

Business Executives & Entrepreneurs

CEOs, managers, entrepreneurs, and business owners

Professionals Program · The Recovery Files

Business Executives & Entrepreneurs

Recovery Program for Business Leaders

Navigate recovery while leading your business. Specialized content addressing the unique challenges executives and entrepreneurs face in maintaining both sobriety and professional success.

Unique Challenges for Business Leaders

High-Pressure Decision-Making

Managing critical business decisions without substances

Recovery Strategies:

- Develop decision-making protocols for high-stress moments
- Build a sober advisory network for major decisions
- Create pause mechanisms before significant choices
- Practice mindfulness techniques for clarity under pressure

Networking in Alcohol-Centric Culture

Building relationships without alcohol as a social lubricant

Recovery Strategies:

- Reframe networking as authentic connection, not performance
- Develop confident responses to drinking invitations
- Create alcohol-free networking opportunities
- Build genuine relationships based on shared values

Work Identity and Ego Challenges

Separating self-worth from business success

Recovery Strategies:

- Recognize identity beyond professional achievements
- Practice vulnerability as a leadership strength
- Build self-esteem independent of business outcomes
- Accept limitations and imperfection

Delegating and Asking for Help

Overcoming control tendencies in leadership

Recovery Strategies:

- Redefine strength as collaboration, not control
- Build trust in team members and recovery support
- Create systems for accountability and support
- Practice asking for help as a recovery skill

Recovery Modules for Business Leaders

§leadership-authenticity

Redefining Strength and Leadership

Introduction

The business world often equates strength with invulnerability, control with competence, and success with perfection. In recovery, you're learning that true strength includes acknowledging limitations, that effective leadership involves trust and delegation, and that sustainable success requires authenticity.

Key Points

Traditional business culture rewards facades and image management

Vulnerability in leadership builds stronger, more loyal teams

Authentic leaders create psychologically safe workplaces

Recovery principles enhance leadership effectiveness

Your recovery can be your greatest leadership development

Reflection Questions

How has your definition of 'strong leadership' changed in recovery?

What aspects of authentic leadership feel most challenging?

How might your recovery journey enhance your leadership?

What fears arise when considering vulnerability at work?

Practical Exercises

Identify three ways traditional business culture conflicts with recovery values

Write about a time when vulnerability strengthened a relationship

List leadership qualities you're developing through recovery

Create a personal leadership philosophy that integrates recovery principles

Managing a Business in Early Recovery

Introduction

Running a business while navigating early recovery presents unique challenges. You're rebuilding yourself while maintaining or rebuilding your company. This requires strategic planning, support systems, and realistic expectations.

Key Points

Early recovery requires protected time and energy

Business decisions may need temporary safeguards

Delegation becomes essential, not optional

Your recovery is the most important business investment

Sustainable business requires a sustainable leader

Reflection Questions

What business responsibilities feel overwhelming in early recovery?

Who in your organization could support increased delegation?

How can you protect recovery time while meeting business demands?

What business decisions might need additional oversight temporarily?

Practical Exercises

Create a 90-day business plan that prioritizes recovery activities

Identify delegation opportunities and capable team members

Develop communication protocols for when you need recovery support

Design a crisis management plan that includes recovery protection

Team Dynamics and Disclosure Considerations

Introduction

Deciding what, when, and how to share with your team about your recovery requires careful consideration. There's no one-size-fits-all answer, but there are frameworks for making informed decisions.

Key Points

Disclosure is a personal decision with professional implications

Consider legal protections and potential consequences

Timing and audience matter significantly

Partial disclosure is a valid option

Your story is yours to share or protect

Reflection Questions

What are my motivations for disclosure or privacy?

How might disclosure impact team dynamics and culture?

What legal or financial implications exist?

Who in my organization do I trust most?

What boundaries feel right for me?

Practical Exercises

List pros and cons of various disclosure scenarios

Identify trusted advisors who can help you decide

Write out different disclosure scripts for various audiences

Create a disclosure decision matrix with criteria important to you

Client Relationships Without Substances

Introduction

For many business leaders, client entertainment involved alcohol and substances. Building and maintaining client relationships in sobriety requires new approaches that often prove more genuine and effective.

Key Points

Authentic relationships outlast transactional networking

Client trust deepens when you're fully present

Sobriety enhances professional reliability and judgment

Alternative entertainment options can be more memorable

Your integrity is your most valuable business asset

Reflection Questions

How did substances facilitate or hinder client relationships?

What authentic connection strategies can I develop?

Which clients will support my recovery?

How can I reframe client entertainment?

What values do I want my business relationships to reflect?

Practical Exercises

Create a list of alcohol-free client entertainment ideas

Develop confident responses to drinking invitations

Identify clients who might appreciate authentic connection

Design a relationship-building strategy based on recovery principles

Creating a Recovery-Positive Workplace Culture

Introduction

Whether or not you disclose your own recovery, creating a workplace culture that supports mental health, work-life balance, and authentic connection benefits everyone and makes your workplace recovery-sustainable.

Key Points

Workplace culture starts at the top

Mental health support benefits all employees
Authentic culture attracts and retains talent
Recovery-friendly policies don't require disclosure
Healthy workplaces are more productive and profitable

Reflection Questions

What cultural shifts would support my recovery?
How can I normalize mental health conversations?
What policies would benefit all employees while supporting recovery?
How might cultural changes impact business outcomes?

Practical Exercises

Assess current workplace culture for recovery support
Develop three policy changes that support well-being
Create mental health resources accessible to all employees
Design a culture initiative that aligns with business values
§bottom-line-success
Separating Self-Worth from Business Performance

Introduction

Many business leaders derive their entire sense of self-worth from professional success. This creates enormous pressure, makes failure devastating, and recovery threatening. Learning to separate who you are from what you do is essential.

Key Points

Business success doesn't equal personal worth
Failure is feedback, not identity
Your value exists independent of achievements
Self-worth based on externals is unstable
Recovery teaches inherent worth regardless of performance

Reflection Questions

How much of my self-worth comes from business success?
What happens to my identity when business struggles?
Who am I separate from my professional role?
What would unconditional self-worth feel like?
How has addiction been tied to performance pressure?

Practical Exercises

List personal qualities unrelated to business success

Write about identity separate from professional achievements

Practice self-compassion during business challenges

Develop affirmations based on inherent worth

Healthy Risk-Taking vs. Reckless Behavior

Introduction

Entrepreneurship requires calculated risk-taking, but active addiction often clouds judgment and enables reckless decisions. In recovery, you're learning to distinguish between strategic risk and impulsive behavior.

Key Points

Entrepreneurship requires courage, not recklessness

Sobriety enhances risk assessment abilities

Impulsive decisions often masked as 'bold moves'

Sustainable growth requires patience

Recovery teaches delayed gratification

Reflection Questions

How did substance use affect my business judgment?

What risks did I take while impaired?

How has my risk assessment changed in sobriety?

What 'bold' decisions were actually reckless?

How can I maintain entrepreneurial spirit with sober judgment?

Practical Exercises

Review major business decisions made during active addiction

Create a decision-making protocol that includes pause periods

Develop criteria for distinguishing healthy risk from recklessness

Establish accountability for significant business decisions

Networking and Socializing Without Alcohol

Introduction

Business networking often centers on alcohol - cocktail hours, wine tastings, golf outings with drinks. Building professional relationships in sobriety requires confidence, authenticity, and new strategies.

Key Points

Authentic connection is more effective than alcohol-lubricated networking

Sobriety creates memorable, trustworthy impressions

Many professionals respect recovery and substance-free choices

Alternative networking opportunities exist and thrive

Your presence matters more than what you're drinking

Reflection Questions

What role did alcohol play in my professional networking?

Which networking situations feel most challenging sober?

What authentic connection skills can I develop?

How might sobriety actually enhance professional relationships?

What fears arise around alcohol-free networking?

Practical Exercises

Develop confident responses to 'Why aren't you drinking?'

Create a list of alcohol-free networking venues and events

Practice networking conversations focused on authentic connection

Identify recovery-friendly business contacts for support

Work-Life Integration in Recovery

Introduction

For many business leaders, work-life 'balance' feels impossible - the business demands constant attention. Recovery requires rethinking this relationship and creating sustainable integration that honors both professional responsibilities and personal well-being.

Key Points

Work-life balance isn't about equal time, but sustainable integration

Recovery requires non-negotiable personal time

Burnout threatens both sobriety and business success

Boundaries enhance productivity and creativity

Your recovery is your most important business asset

Reflection Questions

How did addiction blur work-life boundaries?

What recovery activities feel non-negotiable?

Where do I need firmer boundaries?

How can I integrate recovery into my daily business routine?

What would 'sustainable success' look like for me?

Practical Exercises

Audit your typical week for recovery time

Identify three boundaries that would support your recovery

Create a weekly schedule that includes recovery activities

Design a morning routine that centers recovery principles

Building Sustainable Business Practices

Introduction

Long-term business success and long-term recovery require similar principles: sustainability over sprint mentality, authentic relationships over transactional connections, and values-driven decisions over short-term gains.

Key Points

Sustainable business practices support sustainable recovery

Short-term thinking threatens both sobriety and business

Values-driven business aligns with recovery principles

Authentic leadership creates lasting business success

Recovery teaches patience, essential for building lasting enterprises

Reflection Questions

Which business practices feel unsustainable?

How do my business values align with recovery principles?

What short-term pressures threaten long-term sustainability?

How can recovery principles enhance business practices?

What would a recovery-compatible business model look like?

Practical Exercises

Assess business practices for sustainability and alignment with values

Develop a values statement that integrates recovery principles

Create a strategic plan that prioritizes long-term sustainability

Identify three business practices that could be more recovery-aligned

Resources for Business Leaders in Recovery

Professional Support

- Executive coaching specializing in recovery
- Business mentors in long-term recovery
- CEO/executive recovery support groups
- Professional monitoring and accountability services
- Business attorney with addiction law expertise

Workplace Strategies

- Disclosure decision frameworks
- Return-to-work planning
- HR policies supporting recovery
- Employee assistance program (EAP) guidance
- Workplace accommodation strategies

Business Continuity

- Succession planning during treatment
- Temporary management arrangements
- Board communication strategies
- Client relationship management plans
- Financial planning for recovery time

Personal Development

- Leadership development in recovery
- Emotional intelligence training
- Work-life integration coaching
- Stress management techniques
- Decision-making frameworks for early recovery

Remember

Your recovery is your most valuable business asset. A thriving business led by someone in active addiction is ultimately unsustainable. Investing in your recovery is investing in your business's future. The skills you develop in recovery - authenticity, humility, emotional intelligence, and genuine connection - are the same qualities that create exceptional leaders and sustainable enterprises.