

## **PLANNING GUIDE**

### **BUILDING A PRACTICAL RELEASE PLAN**

A release plan is not a promise about the future. It is a working strategy for how you intend to manage responsibility, reduce risk, and pursue stability after release. This guide is designed to help you think clearly, plan realistically, and document preparation in a way that can be updated over time.

#### **WHAT THIS PLANNING GUIDE IS FOR**

This guide helps you:

- » Translate goals into practical steps
- » Anticipate challenges before they arise
- » Connect daily effort with long-term outcomes
- » Create a written record of preparation and accountability

You may use this guide to draft, revise, or strengthen your release plan.

#### **HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE**

- » Work through one section at a time
- » Write clearly and honestly
- » Focus on what is realistic and controllable
- » Update sections as circumstances change

You do not need to complete this guide all at once. Progress matters more than speed.

#### **STEP 1: DEFINE SUCCESS CLEARLY**

Before planning details, define what success means to you.

Consider:

- » What does a stable life look like after release?
- » What responsibilities must you manage consistently?
- » What outcomes would signal progress in the first year?

- » Write your definition of success in plain language. Avoid vague terms. Be specific.

## **STEP 2: IDENTIFY LIKELY CHALLENGES**

Effective planning starts with realism.

Consider:

- » Housing barriers
- » Employment limitations
- » Financial pressure
- » Relationship strain
- » Stress and decision-making challenges

List challenges honestly. Identifying risk is not pessimism. It is preparation.

## **STEP 3: CREATE PRIMARY AND BACKUP PLANS**

For each major area of life, create:

- » A primary plan
- » At least one contingency plan
- » Key areas to address:
  - » Housing
  - » Employment or education
  - » Transportation
  - » Finances
  - » Health and well-being
  - » Compliance with supervision requirements

Planning for alternatives reduces panic and impulsive decisions.

## **STEP 4: IDENTIFY PREPARATION STEPS YOU CAN TAKE NOW**

A strong release plan shows preparation during incarceration, not only intention after release.

Ask:

- » What skills can I begin developing now?
- » What habits can I practice daily?



- » What information should I gather in advance?
- » What documentation can I build?

Use journals, book reports, and profile entries to document these steps.

### **STEP 5: CONNECT DAILY ACTIONS TO LONG-TERM GOALS**

Planning is ineffective without execution.

- » For each major goal:
- » Identify daily or weekly actions
- » Document progress through writing
- » Review whether actions align with goals
- » Small, consistent actions compound over time.

### **STEP 6: BUILD ACCOUNTABILITY INTO THE PLAN**

Accountability increases follow-through.

Consider:

- » How will I measure progress?
- » How often will I review my plan?
- » Who or what will help keep me accountable?

Your profile, journals, and learning records are tools for accountability.

### **STEP 7: PLAN FOR ADJUSTMENT**

Circumstances change. Information improves.

A strong plan allows for:

- » Revising goals
- » Adjusting timelines
- » Modifying strategies

Updating your plan shows maturity, awareness, and responsibility.

### **HOW THIS PLANNING GUIDE SUPPORTS YOUR PROFILE**

When combined with other profile components:

- » Biography explains direction and values
- » Journals show daily execution



- » Book reports demonstrate learning
- » Release plan shows structured preparation

Together, they create a credible record of effort and readiness.

### **FINAL REMINDER**

Planning does not guarantee outcomes. Preparation improves the odds.

A written release plan shows that you are not relying on chance, hope, or promises—but on deliberate action and accountability.

### **OPTIONAL NOTE FOR PARTICIPANTS**

This planning guide is a tool, not a test. Use it honestly. Revisit it often. Let it evolve as you do.



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