

## **DAILY, WEEKLY, MONTHLY CALENDARS**

Based on the experience of many offenders following release we know that planning and scheduling the use of time is absolutely essential. A good predictor of how time will be used is what happens the first day and week after release. Those who make a conscious effort to (especially) plan their first day and first week set in motion a pattern that can continue for years to come. Simply stated this means:

- Develop a schedule for your first day so you have plan to follow;
- Develop a weekly schedule based on your top priorities & follow it.

### **1. The first day following release**

Your first day following release can be full of challenges—many new people, places, events, activities, and especially choices—there is no one to tell you what to do and no schedule to follow. It is easy for all of this to overwhelm you. Being free can be an overwhelming experience and make you feel afraid, anxious, uncertain—and also sad and lonely. The good news is that you have the ability to create a good experience out of this. You can eliminate much of the stress & hassle simply by planning ahead.

Here are some suggestions for using your time wisely:

- Develop a schedule but allow room for changes. Expect to feel emotionally overwhelmed by the experience of being released.
- Take extra time to rest and adjust—especially at first. Be patient with yourself.
- Also be patient with those around you. It takes time for you to get to know and reconnect with people and for them to get to know you.

### **Planning your first day:**

What are you going to do on the day of your release? What do you and others expect of you? Take some time to write down your plan. Be specific--plan each hour. Don't try to cram so much in you don't have time to enjoy being free. Here are 3 simple steps:

- **First** list all of the things that you have to do. Then, list the things you want to do the first week. And finally, list the things that you would like to get done sometime. Be sure to add some time for reflection.
- **Second**, prioritize the items on the lists. Things that are required of you by the Department of Corrections should be at that top. For example, checking in with Community Corrections within the first 24 hours. Going to a local sporting event might be placed high--but not ahead of those items that are needed for your success.
- **Finally**, from the items listed, put a plan together. The first day should be detailed hour by hour. The second day should be less detailed, but include the items that you have prioritized. Be sure to add room for those items not completed from the previous day. Do the same listing for the balance of the week. Now ... what can you hardly wait to do?

With the lists made, it is now time to plan your first day. Use the items from the things you have to do the first day and the things you want to do the first week on this list. Think about the time of the activity to be sure that the activity is able to be done. A visit to Community Corrections after the office is closed defeats the plan. Also you will want to not only list the activity, but list where that activity will take place and who or what is involved or necessary for it to occur.

| PRIORITY | THINGS I HAVE TO DO THE FIRST DAY   |
|----------|---|
|          | <b>Examples:</b> Check in with Community Corrections within 24 hours; check with Dad (move into my room, talk about use of the car and get keys); check on my driver's license; apply for my social security card; check in with Work Source and complete a job application; visit Mom and pick up the kids; check on child care for the kids; open a checking account; |
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**MY FIRST DAY'S SCHEDULE**

| HOUR          | ACTIVITY | WHO AND WHERE |
|---------------|----------|---------------|
| 7-8AM         |          |               |
| 8-9AM         |          |               |
| 9-10AM        |          |               |
| 10-11AM       |          |               |
| 11-12 Noon    |          |               |
| 12 Noon - 1PM |          |               |
| 1-2PM         |          |               |
| 2-3PM         |          |               |
| 3-4PM         |          |               |
| 4-5PM         |          |               |
| 5-6PM         |          |               |
| 6-7PM         |          |               |
| 7-8PM         |          |               |
| 8-9PM         |          |               |
| 9-10PM        |          |               |

**2. The first week following release**

The first week following release will also have its challenges—but preparation of a careful plan based on your priorities and those things important to you can bring success—especially if you **include your top priorities**. As with the first day, list those things you want to do the first week and once you have the list made out, determine the order of priority for these things. Some examples of things to do the first week are shown below. Once you have your list with priorities complete the weekly calendar.

| PRIORITY | THINGS I WANT TO DO THE FIRST WEEK  |
|----------|---|
|          | <b>Examples:</b> Check in with Work Source about a job; contact Post Prison Education Program and set up an interview; apply for car insurance; join a health club; go to Goodwill/Value Village/Target/Kohl's and pick out some clothes; |
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| PRIORITY | THINGS I WOULD LIKE TO DO SOMETIME   |
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|          | <b>Examples:</b> attend a professional sporting event; go dancing; go to a restaurant for dinner; go out to a movie; go swimming; go on a weekend trip to the coast; |
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