Harm Reduction / Moderation Plan

**Intentions** - What is the client’s intentions regarding substance use or engagement in behavior? Is it to have fun? Relax? Cope? Accentuate a particular experience (concerts, hiking, etc.)? Is it only with certain people, or only in certain locations?

**Considerations –** What things do we need to keep in mind while building this plan together? Could include family history of SUD or mental health disorders, proclivity towards binging, risks associated with the current drug supply, impact that substance use /behaviors could have on mental health disorders or medications, etc.

**Guidelines -**

• This is the part of the HR plan where boundaries are discussed in excruciating detail.   
• The goal of these is that they are like bumpers in a bowling alley, the boundaries should be broad enough that they can be firm.

• The function of bumpers at a bowling alley is not to ensure that you are going to get a strike every time, the goal is to keep you out of the gutter.

• There should not be any situation in which these boundaries are crossed, they should be broad enough to encompass some “exceptions” (meaning that there will not need to be any exceptions!)

• It is not appropriate to say, “I won’t drink a bunch.” What does a bunch mean? Five drinks? What does a “drink” mean? Five Bud Lights is different from five IPAs, which is different than five Hurricanes.

• Specificity is key in this section.

• Questions to answer –

o How often (how many times per week)?

o Which days per week?

o Time spent engaging per day / per week?

o Certain number of days in a row?

o Conditions in which you will not (poor sleep, have not eaten, work the next day, emotionally dysregulated, etc.)

o Amount of substance or behavior (per day, week, and / or month)

o Substance type (beer, wine, liquor, flower, carts, edibles, dabs, etc.)

o Substance strength (ABV, % THC, etc.)

o Mixing substances / behaviors?

o (\*Keep in mind how risky impaired driving is and how adulterated the drug supply is!\*)

| Internal Warning Signs | External Warning Signs | Red Flags |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Thinking of disregarding HR | Defensiveness when talking about substances | Driving under the influence |
| Lying about consumption | Evidence of substance use outside of guidelines (smelling like alcohol or smoke, for  example) | Showing up to appointments or other events intoxicated |
| Avoiding obligations to use | Consumption that clearly  exceeds guidelines | Using substances that had been identified as being completely off-limit |
| Extreme distress when adhering to guidelines | Obtaining and / or collecting substantial amounts of  substances | Completely dropping or  discontinuing meaningful role to use substances |

**Who I can share my plan with:** People that the client can share this worksheet with.

**How I would like my support system to share concerns:** To try and avoid an unnecessary amount of argumentation or disagreement. What is the way that someone could discuss this potentially sensitive topic with you in the least offensive way possible?

**What will I do if my plan is not working:** Consider abstaining for a period (“abstinence sampling”), engaging in a recovery program (whether it be Harm Reduction Works or an abstinence-based program), medication to assist with recovery, treatment and / or withdrawal management (“detox”) if needed.

