

Empty Nest & Recovery

Navigate identity transition

Printable worksheet · 3 parts

Name _____ Date _____

Empty Nest & Recovery Assessment

This assessment helps you navigate the unique challenges when early recovery intersects with the empty nest transition.

Contents

- Part 1 · Part 1: Recognizing Vulnerabilities
- Part 2 · Part 2: Responding to Challenges
- Part 3 · Your Assessment

PART 1 OF 3

Part 1: Recognizing Vulnerabilities

Identify patterns that may indicate recovery vulnerability

1. I find myself questioning whether recovery practices are still necessary now that my parenting responsibilities have decreased.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

2. I experience periods where maintaining sobriety feels more burdensome since my children left home.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

3. I struggle to find purpose or identity beyond my role as a parent.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

4. I find myself forgetting how alcohol negatively impacted my parenting and family life before recovery.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

5. I believe I have developed enough recovery skills to handle occasional drinking now.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

6. I experience intense loneliness in my now-quieter home that triggers urges to drink.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

7. I find myself avoiding or numbing feelings of loss related to my children's departure.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

8. I feel anxious about my future now that my primary parenting role has changed.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

9. I experience resentment toward parents who can drink socially while navigating their empty nest.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

10. I feel increased shame about my recovery needs now that my identity is shifting.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

PART 2 OF 3

Part 2: Responding to Challenges

Assess your strategies for addressing recovery challenges

1. I revisit how alcohol would complicate rather than solve my empty nest adjustment challenges.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

2. I maintain written reminders of how drinking affected my relationship with my children.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

3. I connect with newcomers in recovery to refresh my perspective on recovery's value.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

4. I have updated my recovery goals to include healthy navigation of this parenting transition.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

5. I share honestly with others when experiencing motivational struggles related to empty nest.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

6. I practice allowing myself to feel grief without turning to alcohol.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

7. I intentionally reach out to others when feeling the loneliness of my children's absence.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

8. I have strategies for managing the emotional fluctuations of this family transition.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

9. I recognize and honor both the losses and opportunities in this new life stage.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

10. I have developed specific techniques for managing empty nest-related triggers.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 Rarely ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 Often ☐ 5 Always

NeverRarelySometimesOftenAlways

PART 3 OF 3

Your Assessment

Moving Forward

The empty nest transition can be an opportunity to deepen your recovery foundation and discover new sources of meaning and purpose. Consider sharing your responses with a counselor, sponsor, or trusted person in recovery.