

# Healthy Pathways

## Recover Your Recovery Program

**I**f you must manage a chronic disease prone to relapse, did you find support for your recovery program this past holiday season? Millions of people manage personal programs of recovery from relapse-prone illnesses such as substance use disorders and others associated with eating, gambling, smoking, and other behavioral health issues. Don't delay in reestablishing your program of recovery if you relapsed. You may be waiting for the "right opportunity," but get this one off your "to do" list and on to your "just do it now" list. Don't kick yourself for relapsing. Doing so adds to your procrastination. Instead, put your energy into reestablishing your recovery program without delay. A relapse may have started with some destructive thoughts ("stinking thinking"), or rationalizations. Rebounding from a relapse is easier the more quickly it is begun, because in the early days or weeks you have not yet rekindled strong defenses that prevent you from accepting help. Talk with your sponsor or a counselor to gain insight from your relapse experience so that it becomes part of your armament to help prevent a future relapse. Recapture the promises of recovery in your life.



## Avoid Shift Work Sleep Disorder

**S**hift work sleep disorder (SWSD) affects about 10% to 40% of employees—like health professionals, truckers, first responders, pilots, online customer service agents, factory workers, and retail clerks—who work irregular, nontraditional hours (shift work). Preventing SWSD requires six to seven hours of quality sleep nightly. Avoid health effects of this condition which can include insulin resistance and diabetes, anxiety, depression, lower bone density, and possibly dementia later in life. Create a sleep schedule and a comfortable sleep environment, and avoid exposure to digital screens and caffeine or alcohol before bedtime. Get regular exercise to help optimize sleep. Learn more: [sleepeducation.org](https://sleepeducation.org)



INOVA EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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