

## BALANCING YOUR LIFE

As you consider your mental health, health, and life goals in the TX SDC program, you might want to give thought to what you need to bring balance into your life. We all have parts of our lives that are more or less developed, and it's helpful to take stock of how and why this is happening as you make your goals.

This form lists a number of health and life topics, along with questions that might help you decide if the area needs attention as part of your mental health recovery. It isn't necessary to have a goal in each of these areas, and some goals aren't appropriate for an SDC program and would need to be dealt with elsewhere. Nonetheless, it is helpful to review all of them to make sure your person-centered plan reflects you as a whole person.

## LIFE AREAS TO CONSIDER

### **SOCIAL CIRCLES AND FRIENDS**

This aspect of your life refers to giving and receiving emotional support and assistance from others based on common beliefs/hobbies, needs, and/or life experiences. Do you have friends you can rely on? Do you have a best or close friend? Are you able to talk with your friends about the good and bad things in your life? Do you have past or current relationships that are sources of support or stress? Would you like to think about adding to your social circle and friends as part of your SDC goals?

### **FAMILY**

This aspect of your life refers to giving and receiving emotional support and assistance from your family or people you have defined as family. Do you receive help and support from family? Who are you closest to in your family, and will these people support your efforts in the SDC program? How did/does your family respond to your mental health difficulties and resiliency, and how has that affected your recovery (positively and negatively)? Is there anything related to your family that might have an impact on your SDC goals, or be a part of your goals (such as, for example, to improve your relationship with your kids through family counseling)?

### **PERSONAL POWER AND CONTROL**

This aspect of your life refers to actively engaging in one's own care and personal decision-making (also called self-determination) to promote recovery. Do you feel you have enough personal control over your own care and self-determination? What has promoted your personal power? What has impeded it? Will any problems related to your personal power or freedom to make decisions have an impact on your SDC goals?

### **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

This aspect of your life refers to interacting with people and organizations in the community for social enjoyment and civic fulfillment. Do you participate in community activities? Do you do volunteer work? Would you like to increase your community involvement as part of your SDC goals?

### **ACCESS TO RESOURCES**

This aspect of your life refers to gaining the use of products, services, training, supports, and technologies that promote recovery. Do you feel you've had adequate or limited access to the resources you need to support your recovery? How can this be improved by your involvement in SDC?

### **EDUCATION**

This aspect of your life refers to two kinds of education. One is formal education to develop and maintain a job/career (such as high school, college, vocational/technical training). The other is both informal and formal methods of learning that can result in behavioral changes to enhance recovery (such as Wellness Recovery Action Planning, Certified Peer Specialist training, etc.). What kinds of formal and informal education/training do you have? If you dropped out of school before you wanted to, what happened and would you like to pursue getting a degree/GED now? Are there other types of education, training, or certification you're interested in to enhance your recovery, independence, and job prospects?

### **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

This aspect of your life refers to your living situation. It includes where you live and with whom you live. Do you live with anyone? How long have you lived at your current residence? Is it safe, comfortable, and adequate to your needs and dreams? Would you like to pursue living in a different residence or neighborhood? Would you like to pursue having a roommate or changing roommates?

### **FINANCES**

Finances refer to your income, the management of your own finances, paying bills, your credit history, planning for retirement, and so forth. Many people who receive public mental health services have had financial difficulties, and find it hard to think about money. But having enough money to meet your goals is an important part of recovery. What type of income do you have? Have you had a mostly good or mostly difficult experience in managing your own finances, paying bills, having good credit, etc.? Do you have a plan for your retirement? How will your current financial situation help or hinder your life goals?

### **LEISURE AND RECREATION**

This aspect of your life refers to what you do for fun. What do you do in your free time? What are all the different things you like to do? How often do you spend time alone? How often do you spend time with friends? What activities or groups would you like to get involved with as part of your recovery and SDC goals?

### **DISCRIMINATION**

This aspect of your life refers to overcoming negative perceptions that hinder and/or negatively impact on recovery. Have you experienced discrimination? Do you feel it might limit some of your goals in our program?

### **CULTURE**

This aspect of life refers to groups of people whose shared beliefs and practices identify the particular place, race, ethnicity, religion, social class, and/or time to which they belong. Culture also refers to a particular set of shared attitudes that characterizes a group of people who may share bonds of family, ethnicity, race, religion, country/state/region of origin, gender, sexual orientation, education, etc. Do you maintain close ties with a particular cultural or other group? What are the aspects of your culture that would promote your recovery and life goals? Are you wondering if any part of your culture or group memberships may not support your recovery and independence?

### **SPIRITUALITY**

This aspect of life refers to the relationship with one's spirit or "inner self," and the connection to other human beings and the outside world. Spirituality means different things to different people. For some, it is grounded in religious faith. For others, it may be found outside of formal religion. However you define spirituality, it involves the deeply human search for faith, meaning, connection, and belonging. Health spirituality infers a sense of well-being and wholeness, being comfortable with life and its challenges, and accepting and loving oneself. Are you a member of a particular religion? Do you like yourself as a person? What do you dislike about yourself? How will your spirituality or inner sense of purpose/meaning help your recovery?

### **INTIMACY**

This aspect of your life refers to close, personal, and perhaps lasting relationships. Intimacy in this context also refers to sexual relationships. Here are some questions to consider as you think about your recovery: Are you satisfied with your personal and intimate relationships? Would you like to develop an intimate relationship, if you don't have one? Would you like to improve an intimate relationship, if you're in one? Are you satisfied with your sex life? Has your interest in sex changed recently? When did you start to notice differences? Are you having difficulty with sexual responses due to medication side effects or for other reasons? Do you have a doctor, counselor, and/or someone else to discuss these issues with?

### **LEGAL CONCERNS**

This aspect of your life refers to involvement with the legal system. Have you ever been arrested? When and what for? What was the outcome? How many times have you been arrested? Do you have outstanding traffic tickets? If you've had legal involvement, do you think it could have an impact on your recovery, personal goals, or job prospects?