely. Yes, this might be embarrassing or challenging at first. But actually, in time, you will find that it is easier to tell things to an impartial therapist, to a professional who is being objective, even in a therapy group. In fact, talking about your personal problems is the first step toward resolving them.

Active Participation. Also remember, counseling is a kind of contract. The results depend upon you as well as upon your counselor. Your end is to speak openly, to listen to the therapist with an open mind, to do any assignments you receive, to come promptly to all the scheduled meetings, and to inform the counselor in advance if you cannot make it or are thinking of stopping the therapy. Agreeing to start treatment is your agreement to be here, even when urges, temptations to use, feelings and thoughts may make that difficult for you. Keep on coming; treatment works.

### Get Ready to Make Changes.

We all know how hard it can be sometimes to change and to work towards recovery. Our clients and many professionals also have been

In situations similar to yours and are working on recovery, just as you will be working on recovery. We are concerned about helping you build on your strengths. We know it can be difficult to disclose your problems. We won't blame or criticize you or put our values on you, but we will encourage you and help you.

Let's Talk About CHANGES.

Therapy benefits you by helping you work towards many of these kinds of changes:

- staying away from alcohol, drugs, gambling
- reducing urges to use
- coping with life and stress clean and straight
- relieving depression, fears, traumas, or anxieties
- lessening distress
- healing painful past experiences
- increasing independence and assertiveness
- solving family problems
- improving parenting skills
- changing patterns of behavior
- better self-image and self-esteem
- changing inappropriate thinking patterns
- gaining greater satisfaction from life.

Therapy may help you to grow as a person.

Change may be swift, but usually it may take a longer time to accomplish your therapy goals. We will do our best to help you as you work to achieve positive changes in your life.

## What Changes Are YOU Ready to Make?

### Check Your Level of Readiness to Change

Circle the numbers from 1 through 7 which best capture how you are feelings about using versus recovery.

**1.** I haven't really been considering a change in my use of drugs or alcohol or gambling. I have not considered it a problem. Even if others have commented on it, I don't think it is a problem. I may even be annoyed they brought it up.

**2.** I am in-between, so I am choosing between my using and, also, realizing it causes problems in my life. I may think of stopping, but not so much that it makes me stop.

**3.** I realize using has been causing too many problems and I am ready to change. I am not sure what steps to take, but I have to change.

**4.** I am ready for Stage I Recovery: Taking Action to Get Sober.

- A. I know I have problems with misuse, excessive use, abuse, or dependence with alcohol, drugs, sex, computers, food, or gambling.
- B. I want to learn to stop using. I am ready to learn ways to STAY STRAIGHT AND CLEAN.
- C. I want help to manage my urges, impulses, and temptations to use.
- D. I am open to being directed by a therapist or group and given a plan for recovery.

**5.** I am ready to make a real and lasting commitment to getting addiction out of my life. My commitment is my own idea now, and I desire to stop and I am learning how to accomplish that.

**6.** I am ready for Stage II Recovery: Staying Straight & Clean (The Maintenance Stage).

- A. I am learning ways to cope with feelings and life situations without using alcohol or drugs. I am implementing those changes.
- B. I want to learn to avoid triggers that stimulate me to use.
- C. I want to change my thinking from thoughts which make it okay to use to thoughts which make it okay to be straight and clean. I have to learn to stop thinking chemicals and action are necessary in my life.
- D. I want to change to a new, sober lifestyle.
- E. I want to learn new ways to manage mental health problems or problems in life which I may have, including learning to care about myself more.

**7.** I am ready for Stage III Recovery: Learning to Live a Good Life

- A. I am ready to change my ways of coping to healthy choices.
- B. I am ready to learn to have positive relationships that don't involve addictions.

- C. I want to engage in socially meaningful, drug-free activities.
- D. I want to make a contribution to others getting sober.

Commonly, people are unaware of, or unclear about, patterns that lead to their problems. Part of therapy is to help you understand these patterns and set goals for changing them.

Appointments: Come to Every Meeting.

Treatment is most helpful when you come to every planned session. An appointment is a commitment for us to meet. Because a time slot or a slot in group is reserved for you, we ask that you inform us 24 hours ahead if you must miss a session. If you cannot make it to group, we want to know ahead of time. Patients who miss frequent appointments may be asked to postpone treatment until it fits better in their lives.

#### A Word About Completing Therapy

The final sessions are important for reviewing the therapy. If you decide to stop, let the therapist know in advance. If you start thinking that you might not want to come to another session, it is important that you come back and tell your counselor about your doubts.

Your FEEDBACK is important. Counselors always want to know what you are thinking about the sessions. You should attend a few sessions before making decisions about whether to continue. Avoid just not showing up; if you want to cancel, call the therapist.

#### Are You Ready to Change?

Be honest about your readiness to change. Where are you on the list below?

#### **A Few Important Points**

We believe all persons deserve the same high quality of services. Our therapists do not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, marital status, physical or mental disability, health status, or sexual orientation. We offer services to all people for whom we believe we have the appropriate skills and knowledge and funding.

If you have a concern which requires additional time, then schedule extra sessions.

In an emergency, call the therapist's voice mail box at 414-540-2170 and identify the problem as an emergency by following the instructions. If the therapist is on vacation, there will be someone on call for him/her for emergencies.

Are There Risks in Therapy. Therapy is usually very beneficial, but occasionally there may be some small risks such as: bringing out intense feelings; remembering unpleasant life events; slow progress or setbacks; changing your relationships; becoming more independent; feeling embarrassed at revealing information; questioning some of your ideas or values.

#### Access to Records

The law requires us to keep records of therapy for several years after treatment. Records help us recall details, keep track of what happened in therapy, and review plans for helping you. After you complete treatment, you may have a copy of the record sent to you or to health professionals you designate, for a small copying fee. If you want to review files during treatment, the therapist will summarize the record for you.

#### Stay With It, Don't Stop -- KEEP ON COMING

Sometimes patients feel too upset or depressed to want to come to a therapy session, but these feelings may be part of the process of change, so come to every scheduled appointment and discuss all the feelings you are having.

We want to discuss any of these feelings or any negative reactions you may have in therapy. For your well-being, avoid ending therapy early since your therapist can direct you to other resources or counselors and can try different methods to help you.

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## Confidentiality Is Not Absolute

### Limits to Confidentiality

Treatment is a private confidential relationship involving just the therapist and you. Information is sent to other professionals outside our treatment team only with your written permission, except when the law requires us to disclose information. For instance, the therapist, by law, is required to work with a clinical supervisor in order to provide the best treatment he/she can. Ethically, therapists working with couples or families only releases the entire family record if all family members (over 12) seen in marriage or family therapy give written permission. All members in group therapy should keep everything discussed confidential.

There are a few emergencies or situations in which counselors have a legal duty to share information which may help protect you or your family. These situations include abuse or neglect of children or the elderly or when a client may be a danger to self or others, or under some subpoenas or court orders. Then, the therapist may need to take steps to protect people from harm or warn them.

Certain state agencies and insurers may have a right to records for the purpose of investigations, audits, or verification of charges.

There are some situations in which information is "Privileged," i.e., it can't be divulged in court without your permission. Ask if you have concerns about it.

We will let you know how information is handled when different members of a family are seen.

## **So now your counseling can begin.**

Counseling is worth it.

Please keep returning for help.

We congratulate you for choosing to start your recovery.

Complete your recovery at Shorehaven.

### Urges Are a Normal Part of Changing.

*Urges and cravings do not compel you to use.* You can bear up to them. People may crave a drug, a drink, action. But urges pass. The urges you feed grow and those you starve shrink over time.

*You can resist cravings.* They will get weaker, while you get stronger. Score them from 0 (no urge) to 10 (irresistible). Watch how the level of urge drops off in a few minutes. In 10-20 minutes, the urge is minimal. People with 60 days of sobriety tell us that urges drop off in a minute or two.

*Changing your focus.* Note that when you see or think about things or feelings that remind you of using, that's when the urges go up. It's like incubating the urges. You can stay away from those reminders. You can shut down the process of thinking about using. Learning Mindfulness, distraction, focusing on other activities, and talking to a sober person are all ways to shift your mental focus.

When you realize you can stand a little discomfort, you will be back in control and part of your problem will be solved immediately.

You make yourself feel urges by thinking thoughts such as, "I can't stand this; it's awful to feel this way; this is too much for me; I'm losing control of my emotions and I must be in control."

The truth is you CAN tolerate it.

It's not too much for you because, when you used, you dealt with worse experiences.

You aren't losing control; the urge will pass. You will keep your health and control over your life.

You—not drugs—will control your life.

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## **Shorehaven Behavioral Health, Inc.**

(414) 540-2170

Fax 540-2171

### ***Short Term Help for Long Term Results***

Shorehaven is a large clinic with Professional Counselors, Social Workers, Psychologists, and Dual Disorders Counselors (meaning a substance use problem and a mental health problem together). Locations:

3900 W. Brown Deer, Suite 200, Brown Deer, WI 53209

4370 S 76th St, Greenfield, WI 53220

6233 Durand Avenue, Ste F, Racine, WI 53406

***Our hallmark is rapid access to services.***

Helping You Find Your Strength and Serenity

### **Send Others to Us for Help**

We rely upon clients like yourself to refer others who might benefit from our services. If we satisfy you, please send us others so we may satisfy them with the help we provide. Thanks for your confidence and trust.