



DESIGN YOUR DETOX

An International Guide to
Integrating Traditional and Holistic
Addiction Recovery Methods

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Addiction Recovery Methods

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This book is dedicated to my children and granddaughter,
my inspiration for everything.



I would also like to thank...

Everyone who believed in me during this project. This includes people who shared their detox experiences with me, professionals in the recovery and holistic communities, and friends in social media communities. I had the pleasure and honor of meeting some of the most amazing people during this project, both virtually and in person, and I hope to one day reconnect with everyone who was involved. Many blessings to all of you, all of us, because we're all one global family, and we're all in this together.

Introduction

This book is a report of the findings of a Grassroots Addiction Recovery Project that I've been working on since October of 2014. I began this project when a friend of mine discovered an herbal opiate-detox formula that was being used in Hanoi, Vietnam called Heantos 4®. He flew to Vietnam to meet with Dr. Sung, the doctor who completed the development of the formula, and brought several boxes of it back to the states. He asked if I would be interested in working with Heantos because I had been involved with the Ibogaine Recovery Community for more than a decade and had friends who were still active in their addictions. At the time, Ibogaine was really the only natural detox aid that anyone knew about, but because it wasn't legal in the United States many people were not able to obtain treatment. I decided that I would love to get involved with learning more about Heantos and launched a Facebook® group called 'Welcome to Heantos' to begin getting the word out. I hoped that it would be as effective as I was being told it was in Vietnam, which would give affordable hope to a lot of people I knew. Within just a few weeks of launching the Facebook group, a friend of mine cold-turkey detoxed himself from heroin while using Heantos to help reduce his withdrawal symptoms. We shared his experience with the Facebook group.

The protocol that we were originally given was 7 Heantos capsules 2x a day, or 14 capsules a day. I was also told that in Vietnam the detox centers were alternating Valium® with the Heantos doses. This was a huge problem for us because Valium is a controlled substance here in the United States. Heantos was completely legal, but Heantos alone was not enough to detox a person comfortably from opiates. Oftentimes it was enough for people who were detoxing from cocaine or methamphetamines, but the physical symptoms of opiate withdrawal were the most difficult to manage. Due to the fact that Valium had to be eliminated from the protocol, the Heantos detoxes became a long process of trial and error.

When my friend began the first Heantos detox, we knew that we would be more-or-less experimenting with Heantos and with the additional supplements that he decided to use. He had some bad days and some better days, but he was determined to get through the detox, which he did. We learned a lot that week, and for the next few years I continued to be a support system for people who were detoxing themselves at home. Under the advisement of Dr. Sung, we made adjustments to the Heantos protocol and experimented with different supplements and herbal formulas that could be safely used in combination with it.

The Facebook group quickly became very active. People were eager to learn more about Heantos, as was I. More and more people started detoxing with it and the project started gaining momentum. We were using the Facebook group to share detox experiences and to discuss ways to improve the process. The Facebook group also gave us open dialogue with a doctor who helped develop Heantos, Dr. Tran Van Sung, and his nephew Hieu, in Vietnam. We were able to create an incredible platform where we were collectively learning how to improve the herbal protocols that would make detoxing more comfortable. A tremendous amount of information was shared in this virtual arena. We discussed a variety of topics involving detox and recovery, but our primary focus was opiate detox. With the first detox we realized that Heantos had helped, but it seemed that the dose was too low and that we would need additional herbs and over-the-counter products to take in-between Heantos doses. Under the advisement of Dr. Sung, we began raising the Heantos doses and we started seeing better results. However, there was much room for improvement and still a lot to learn.

During the first few months of this project, I was contacted by several professionals who worked in different mainstream addiction recovery programs, such as addiction counseling and social work. They were interested in learning if Heantos could help some of their clients, especially the ones who had repeated relapse. Talking to these professionals and learning about their programs made me realize that using natural recovery methods might help to fill in the gaps for traditional recovery programs that were struggling to help their clients long-term. I started to see detox and recovery in such a different light. I saw that incorporating holistic modalities (such as herbal supplements, yoga, meditation, Qi Gong, salt baths, etc.) with traditional modalities (such as rehab, out-patient programs, 12 Step® groups, etc.) created more of a full-spectrum recovery from addiction. I realized that the process of detox and recovery itself should be seen more of an experience of personal transformation and less of a dreaded punishment. I began sharing these ideas with professionals and with people who were contacting me for detox support. Little by little, I started seeing better results.

When I was first asked to work with Heantos, I jumped into it without considering the magnitude of support and resources that people would truly need if they were going to be successful long-term. As much as I wanted to help people overcome all of their challenges, I just didn't have the resources or experience to be able to effectively do so. I realized that this was very serious work, much more serious than just experimenting with some herbs and supplements. I also wasn't prepared for the overwhelming response that the Facebook group had. Overnight, I was being contacted from people all around the world, telling me their stories and asking for guidance and support. I did my best to answer every call and message, and to help each person to the best of my ability, but I was in way over my head. I stayed in close contact with everyone who reached out to me for support with their at-home detoxes, talking and texting daily, in most cases for at least a few weeks.

Raising two children and working two jobs made my time extremely limited, but I squeezed in calls every chance I had. I took this work very seriously and did my best to give everyone my all, but at some point I realized that people needed more help than what I could offer. So, I took a step back from the project and decided to begin the process of creating a professional platform.

After the experimentation and this global sharing of ideas, I compiled as much information as I could that might be beneficial when designing a detox and recovery plan, especially for those with limited resources. I've compiled it all in this book in the hopes that it can be a guide for people who are struggling to overcome addiction and are in need of new ideas and suggestions. There are a range of methods and products discussed in this book, so I hope you'll read all of it and decide if anything resonates with you and your desire to get clean. If you're reading this book because someone you know is struggling with addiction, then may this book soften your heart to the harshness of addiction, and hopefully give you some insight and understanding to help that person recover. If you decide you're ready to begin the path of detox and recovery, please do extensive research, devise a plan, take your time, and do this right... because your life (or the life of someone you love) depends on it.

This book is meant to be a resource that will aid you on your journey of detox and recovery, doing it as quickly or as slowly as you need to meet your specific needs and circumstances. A lot of the methods I discuss are discreet, manageable, and affordable. They can be used short or long-term and can also be used for preventing and coping with relapse and cravings. I have written and rewritten this book several times, and here I sit one last time revising it to hopefully provide the most helpful information that I possibly can to anyone out there who might be struggling and suffering in their addiction.



The problem with the current mainstream models for treating addiction is that there aren't enough options available for people seeking help, especially for those with limited resources. Inpatient facilities are exorbitant, ranging from \$3,000-\$100,000, with no guarantee for success. State funded facilities tend to have low success rates and can be difficult to qualify for. 12 Step programs work great for some people, but not at all for others. Additionally, many recovery programs use addictive prescription drugs such as Methadone® or Suboxone® as their primary method of detox and aren't incorporating a therapeutic component, which ultimately leads to the replacement of one addiction for another. Many people have exhausted all options, time and time again, but still have not won the battle. The holistic methods I will be discussing can be integrated with *any* detox and recovery plan, and oftentimes can seem to fill in the gaps for people who are struggling to stay clean. I don't believe that there's one solution for detox and recovery, but what I have seen is that integrating a variety of tools and methods will bring the best chances for long-term success.

In this book, I will be sharing the successful components of the 'Design Your Detox' project. For those who have no choice but to do a cold-turkey detox at home, I will walk you through the process of using natural products and methods to help ease withdrawal discomforts. I will provide an overview of the preparation required, outline methods for easing withdrawal symptoms, and offer suggestions for designing an aftercare plan. Once the peak days of detox have passed, you can begin your long-term aftercare plan in the hopes of leading yourself into a completely new way of life.

Please read this book with an open mind, understanding that this is not a 'user's guide to detox' but instead a log of methods that have helped people get clean. The information that I share is information that seemed to be critical for a successful recovery. Please remember that detoxing is a very serious medical process, and if you or a loved one is considering any method of detox, it's imperative to discuss your plans with a medical professional **BEFORE** beginning. I will mention this several times throughout the book because safety is the most critical component to a successful detox and recovery plan.

When the time comes to sit down and design your recovery plan, please visit www.DesignYourDetox.com. I built this website to go along with this book. It has a range of information, videos, and resources for all stages of recovery. I designed it to take this book to the next level. I wanted to create a safe and organized space for people to design recovery plans, access resources, and ask questions. Drug recovery is typically an over-priced industry, so I also wanted to provide options for people who are on a tight budget. It's a tragedy within our society that 75% of people battling addiction in the United States will not receive any form of treatment (National Institutes of Health, 2022). I believe we can reduce this statistic if we create a new mainstream narrative.

Chapter 1

A Summary of Addiction

"Something has gone badly wrong with our culture. We've created a culture where really large numbers of the people around us can't bear to be present in their daily lives. They need to medicate themselves to get through their day." ~ Johann Hari

A SUMMARY OF ADDICTION

ad·dic·tion

ə'dikSH(ə)n/

noun

noun: addiction; plural noun: addictions

1. the fact or condition of being addicted to a particular substance, thing, or activity.

synonyms: dependency, dependence, habit, problem - Dictionary.com

Addiction is a compulsion to engage in unhealthy or detrimental behavior. Human beings can become addicted to many forms of behaviors such as gambling, overeating, sex, or reckless behavior, but the term "addiction" is most commonly used to refer to a physiological state of dependence caused by the habitual use of drugs, alcohol, or other substances. Addiction is characterized by uncontrolled craving, increased tolerance, and withdrawal symptoms when deprived of access to the addictive substance. Addictions afflict millions of people in the United States alone.

- Encyclopedia.com

Addiction is a broad term used to describe a condition of over-using, or abusing, a range of substances, things, or activities. People have many addictions in society today such as prescription pills, illicit street drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, gambling, social media, food, money, sex, love, even shopping. Addictions come in many forms and are destructive in many ways, not only to the person suffering with the addiction, but to their loved ones as well. Addictions time and again act as a buffer between insecurities, fears, traumas, and overwhelming emotions. Most people who suffer from addiction have unresolved trauma or insecurities, causing them to seek a means of finding emotional, psychological, and/or physical relief.

Addiction is typically treated as a crime and has many negative stigmas in our contemporary western culture. This is reflected in the available mainstream recovery models, as many of these programs *feel* like a punishment. After many years of advocacy work, I have concluded that addiction is a multi-faceted condition that requires a full spectrum, compassionate approach. The journey of detox and recovery can and should be viewed as a transformation of one's life. It's the reemerging of one's true self and an experience of closing old chapters and reconnecting with the world. In some cases, it's even the journey towards resolution to past trauma.

Why do people become addicted? I'm sure many of you have asked that question, either to yourself or to someone else. The answer is different for everyone, but the common response among most is that they're trying to escape their pain. A lot of people are deeply suffering, for a variety of reasons; whether they're injured, depressed, lonely, insecure, unhealthy, unstable, chemically imbalanced, abused, or traumatized by the many pains of life, people use drugs and alcohol to escape these many overwhelming feelings. Unfortunately, once addiction gets its' grip on you, it no longer becomes a choice, and instead becomes a physical and mental necessity, turning one's body and mind into a prison of their own design.

Some believe that addiction is a disease, and if you break it down to '*dis - ease*' or uneasiness within the mind and body, then yes, this is correct. People do not begin their addictions in the hopes of it controlling and destroying their lives, yet inevitably at some point it will take control, and life will slowly begin to change for the worse.

What is the solution? In my years of research and advocacy, I believe the solution includes striving to attain inner peace, working towards positive changes and inspiring goals, surrounding yourself with healthy people and environments, and, of course, balancing and responding to the needs and imbalances of your body and mind. Ultimately, what this sums up to is... **LOVING YOURSELF!**

If you're unsure if someone you love may be struggling with addiction, there are several signs that you can look for. It's critical to intervene with love and understanding, letting them know that they aren't alone and that you're not judging or condemning them. The following is a list of signs that you may want to look for, and if you're still unsure, you can gently ask the person to take an at-home drug test:

- Changes in mood
- Excessive spending
- Unusual sleeping and eating patterns
- Troubled relationships
- Isolating from friends and family
- Disappearing from or deactivating social media accounts
- Difficulties at work / inability to hold a job
- Lack of interest in hobbies
- Decline in health
- Change in appearance / weight loss
- Unexplained disappearances

- Presence of drug paraphernalia
- Track marks on arms or other areas of the body
- Noticeable withdrawal symptoms
- Unusual sleepiness / nodding out
- Extreme levels of energy / staying awake for several days at a time
- Patterns of dishonesty
- New circles of friends

Although it may seem that your loved one is changing right before your eyes, please remember that addiction is a powerful force that can completely control a person's life and mind. Your loved one may seem as though he or she has become a stranger to you, but I assure you that beneath the addiction is their true-self longing to be freed from this prison. It's important not to give up on them because **NO ONE IS A LOST CAUSE.**

Chapter 2

Introduction to Detox

"The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step." ~ Lao Tzu

Introduction to Detox

There are a lot of different substances that people can use or abuse; prescription drugs, illicit street drugs, alcohol, over the counter medicines, supplements, cigarettes, even food or caffeine. Some substances are easier than others to discontinue using. Prescription drugs typically require a slow dosage reduction prescribed by your doctor if you decide to discontinue a medicine that you've taken over an extended period of time. I'm not sure if there's any substance that doesn't create some level of physical discomfort when you discontinue using it after an extended period of time. If you drink soda or coffee every day for several years and suddenly decide to discontinue drinking it, you will experience physical withdrawals such as headache, fatigue, decreased energy, depression, and irritability. Something as simple as coffee, a grocery item, can leave you feeling ill and uncomfortable, so just imagine how severe the symptoms would be for someone who is trying to get clean from heroin or methamphetamines.

The symptoms that people experience when discontinuing the use of any substance, from coffee to methamphetamines, are called withdrawal symptoms. They are also referred to as acute withdrawal symptoms or physical withdrawal symptoms. You will also hear people refer to this process as detox or detoxing. So, when a person decides to stop using a substance, they will need to consider how severe the withdrawal symptoms will be during their period of detox so that they can prepare accordingly.

If the withdrawal symptoms are mild, such as with caffeine or sugar, then the detox won't be too much of an issue. You can plan for a few days of rest, healthy food, relaxing herbs, yoga, and warm salt baths. However, if a person is going to detox from addictive prescription drugs such as Xanax® or Oxycodone®, street drugs such as heroin or crystal meth, or even alcohol, then they will need to plan for a challenging and sometimes crippling detox. These addictions can come with an extremely severe level of withdrawal symptoms, and this is usually the reason that people get trapped in their addictions. Some people feel as though getting clean is out of their reach or is simply impossible to attain. Sometimes options seem limited, as well as resources. The current options for detoxing are typically going into a long-term rehabilitation center, undergoing a short-term medical detox in a hospital type setting, going to an Ibogaine clinic outside of the U.S., or cold-turkey detoxing yourself at home. Each option comes with pros and cons.

I'm personally a big fan of rehabilitation centers and detox centers. A rehabilitation center is a medical detox center combined with a short or long-term aftercare program; however these programs can be extremely expensive, and not affordable or attainable for everyone. A detox center is usually a state funded facility that medically detoxes the person and sends them home as soon as the withdrawal symptoms subside, usually in a week or so. They aren't always the nicest facilities, but you'll have around-the-clock medical monitoring to safely get you through your detox, and that's the most important factor to consider. If you choose to go to a rehab or a detox center, this shouldn't be the only step in your recovery plan, this should realistically be just the first step in your long-term plan. An example of a safe and effective long-term recovery plan might look like this:

- Go to rehab for 30-90 days
- Transition into a halfway house
- Use herbs, vitamins and supplements to manage lingering withdrawal symptoms and discomforts
- Begin doing Yoga, Tai Chi, and/or meditation daily

- Focus on nutrition and fitness
- Go to an Ibogaine clinic for a post-detox psycho-spiritual treatment
- See a therapist regularly
- Attend support groups such as Narcotics Anonymous® or SMART Recovery®
- Go back to work
- Begin your new life

A long-term plan like this can help you target so many aspects of addiction:

- Rehab will safely detox you and teach you more about yourself and what may have led to your addiction.
- A halfway house will help keep you sober during that first period following rehab (which is a very delicate time).
- Using herbs, vitamins and supplements will help with the wide range of lingering long-term symptoms you may experience while the body is repairing and rebalancing from the damage of addiction. This might also help you to overcome triggering sensations such as anxiety and insomnia.
- If you're able to go to a reputable Ibogaine clinic, this will give you a unique opportunity to psycho-therapeutically analyze your subconscious mind in an attempt to uncover the underlying causes of your addiction and help you to find closure to the past. Ibogaine has been compared to ten years of psychotherapy in a single night, so when administered by an experienced doctor in a safe setting, the experience can be incredibly rewarding and transformational.
- Working with a therapist can be very rewarding because this will also help you to learn more about yourself, your addiction, your trauma, the underlying causes of your addiction, and can help you figure out how to identify and overcome unhealthy patterns in your life.

- Going to support groups such as Narcotics Anonymous and SMART Recovery will give you an opportunity to socialize with sober people and to support one another on this difficult journey.
- Doing yoga and other meditative arts daily is a wonderful way to help your body restore and rejuvenate itself so that you can fully overcome the physical challenges of addiction.
- It's important to focus on nutrition and fitness as this will further help your mind and body to fully heal and feel it's best.
- Meditation is a tool that will help you to stay grounded and centered in this chaotic world and through this difficult time in your life.

Collectively, each item on the list is a key component in this example of a full spectrum recovery plan. The idea isn't to just 'stop doing drugs', but to transform your mind, your body, and your day-to-day life in the process. A truly successful and rewarding recovery requires you to focus on all areas of your life, and to integrate as many therapeutic modalities as you can. Once this chapter is behind you, you will be living a new life that you've intentionally designed. The goal is to begin the next chapter as strong, recovered, and inspired as you can possibly be.

Unfortunately, many people aren't able to go to a rehab or detox center and are left to detox themselves at home. While this can be a very challenging experience, if you make all of the proper preparations and do so under the care of your doctor, then it *can* be done safely and successfully.

This 'Design Your Detox' project began in 2014 with people in many regions of the world experimenting with Heantos and other herbs to detox themselves at home. While no detox was free of discomforts, a lot of them were tolerable, even for people with heavy long-term habits. If you decide to detox yourself at home, you just have to accept that it's going to come with challenges and discomforts, but the goal of being clean is the light at the end of that tunnel.

During the first few years of this project, I was in close contact with many people throughout the duration of their at-home detoxes and I started learning the differences between the different types of detoxes. For example, someone going through an opiate detox seemed to be more physically ill than any other detox. Their withdrawal symptoms were always very severe and generally lasted anywhere from four to seven days (or more), usually followed by several weeks of milder lingering symptoms. One of the biggest challenges that caused a lot of people to consider relapsing seemed to be insomnia. So, for the peak days of detox the goal would be to use as many relaxing herbs and supplements as possible. Diet would be light as they didn't have much of an appetite and often struggled to hold food down. Anxiety also seemed to be a major challenge with opiate detoxes, as well as physical pain and digestive issues. In general, opiate detoxes were extremely difficult, but not impossible to manage at home. People who were detoxing from methamphetamines had a very different type of detox. It seemed that insomnia was only an issue for the first day or two, so getting them to fall asleep was an important focus at the onset. Once they finally got their first sound sleep, it would begin a several-day cycle of long periods of deep sleeping with short intervals of being awake (and quite groggy). In between periods of sleeping, they would wake up starving for hearty, filling meals (meat and potatoes often seemed to be a good choice). However, it was important for them not to sleep too much because it's also very important to move around and get the blood flowing during a detox. In general, it appeared that people detoxing from methamphetamines had less severe physical withdrawal symptoms, they had heartier appetites, and they required an extreme amount of deep sleep.

Before beginning any stage of detox, please make sure to research all of the substances you will be detoxing from and all of the potential withdrawal symptoms so that you can accurately prepare for what you may experience. You want to be as prepared as possible because once the detox begins you want to have everything that you may need to make the experience as comfortable and functional as possible.

Chapter 3

Detoxing at Home

"I'm not telling you it's going to be easy, I'm telling you it's going to be worth it." ~ Arthur L. Williams Jr.

3

Detoxing at Home

Cold-Turkey Detox

verb (used with object)

to withdraw from (an addictive substance or a habit) abruptly and completely. ~ Dictionary.com

*"Detoxification may take from several days to many weeks. Detoxification can be accomplished "**cold turkey**," by complete and immediate cessation (a temporary or complete stopping; discontinuance - Dictionary.com) of all substance use, or by slowly decreasing (tapering) the dose that a person is taking, to minimize the side effects of withdrawal. Some substances absolutely must be tapered, because "cold turkey" methods of detoxification are **potentially life threatening**. Alternatively, a variety of medications may be utilized to combat the unpleasant and threatening physical symptoms of withdrawal. A substance (such as methadone in the case of heroin addiction) may be substituted for the original substance of abuse, with gradual tapering of this substituted drug. In practice, many patients may be maintained on methadone and lead a reasonably normal life. Because of the rebound effects of fluctuating blood pressure, body temperature, heart and breathing rates, as well as the potential for bizarre behavior and hallucinations, **a person undergoing withdrawal must be carefully monitored and treated appropriately.**" ~ Encyclopedia.com*

Undergoing a cold-turkey detox at home requires a serious commitment from the person who will be detoxing and from everyone in their support system. It's recommended to devote a minimum of 2-3 weeks to your detox (6-12 weeks or more for long-acting opiate detox) so that you can take your time and get the proper rest and recovery that your body will require. The first week or so will be dedicated to managing acute withdrawal symptoms, and the following week/s will be used to rest, recover, and rebalance.

People who are addicted to Fentanyl®, Alcohol or Benzodiazepines® (anxiety medications such as Xanax®, Klonopin® or Valium®) should never detox at home. Fentanyl, Benzodiazepines and alcohol are some of the most dangerous substances to detox from and will always require around-the-clock supervision of a medical professional. Benzodiazepine and alcohol detoxes can cause unexpected seizures and are very dangerous, even life threatening. You can use the holistic methods described in this book (in combination with therapy and other recovery tools) to treat non-daily alcohol use, but if the person is a frequent drinker and is experiencing withdrawal symptoms, then they will be at high risk for seizures or other health related risks. If a person has a mild alcohol addiction and drinks a couple times a week, or binge drinks infrequently, then this method may be safe, as long as the person is not experiencing daily symptoms of withdrawals, such as shakes, vomiting, and/or accelerated heart rate. **Always speak to your doctor before beginning any stage of detox to determine the safest course of action for your unique circumstances.**

I know it can be scary to admit to your doctor that you have an addiction, but it's important that you detox safely. It takes a lot of courage to decide to overcome an addiction, and part of that courage may require you to be open and honest about something that you may have been hiding for a long time. Addiction has most likely taken a toll on your life and your body. Navigating safely out of it has to be a primary focus, so that means utilizing every tool and resource available to you. **Consulting with your doctor is one of the most powerful and responsible decisions that you can make.**

I've spoken to many people who've had Benzodiazepine prescriptions abruptly stopped, or people who suddenly didn't have access to their medications and were left with no choice but to cold turkey detox. **I cannot express enough how dangerous these detoxes are.** If you or a loved one suddenly find yourself in a position where you must suddenly detox from Fentanyl, Benzodiazepines or alcohol, and you don't have a doctor to oversee the process, then please go to your local emergency room for assistance. Spending a few days in a state-funded medical detox center could be the difference between life and death. Upon release, using herbal supplements and other holistic methods could be the perfect solution to overcoming the lingering, long-term discomforts, but the peak days of detox need to be monitored by a medical professional.

Over the course of the 'Design Your Detox' project, Fentanyl unfortunately made a huge impact on the addiction community. It's currently being added to most street drugs, even cannabis, to enhance their effects and addictiveness. Cold-turkey detoxing from Fentanyl can be extremely dangerous and unpredictable. If you have any Fentanyl in your system, whether intentionally or not, your safest course of action will be to go to the emergency room and spend a few days in a state-funded detox center. They will safely monitor the critical days of detox, which again could be the difference between life and death. Due to the fact that most street drugs are currently being laced with Fentanyl, before beginning any method of detox, please take a drug test so that you'll know exactly what's in your system.

A lot of the herbs and supplements that I'll be discussing in this book are sedating and promote sleep and relaxation. The premise of an at-home naturally supported detox is to essentially rest and relax through the peak days of withdrawals using a variety of products and methods to reduce the intensity and discomfort of physical withdrawal symptoms. **While taking any sedating products, it's recommended not to drive, operate any machinery, or take on any tasks that require full concentration. If children will be present, you'll need to have a caretaker for them because you'll be unusually tired, and at times disoriented from the sedating effects of the supplements. Always consult with your doctor before beginning any stage of detox.**

Using herbal products during a detox is a natural way to reduce withdrawal discomforts that can be done safely from home. The peak days of withdrawal will typically last 5-10 days (sometimes longer), unless you're detoxing from a long-acting substance such as Methadone® or Suboxone®, in which case the peak days could last up to 2-12 weeks, or more. Once the peak days have passed and withdrawal symptoms have subsided, you may want to continue taking smaller maintenance doses of your herbs and supplements for the days, weeks, or even months to follow.

Naturally supporting a cold-turkey detox consists of managing and minimizing withdrawal symptoms, trying to maintain a positive attitude, resting as much as possible, incorporating nutrition and fitness, and mentally preparing for the next chapter in life. It's recommended to have an around-the-clock caretaker present for the peak days of detox because you may be sedated or disoriented at times, and you could have difficulty keeping track of your supplement dosages. In addition, it's helpful to have someone there to cook your meals, straighten or change your bed sheets, prepare your baths, and to just generally keep you company and help keep your spirits lifted.

This type of at-home detox can be an effective way of beginning your journey of addiction recovery, but it requires a lot of planning, preparation, and commitment. The herbs and supplements discussed in this book are gentle on the body and can be used long-term to slowly reduce high dosages pre-detox, to manage the primary days of detox, and for post-detox maintenance. It's recommended that you take your time reading this book, take notes on information that resonates with you, and begin making a list of goals, steps, resources, and/or products that will hopefully take you successfully through recovery.

Detoxing at home with the support of natural products can be done affordably, but it's important to make sure that you have everything you need **BEFORE** beginning your detox. There isn't one specific combination of herbs or one specific way in which to use this method. There are endless combinations of medicinal herbs, products and methods out there for you to research and possibly use. At some point in the beginning stages of experimenting with Heantos, I realized that herbs and different over-the-counter natural products could actually help reduce physical withdrawal symptoms. I also realized that none of the products worked well enough alone, so the project became a trial-and-error process of testing different products and herbs together (along with yoga, salt-baths, exercise and diet, massage, and more). Once I began researching products, formulas, and methods, and talked to different holistic professionals, nutritionists, and doctors, I realized that the combination of products available is extremely extensive. I found some really effective products from smaller, local holistic companies. I also found some of the best products at nutrition and health food stores, smoke shops, online holistic stores, Asian markets, local farmers markets, farm stores, and Amish stores. You definitely need to research the quality of the brand/s that you're buying. There's a tremendous variation in effectiveness of different herbal products, and unfortunately most of the cheaper products don't work well. You really do want to invest in the more expensive products, if possible. But even the more expensive products are still extremely affordable considering what you're trying to achieve.

In addition to all that I learned about using herbal supplements, I also learned that herbs and supplements alone aren't enough, and that you will need to incorporate additional natural methods into your detox and recovery plan. Nutrition and fitness will play a huge role in your long-term experience, as well as different meditative arts such as Yoga or Tai Chi. I could see that the people who were preparing their bodies leading up to detox (such as drinking more water, eating a raw organic diet, doing yoga and exercising) felt better during and after their detox. It was the combination of several natural methods that brought the greatest results.

Basically, what I am proposing is to completely rewrite the daily narrative of your life. Most people in active addiction are living a high stress lifestyle, and in a lot of cases aren't eating nutritiously or taking care of their bodies. If you decide that you want to begin this journey of addiction recovery, it must start with a commitment to yourself to create a completely new daily lifestyle and daily routine. How you decide to design this next chapter of your life is up to you. Your level of commitment is also up to you. You will need to begin researching and brainstorming with someone who can help you design a detailed plan that covers how and where you're going to detox, what your aftercare plan will be, what your resources and options are, who your support system will be, and what your long-term plans and goals will be.

I will mention several times throughout this book that it's always recommended to review your detox plans, products, and protocol with a medical professional prior to beginning any stage of detox. Even though these methods are safe and gentle on the body, undergoing drug detox is a complicated medical process that requires proper medical guidance. An important goal in recovery is to love yourself and honor your body. Taking every safety measure possible is an important step in beginning that process.

Detoxing is just the first step on the life-long journey of recovery. For many people, their addiction is the dominating force in their lives, and recovery will require many changes in their daily lifestyle. The following is a list of the main components to a successful recovery plan:

Researching products and services - Take your time researching products and services, reading testimonies and reviews, and talking to people who have experience with the products and services that you're considering.

Designing a detox plan (if needed). - If you will be experiencing withdrawal symptoms, please take your time researching all methods of detox. This will include different inpatient facilities, Ibogaine or other holistic detox centers, or detoxing yourself at home with the support of natural support products and methods. Take your time making your decision and collect as much information as you can about every option available to you.

Designing a detox protocol (if needed). - If you're undergoing a cold-turkey detox at home and have purchased products to aid in this process, it's important to design a dosaging schedule (protocol) that will be used as a guide for your detox. Each day may vary based on the intensity of withdrawals, but having a protocol designed will help to guide you and your caretaker through the peak days.

Preparing the mind, body, and home - Addiction and detox are very taxing on the mind, body, and overall lifestyle. It's important to take your time preparing for this process because it's the closing of a very painful and destructive chapter in your life. The key to recovery is loving yourself, and some of the best ways you can love yourself are by eating healthy, drinking plenty of water, quieting the mind with meditation, spending time in nature, reading self-help books or watching motivational speakers, listening to uplifting music, getting plenty of sleep and relaxation time, making healthy connections with sober people, and creating a serene home environment. I always recommend thoroughly cleaning the home prior to detox, discarding any drug paraphernalia or reminders of drug usage, and even changing the furniture and decor around if possible. This is the beginning of a fresh start, so cleaning and organizing can oftentimes help to instill a renewed feeling.

Safeguarding yourself from drug contacts – **Delete and Block!!!** Delete and block drug contacts from your phone, social media, email, etc. Delete your social media profiles and make new ones if drug contacts are connected to old ones, change your phone number, and even relocate if needed. Cut all ties to drug contacts prior to beginning your detox. The last thing you want to be faced with while detoxing is an unexpected visit or call from a dealer or a friend that you used to party with. You must eliminate all reminders and connections to your former life. Down the road, after you have a substantial amount of clean time, you may want to reach out to old friends and offer to help them with their addictions if you feel called to do that, but in the beginning, you need to stay away from anyone associated with drugs and focus on getting yourself strong first.

Creating a support system – This is one of the most important components of an effective recovery. One of my favorite quotes is by the author of *Chasing the Scream: The First and Last Days of the War on Drugs*, by Johann Hari; *"The opposite of addiction is not sobriety. The opposite of addiction is connection"*. This theory was examined in the "Rat Park" experiment at the University of British Columbia. Rats were kept in isolation and were given the option of drinking clean-water or morphine-water. When the rats were in a state of isolation, they typically chose to drink the morphine-water. Then the rats were taken out of isolation and were brought together in a social setting called Rat Park. The rats were offered the same water options, only now they preferred the clean-water instead of the morphine-water. This response indicates that when the rats were in a healthy social setting, they no longer had the desire to drink the morphine-water. It's thought that intoxication was filling the void they experienced in isolation. This holds true for humans as well; in isolation, you may be left with a void. It's human nature to crave healthy connections, with other humans, with animals, and with nature. Without healthy connections, one can be left with a void that may seem to be satisfied with substances such as drugs, alcohol, money, sex, food, or more. So, please keep in mind the importance of a support system when designing your recovery plan.

Evaluating community resources – There are a range of resources within a community that can be helpful during recovery, such as Twelve-Step programs, SMART Recovery groups, outpatient recovery programs, churches/spiritual centers, meditation groups, yoga studios, recreation centers, gyms, art studios, drum circles, breathwork studios, cold-plunge studios, acupuncture clinics, massage therapists, saunas, counselors, herbalists, and more. Get creative when designing a recovery plan, you don't have to go to standard recovery programs all the time, you can incorporate anything that makes you feel uplifted and inspired! Also, don't limit yourself to one outlet, it helps to fill your time with as many healthy activities and resources as you can. Boredom is oftentimes a trigger and a cause for relapse for many people.

Setting short and long-term goals – Setting short and long-term goals is an important way to bring motivation and organization to your recovery plan. Goals can be big, such as embarking on a new career path or relocating; or they can be small, like reading a self-help book or taking a daily walk. The important thing is to set goals that will bring happiness, wellness, stability, and progress into your life.

Designing a long-term plan – Detox is only the first step in the journey of recovery, so it's important to design a long-term plan that you will adhere to following detox. The detox is essentially the doorway to the long-term journey of recovery, so designing a detailed aftercare plan will be critical for a successful recovery and a positive next chapter of life.

Understanding the underlying causes of your addiction – This is a process that might take some time, but it should definitely be a goal during your recovery. This may require the assistance of a counselor, and it may take a while, but be patient with the process because what you discover may help you to avoid falling into the pattern of addiction in the future. Addiction is oftentimes a means of avoiding uncomfortable feelings and memories, so facing them and working through them may be what you need to close painful chapters in your life.

Developing new coping skills – Up until this point, your mental/emotional/physical ‘default button’ for coping with stress or discomfort may have been to get high or drunk (or whatever your addiction is). Stress will not cease to exist in your life just because you decide to get clean. Life may be difficult and complicated during the early stages of recovery, so you'll quickly need to rely on new coping skills to prevent life from becoming unmanageable again. The first few months of recovery are very fragile. You need to be in a safe, sober environment with some form of support system, if possible, even if it's only virtual support. You need to have a list of new routines and coping mechanisms, so that a few weeks following detox, you'll already be forming new coping habits. Some examples of this are taking morning and evening supplements to relax your body and mind, meditating, doing Yoga or Tai Chi, creating a fitness routine, going to recovery meetings, reading self-help books, listening to motivational speakers, starting a hobby, gardening, journaling, or playing an instrument. Get creative when it comes to designing new coping skills! This next stage of your life is very critical because there will be a delicate transition period. The good news is that at some point, whether it's a few weeks or a few months, you'll be feeling better, as long as you stay committed to healthy daily habits and routines. The fruits of your efforts will all pay off because at some point your body WILL overcome the lingering effects of addiction and detox, and you will be functioning at some level of **BALANCE**. Once your body achieves balance, you will feel better physically, mentally, and emotionally. I recommend researching meditative arts, such as Tai Chi, Qi Gong, Yoga, Sungazing, Breathwork, Meditation, Reiki, or several others that are available. Daily practice of one or more of these arts can bring life-changing long-term results. I speak from personal experience when I say that when I am disciplined and practicing these arts on a regular basis, my life and health are in a much better balance. These practices bring a well-being to my mind and body while helping to calm the turbulence in my outside world. Our society is so driven by technology and external stimulation, that we have lost our inner stillness. For a lot of people, using drugs and alcohol mistakenly brings them to what *seems* to be an inner stillness, but this will only last for a short time.

Then at some point, it inevitably becomes inner turmoil, and you'll eventually find yourself in a life that's spinning out of control. Recovery is that critical point in life where you give up the 'unsustainable' false sense of stillness, and transition to the 'sustainable' true sense of inner-stillness; the stillness that you can tap into whenever you feel the need. For me, this stillness comes from meditation, Qi Gong, Kundalini Yoga, gardening, and spending quiet time in nature. You can find instructional videos for all of these meditative arts on YouTube® and at www.DesignYourDetox.com, and easily add them to your recovery plan. If you practice at least one of these arts every day for ninety days, you will undoubtedly experience a new level of well-being and stillness in your life that could make your recovery journey so much more rewarding AND successful.

Chapter 4

Herbs and Natural Products

"No one is immune from addiction; it afflicts people of all ages, races, classes, and professions."

~ Patrick J. Kennedy

4

Herbs and Natural Products

This section discusses a variety of herbs and natural products that can be used to help manage withdrawal symptoms during a detox, and to help rebalance the body after a detox. I will share my personal observations and make suggestions on how you can combine a variety of herbs and products to design a protocol that will hopefully help to minimize withdrawal discomforts. Unfortunately, none of the products seem to work well enough alone for an opiate detox (except for Ibogaine or Iboga, administered in a licensed medical facility), but combining a variety of herbs and natural products can help to manage difficult withdrawal symptoms and make detoxing more tolerable. Just keep in mind that although you may experience painful uncomfortable days ahead, it's only temporary. As soon as the toxins are eliminated from your body you will begin to feel better mentally and physically. The idea is to do your best to get through those difficult detox days, and to know that they won't last forever.

When working with herbal products, please keep in mind that the effectiveness of these products may vary, and there are several causes for this. Herbs tend to fluctuate in potency as they go through life cycles, and this could potentially affect the strength of each batch. Each person will also absorb and experience variations of effectiveness from these products based on your body's unique chemistry, how clean your diet is, and the level of toxins in your body. Products also range in quality; in most cases the more expensive products will be a better quality. **Please do extensive research on the wide variety of natural products available that can help aid the process of detoxing and rebalancing the body.**

The following list is not the only list of herbs and supplements that can aid a detox. These suggestions are just a foundation for you to begin your own research. Once you begin researching products online and in local health food stores, you'll find an endless rabbit hole of options. My suggestion is to look for the more expensive products that have a higher concentration of herbs. Also, combination products can often be very effective (products that have multiple herbs already combined). Addiction affects your body's nervous system and natural balance, and the only thing that can truly repair and restore your body's balance is a substantial amount of clean time. Using herbs and supplements will help you to be more comfortable and bypass the time your body needs to restore its' balance. However, this will also require a healthy lifestyle overall; clean diet, plenty of water, exercise, meditation, yoga, etc. Herbs alone won't get you through this. This is the time in your life to make GREAT CHANGES in order to see GREAT RESULTS!

Heantos 4

Heantos 4® (also called Heantos) is a Vietnamese detox aid that was developed as a project of the United Nations in the 1990's to help combat the growing opium epidemic in Vietnam. The formula is comprised of 13 Chinese and Western herbs that help to reduce opiate withdrawal symptoms and induce sleep. Heantos© can be used as a foundation for designing an herbal detox support protocol. From what I have witnessed, people undergoing a cold-turkey detox that were taking Heantos were able to sleep, eat, and somewhat relax through the peak days of withdrawals. It won't completely eliminate withdrawal symptoms, but it definitely seems to ease the process. Heantos can be used long-term and will not result in physical dependency.

Heantos 4 is a versatile product that can be used in a range of ways:

- Dosage reduction
- Cold-turkey detox support
- Long-term maintenance
- Relapse prevention / treatment
- Body re-balancing
- Post-acute withdrawals (PAWS)

When 'Design Your Detox' began in October of 2014, not too many people had even heard of Heantos 4. The University of British Columbia was doing a study on it, but other than that it was pretty unheard of in the mainstream addiction and medical communities. However, now ten years later, when I do a Google® or YouTube search of 'Heantos 4', there's a vast amount of information from reputable sources, so please take your time and do as much research as you can. I have personally seen this supplement help people not only during the peak days of detox, but as a relapse prevention following detox. It has many uses and benefits, and can be a great addition to your detox and recovery plan.

This is just a brief overview of Heantos. For more information, please visit www.heantosworldwide.com. You can also email Dr. Sung directly in Vietnam at tranvansungvhh@gmail.com. Dr. Sung was instrumental not only in the development of Heantos, but also in the first couple years of Design Your Detox. Without his dedicated participation, we would not have been able to learn all that we did about the many uses and benefits of Heantos.

Kratom

Kratom is a plant medicine that's native to Southeast Asia. I want to mention first and foremost that Kratom **IS PHYSICALLY ADDICTIVE**; if you use Kratom daily for more than two to three weeks, you could become physically dependent. I recommend only using it daily at most for one consecutive week (the peak days of opiate withdrawals), just to be on the safe side. For this reason, it's important to do a lot of research before adding it to your herbal regimen. You're probably wondering why I would even suggest using an addictive substance during a detox, and the reason is because it's one of the most effective natural, legal products for reducing opiate withdrawal symptoms. If you use Kratom very carefully for a short period of time, you shouldn't have withdrawal symptoms when you discontinue using it.

Kratom is a natural pain reliever. It's not an opiate, but it affects the body in a similar way. If a person is in opiate withdrawals, taking Kratom will help to reduce the withdrawal symptoms while allowing the opiates to be eliminated from the body. Using Kratom during a cold-turkey detox can be very beneficial because it seems to give a substantial amount of withdrawal relief. As I said earlier, when we first began working with Heantos, we had to find ways to eliminate the use of Valium in the original Heantos protocol, and we discovered that Kratom works very well for this (under the advisement of Dr. Sung). Since it **IS** habit forming, it's only recommended to use Kratom during the most intense days of detox, also called the peak days or acute withdrawals. I recommend using Kratom no longer than a week consecutively at most, and as soon as the peak days pass, I recommend not using it at all in your long-term maintenance plan. It has its place during peak days of withdrawals, but once you've bypassed that stage, it's safest to completely discontinue using it. However, I do want to mention keeping some on hand for emergency moments where you may be considering relapse. I'd much rather see a person take a dose of Kratom when a strong urge to relapse is occurring, rather than giving into the urge and relapsing. This would be considered Harm Reduction.

There are many Kratom vendors online that you can research, as well as local smoke shops and health food stores that may sell it. You may want to research the concentrated liquid extracts which some people prefer to use due to the simplicity of taking a dropper full of liquid as opposed to several grams of a dry powder. Additionally, there are several strands of Kratom that can be used for different purposes, such as relaxation, energy, or pain relief. If you decide to use Kratom during your detox, make sure to choose the strand/s that offer the affects you're specifically seeking.

Gui Pi Wan

Gui Pi Wan is a combination of Chinese herbs used to maintain general strength and energy in the body. It has health benefits for the heart and the blood, it helps to relieve tension, and can also help balance energy and rest. This product is not recommended to use during the peak days of withdrawal, but it's a very helpful product during the weeks following a detox. A regimen of Gui Pi Wan in the daytime followed by Heantos at night can be a good combination for promoting post-detox rebalancing and to minimize the symptoms of Post-Acute Withdrawal Syndrome (PAWS). Gui Pi Wan can be purchased from online holistic vendors as well as local health food stores. There are many brands of Gui Pi Wan available so please be sure to purchase a product that is high in quality so that you receive the most benefits from it.

Ibogaine

Ibogaine is a West African indigenous medicine used to interrupt addiction by neuro-chemically transporting one to a pre-addicted state. It's a psycho-active substance that can induce a psychedelic dream-like experience. It's commonly known to invoke a deeply introspective examination of both the subconscious and conscious mind. Ibogaine is the most effective natural treatment used to eliminate the physical symptoms of opiate withdrawal. It can be used as the primary detox aid, or it can be used following detox to eliminate lingering withdrawal symptoms and to offer one a psycho-therapeutic experience.

Ibogaine is not an easy medicine to obtain due to its legal status in most countries, however some countries such as Canada and Mexico have legal Ibogaine clinics where people can come to either do their full detox, or they can come after a detox for a post-detox treatment. Ibogaine can be very taxing on the body so medical screening will be required to determine whether or not you're a candidate for this type of treatment. If you have the opportunity to receive an Ibogaine treatment to treat your addiction, I whole heartedly recommend doing it. When administered properly, it seems to be the most effective addiction treatment available worldwide. However, you will need to do a considerable amount of research and planning. A lot of Ibogaine clinics, especially in Mexico, do not operate ethically, oftentimes underdosing or overdosing patients. Additionally, the initial days and weeks following an Ibogaine detox are a very delicate and critical period of time. If used wisely, it can lead one into a complete life transformation, so careful aftercare planning needs to be done to ensure the best long-term results.

If you're in a country where Ibogaine is legal, you can also talk to your Ibogaine provider or physician about micro-dosing (taking small daily dosages) to either ween off of an addictive substance, or to manage lingering withdrawal symptoms after a detox. Ibogaine is very versatile and can be extremely beneficial when it's administered safely and properly by a licensed medical professional.

Iboga Root Bark

The alkaloid 'Ibogaine' is most commonly extracted from the bark of the root of a perennial rainforest shrub native to West Central Africa called Tabernanthe Iboga. There are numerous medicinal alkaloids in this bark. Although Ibogaine is an extremely affective alkaloid to use alone to treat an addiction, many people prefer the synergy of taking all of the alkaloids in their natural form. As with the alkaloid Ibogaine, Iboga Root Bark in its natural form is extremely versatile when treating addiction. It can be used for the peak days of withdrawals as the primary detox aid, or it can be used in extremely small doses long-term to manage lingering withdrawal symptoms. Using Iboga Root Bark post-detox can speed up the process of repairing damaged receptors, and can bring an overall sense of clarity, renewal, and upliftment.

Iboga Root Bark follows the same legal restrictions as Ibogaine, so be sure to research its legal status in your region of the world. If it's legal and accessible to you, then it could truly be a life-changing addition to your recovery protocol. **As with all products that I've discussed in this book, it's imperative to speak with your medical professional before using Iboga Root Bark or any of its alkaloids. Proper medical screening will need to be done to ensure that you can safely use this plant.**

Typically, when people begin using Iboga Root Bark, they naturally begin to crave a healthier, cleaner lifestyle. Many people begin losing the desire to use harmful substances, and they begin craving healthier food and beverage choices as well. An organic morning smoothie with a dash of Iboga Root Bark can be a great way to begin your day. However, prolonged use could cause severe insomnia. Additionally, Iboga stays in your system for an extended period of time, so daily use is not recommended as the effects could become too strong. When using Iboga, oftentimes the less you use, the better. **Iboga can be an extremely dangerous medicine if administered improperly or in too high of a dose. Iboga should only be used under strict medical care and guidance.**

Traditionally, ingesting Iboga alone will not bring the multitude of physical, mental, emotional, and even spiritual benefits that one is meant to receive when working with this extremely powerful and sacred medicine. It's important to work with a licensed Iboga facilitator who is not only incorporating safe medical practice but is also well trained on the spiritual and ceremonial elements of working with this medicine. Incorporating ceremonial practices into an Ibogaine or Iboga treatment will allow you to receive a deeper level of healing benefits and will better provide you with the opportunity to turn this into an experience of extreme transformation. If you make the decision to incorporate Ibogaine or Iboga into your recovery journey, please do so with the humble and grateful understanding that it's truly an honor to be given this opportunity in your life. If addiction has led you to this sacred medicine, then please do everything in your power to respect its sacredness and to take the experience (and your recovery) extremely seriously. Using or administering Iboga or Ibogaine is not only a gift but is also an important responsibility.

Sourcing safe and ethical Iboga Root Bark is also an extremely important factor to consider. Tabernanthe Iboga is a sacred indigenous plant medicine that is central to the Bwiti spiritual practices and is protected by the Gabonese government. The use of Tabernanthe Iboga is considered to be deeply sacred, which means it requires ethical sourcing and distribution. If you're a licensed Ibogaine or Iboga clinic or retreat center and would like to source Tabernanthe Iboga in a fair and sustainable way, or to learn more about the cultural knowledge regarding the history and ritual tools (such as music, masks, incense, and torches), please send an email to info@blessingsoftheforest.org. You will be provided with resources through a clear and transparent process that is fair between the communities and cultures. For more information regarding the planting and preserving of Tabernanthe Iboga and traditional Bwiti practices and projects, please visit www.blessingsoftheforest.org.

Cannabis

A lot of people have asked me if I think it's a good idea or a bad idea to use cannabis in a detox and recovery protocol. The answer is that it will vary for each person. First you will need to consider whether or not it's legal in your region of the world. If it isn't, then it's best not to use it because it'll keep you in the cycle of connecting with local street dealers. Oftentimes people who sell cannabis on the street may sell other illegal substances as well. Cutting all of those ties and connections is a critical measure to take when embarking on the life-saving journey of detox and recovery.

If cannabis is legal in your region of the world, then the next thing to consider is that it CAN be abusable, as any mind-and-body altering substance can be. If you use cannabis to aid you in your recovery, is there a chance that you may be trading one addiction for another? This is a question that only YOU can answer. If you're worried that you could overuse or abuse cannabis as a replacement for another substance, then you may want to avoid using it. However, Cannabis does have a wide range of medicinal benefits that could be a helpful addition to a detox and recovery protocol.

Another thing to consider is that you may feel that overusing or abusing cannabis as a replacement for something more harmful is a form of Harm Reduction and could be more of a safer step in the right direction, even if it's still keeping you in a cycle of substance use. I'd much rather see an opiate user go through their detox and start taking Cannabis edibles every day, as opposed to going back to opiates. Everybody's recovery plan will be completely unique to who they are, what their resources are, and where they are in life. Who am I to say that someone doesn't have the right to use a plant to take the edge off the mental and physical discomforts that they may be experiencing? This is a very personal decision that you need to carefully consider.

Addiction and recovery are very personal and unique journeys. When you make the decision to overcome your addiction, you need to be fiercely honest with yourself about what you think is a safe choice, and what you know isn't. You can lie to everyone else, but at the end of the day if you're lying to yourself then you're going to make it even more difficult to navigate your way out of your addiction. With that being said, if you feel that you could safely use cannabis as a tool for detox and recovery, and it's legal in your region of the world, then you can definitely do so. THC and CBD have a wide range of health benefits, including pain management, soothing upset stomach, helping with insomnia and anxiety, inducing appetite, and more. You can even use external creams and lotions to help with body aches and pains. If you're considering using cannabis, speak with your doctor and local cannabis professionals to determine which products would work best to meet your unique needs.

Vitamin C

There has been a lot of research done on the medicinal use of high doses of Vitamin C during an opiate detox to reduce the intensity of withdrawal symptoms. There's a lot of information online regarding this method of detox. Be sure to speak to your doctor and local nutritionist about this as well. From what I've been told, adding the proper type and dosage of Vitamin C to an opiate detox can greatly help with the process. Some people claim that they **only** use a specific high dose protocol of Vitamin C to detox themselves, and that it's effective enough alone to not need anything else. Others use it in combination with other natural products. If you're interested in using Vitamin C to assist your detox, then please do extensive research and discuss your plans with your doctor.

Additional Herbs, Supplements, and Natural Methods to Research

Sleep – CBD, Valerian, GABA, Melatonin (should not be used daily), Passionflower, Kava Kava Root, Chamomile

Anxiety - GABA, Kava Kava Root, Passionflower, Ginger, Chamomile, St. John's Wart, Skullcap, Valerian

Depression - St. John's Wart, Kava Kava Root, Passionflower, Chamomile, Ashwagandha

Restless Legs - Magnesium (also Magnesium Oil for topical use), Gotu Kola, Ashwaganda, Passionflower, Kava Kava Root, Epsom Salt (baths), Hyland's Restless Leg (purchase at any pharmacy)

Stomach Ailments - Ginger, Cinnamon, Dandelion, Peppermint

Energy - Maca Root, Ginseng, Eleuthero, Ashwaganda, Green or Black Tea, Yerba Mate

Pain – Wild Lettuce, CBD, Eleurtho, Curcumin, Ginger, Turmeric, Holy Basil, White Willow Bark, Arnica, Magnesium, Cherries, Cranberry Juice

Hot Flashes and Night Sweats - Black Cohosh, Dong Quai

Chills - hot water with lemon and honey, cranberry juice, rub warm washcloth over body, take hot Epsom Salt bath

Boost Immune System – Echinacea, Garlic, Ganoderma

Vitamins recommended - C, D, B complex, B12 sublingual

Products for balancing the body post detox - Gui Pi Wan, 5HTP, Heantos

Products for helping to eliminate toxins - Activated Charcoal, Red Clover Blossoms

Products for aiding digestion (long-term) - Kombucha, pre and probiotics

Chapter 5

Preparing for an At-Home Detox

"Trying to overcome addiction is one of the hardest things for a person to do."

~ Matthew Perry

5

Preparing for an At-Home Detox

To ensure the best chances at achieving long-term success, it's important to take your time and prepare your body and life for the process and commitment of detox and recovery. This is not something to take lightly; it's a long-term process of repairing and restoring balance to your physical / emotional / mental / and possibly even your spiritual self. There are many preparations that should be made before beginning an at-home detox.

Setting and location - Prepare a quiet environment for your detox. It's recommended to give your body a minimum of two weeks for the detox (longer for Methadone or Suboxone). Some people are not able to take that much time off work or away from the responsibilities of everyday life, so you may have to adjust your dosing schedules and the speed of your detox around difficult schedules. Normally, the first week is used to detox and the second week is used to rest and get stabilized on a long-term supplement / vitamin / fitness regimen. Be sure to have a comfortable bed and a quiet, supportive environment. You will want to rest as much as possible so try to darken the windows and create a relaxing atmosphere. Some people prefer to detox somewhere other than their home, such as a friend or family member's home, a hotel, or a remote cabin. However, if this is not possible then it is okay to detox at home as long as there will definitely not be any drugs, paraphernalia, or drug users present.

Designing your protocol – It's helpful to create a guide for your herbal support protocol. It's important to take your time and research all the products that you are going to be using. Allow sufficient time for everything to be delivered and never begin detoxing until everything has arrived and you have discussed your plans and products with your doctor. Please take your time designing a protocol; don't rush into this process without having a solid dosaging schedule set in place. You may adjust the times and dosages of products that you are taking based on the intensity of withdrawal symptoms that you are experiencing from day-to-day, but it's best to create a basic guide for you and your caretaker/s to follow. It's helpful to write your dosaging schedule out in a 'chart style' so that everyone who is assisting you can easily refer to the chart to determine when to administer each supplement (see Appendix 5). Using herbs and natural products to help manage a cold-turkey detox can be effective if you take your time and make the proper preparations.

Preparing and testing products – It's important to prepare and test all of your products before beginning your detox. Some products might be in powder form and you may want to put them in capsules. It's recommended to thoroughly research all of the products that you will be using and have everything prepared before beginning your detox. It's also recommended to test each product before beginning your detox so that you know what to expect and what dosage works best for you. A method for doing this is to wait until you would normally take the next dosage of your drug, and instead replace it with a supplement (only test one product at a time). Wait about 60-90 minutes and evaluate how you are feeling. This will give you an indication of how the products will make you feel during withdrawals. Always start out with a low dose to make sure you don't have an adverse reaction, and then you can raise your dosages as needed, under your doctor's advisement.

Separating Dosages – If you're going to be alone during your detox, it's helpful to separate each dosage before beginning. Once you begin, you may have several days of grogginess and confusion. It's important not to exceed recommended dosages of products, so keeping track of what you are taking is very important. This is one of the main reasons you should have a caretaker with you 24-hours a day for at least the first week. An effective method for keeping track of dosages is to separate and label the date and time for each dose. You can purchase a plastic container to keep your dosages organized and easily accessible. Some examples of containers you can purchase are toolboxes with rows of small drawers or plastic bead containers. It's recommended to prepare all of your products before beginning your detox. Please take this process very seriously and do it when you are in a clear mindset. Safety is the most important component when undergoing a process like this. Each compartment or drawer can be labeled by date and approximate time, and all you need to do is take them in order. If you are sleeping and miss a dose, that's ok, just pick up where you left off upon awakening. You can use a marker to label each compartment.

Clothing – You will want to have several sets of comfortable clothes and pajamas laid out for the peak days of detox. Make sure you have changes of sheets and pajamas by the bedside in case you wake up with night-sweats. It's always nice to have comfortable clothes, warm socks, and cozy sweatshirts or bathrobes. Be sure to really prepare your space for the next few days of grogginess and sickness. Try to think of everything you might want easily available, including your coziest pajamas and favorite blankets.

Diet before detox – To prepare the body, do your best to incorporate a clean and healthy diet for the days or weeks prior to your detox. The cleaner your diet is, the easier it will be to eliminate the toxins from your body. Do your best to eat nourishing meals, get plenty of rest, and stay hydrated prior to detox. The following is a list of items that you may want to avoid or reduce in the days or weeks prior to detox:

- Excessive salt and sugar
- Processed foods (fast food)
- Fried and fatty foods
- Breads and pastas
- Alcohol and cigarettes (preferred)

Diet during detox - During the peak days of withdrawal your appetite may fluctuate. Some people have ravenous appetites and others have no appetite at all. It's helpful to have a fruit-bowl prepared so that you can easily grab healthy fruit that's already washed and prepared. You may not have any appetite at all, but it isn't recommended to take supplements on an empty stomach, so please be sure to eat at least a little something, even if you aren't hungry.

Nutritional bars and trail mix are also great to have handy during this time, as well as your favorite snacks. Homemade vegetable or chicken soup is a great addition because if you're not very hungry, you can at least drink the broth and still absorb some nutrients. Juicing is very beneficial during a detox because it will replenish nutrients and promote the body's natural ability to heal. Kombucha is also an excellent addition, as it will aid in the digestive process and rebalance the stomach's flora and healthy bacteria. It's important to stay hydrated so be sure to have plenty of clean water, coconut water and/or juice with electrolytes. Try to purchase a week's worth of food prior to detox so that you don't have to go shopping until you are past the peak days (and please never drive while under the influence of herbal products that promote drowsiness).

Preparing the mind - Do your best to avoid negative or stressful situations in the days or weeks prior to detox. Try to finish any work that needs to be finished and resolve any relationship conflicts so that you aren't feeling additional pressure during the next few weeks. Avoid too much television and crowded areas for a few days so that you can find quiet time to reflect on the changes that you're about to make in your life. You can practice calming the mind with meditation, Tai Chi, journaling, going for walks, sun-gazing or taking relaxing baths. Being in active addiction does not have to prevent you from being able to meditate or ground yourself. There's no better time than the present to begin these inner workings. The transformation could begin in this very moment, simply by closing your eyes, taking three long deep breaths, and telling yourself that you WILL SUCCEED.

Preparing an aftercare plan - Please do not begin your detox until you have a solid aftercare plan set in place. For some, this will be an intensive plan, such as relocating or entering a residential program. For others it may be less intensive, such as attending ninety 12-Step meetings and ninety yoga classes in ninety-days. It's important to take sufficient time to research all options that may work best for your individual situation.

Intestinal cleanse - This is recommended for people who take opiates because they tend to cause severe constipation, which could cause unwanted stomach discomforts and difficulty eliminating toxins during detox. If you're not having regular bowel movements then it will be helpful to begin taking steps two-to-four weeks prior to detox so that the bowels are moving more freely. This will help the body rid itself more comfortably of toxins, which will speed up the detox process. There are many ways this can be accomplished, so it's recommended to speak to your doctor or local health-food store professionals to get recommendations for the most effective products. Once you make the decision to detox, it's important to begin paying careful attention to everything that you put into your body. Improving your diet is one of the best ways to repair and nourish your body. Eating a healthy, balanced diet with a lot of fruit and fiber is a great way to aid the body in an intestinal cleanse. The following are recommendations for treating severe constipation:

- Water
- Kombucha
- Colon cleanse herbal products
- Apple Cider Vinegar (with Mothers)
- Senna
- High fiber diets
- Watermelon juice
- 5 apples a day
- Stool softeners
- Magnesium citrate
- Fruits and vegetables
- Coconut water
- Castor Oil
- Enema

Suggested items for detox - The following is a list of items that are recommended to have handy for your peak withdrawal days to make the process as comfortable and manageable as possible:

- Hot teas – sleepy tea (calming), detox tea (speeds up process), ginger tea (upset stomach), senna tea (natural laxative)
- OTC products and supplements for inflammation, headaches, pain, nausea, diarrhea, insomnia, anxiety, and any other symptoms of withdrawals that you might experience.
- Heating pad (for chills)
- Change of sheets and blankets (in case of night-time sweats)
- Thermos (for mixing powdered detox aids, such as Kratom)
- Soft tissues
- Pepto Bismol or Imodium (upset stomach/diarrhea)

- Ibuprofen or Tylenol (to help with headaches and body aches)
- Warm socks
- Sea salt or Epsom salt (baths for detoxification, restless legs, and relaxation)
- Over-the-counter heartburn medication
- Magnesium Oil (topical oil for restless legs)
- Hydration drinks (water, coconut water, sports drinks w/ electrolytes)
- Journal, books, movies and music
- Crafts and hobbies (to pass the time)

Chapter 6

Important Information About Detoxing

"Believe you can and you're halfway there."

~ Theodore Roosevelt

6

Important Information About Detoxing

There's a lot to know about detoxing and the different types of substances that you may be detoxing from. Below is an overview of some important information that pertains to detoxing.

Part 1

Dosage Reduction

There are two ways that you can approach your detox; you can either jump right into a cold-turkey detox where you abruptly stop taking the substance/s, or you can gradually reduce your dosage prior to detox so that you can gradually transition off (this method is also called tapering). Many people prefer to gradually reduce their dosage (taper) so that the detox is less of a shock to the body. This can be done by using smaller and/or less frequent doses of your substance/s. During the process of reducing your dosage, you may begin experiencing mild withdrawal symptoms as your body adjusts to each new reduced dosage. This can be managed by taking small doses of natural supplements in between dosages of your substance. It's best to make a calculated dosaging schedule once you begin your taper because the most accurate way to lower your dose is with specific, calculated increments.

For example, if you take a total of 20mg of your substance every day and you want to reduce to 16mg/day, you can calculate this by dividing your daily intake into 5mg every 6 hours, which would be 4 doses in a 24-hour period. Then when you're ready, you can reduce to 4mg every 6 hours, which will reduce your daily intake to 16mg rather than 20mg. You may want to stay at this dosage for 1 or 2 weeks, so your body can acclimate to the new dosage with minimal withdrawal symptoms. When you feel that you're ready for your next reduction, you can decide on a new dosage and create a specific dosaging schedule to make that change. For example, once you're comfortable at 16mg/day, you may be ready to reduce to 12mg/day, and your new dosaging schedule could be 3mg every 6 hours. With every reduction, you may experience mild withdrawal symptoms that are typically manageable. As you can see in the example above, in just a few weeks the dosage was reduced from 20mg to 12 mg, which is almost half the amount of the original dose. Reducing your dosage in a comfortable, calculated way can oftentimes help to ease the transition from active addiction to abstinence, making the final stage of detox more manageable.

The different ways that a taper can be executed are either by taking smaller dosages of the substance/s, taking the same dose that you normally take but extending the length of time in between each dosage, or you can combine the two methods (smaller doses less frequently). For example, if you normally take 30mg of your substance every six hours, you can begin your reduction by extending your dosages to every eight hours. Simply extending dosages by two hours will eliminate a full dose each day, which means in this example you will have reduced 25% of your daily intake. Slowly extending time increments in between dosages is a very effective method for reducing your dosage. Additionally, you may decide you want to extend your dose to every 8 hours, but also reduce the dose to 28mg rather than 30mg. Small changes such as this can result in substantial progress with reducing your daily intake.

Many people prefer using the tapering method leading up to the final stage of detox because it allows the body to reduce the amount of toxins that will be detoxed at the end stage. The less toxins there are in your body, the more tolerable the withdrawal symptoms will be, and sometimes the detox will even end quicker. However, if someone is using intravenous drugs (injecting) or dangerous street drugs, then this may not be a good method because sometimes it's just too dangerous to extend usage by even one day. In this case, your best option is to go to your emergency room and request to be admitted into a medical detox center.

Never begin a dosage reduction until you have spoken with your doctor so he or she can design a safe reduction regimen for you. Safety is always key to a successful recovery. Even small dosage reductions can have medical risks, depending on the substance/s you are reducing. So please always consult with your doctor before beginning any stage of dosage reduction or detox. I know it can be scary to admit that you're battling addiction to your doctor, but this is an extremely serious medical condition and the safest way to ensure a successful recovery is to use every tool available to help guide and execute the process. Although there are many negative stigmas associated with addiction, most likely your doctor will have a plethora of advice and resources that will aid the process. Additionally, they may be able to prescribe medications to aid in the process, such as muscle relaxers or sleep aids. The period of detox will most likely come with many physical discomforts and challenges, so please trust that your doctor can help you through this process. Your doctor may try to encourage you to enter into a detox facility, and if they're able to help make arrangements for you to do so then please be open to that option. Detoxing at home should be an absolute last resort if nothing else is available to you. Oftentimes doctors are aware of programs that you may not know about. Additionally, they have access to financial aid programs that may help you to afford a long-term rehabilitation center. While many people dread the idea of entering into a residential facility, you have to keep in mind that it will only be a temporary situation that could very well be the decision that saved and changed your entire life.

Unfortunately, in America it's very difficult, if not impossible, to find a doctor that will prescribe a medication that will allow you to taper comfortably from street drugs. For example, in Mexico if a person is addicted to heroin, they can go to certain clinics and be given a pharmaceutical opiate in replace of it. The doctor will figure out what the equivalent dose of the pharmaceutical opiate is compared to the drug they are currently taking, which allows them to do a much safer, calculated taper and detox, under their doctor's care. Mexico is an excellent country to look to for much more effective detox options then what America typically has to offer, such as Ibogaine treatments and other alternative therapies.

Reducing and Leveling Out:

When doing a reduction, it's important to design a specific dosaging schedule that includes 'how often' and 'how much' you will reduce your dosage, as well as any products that you may be supplementing with during the process. It's important to keep substances at consistent levels so that reductions can be properly calculated and done with as much ease as possible. Anytime you reduce your dosage, it's helpful to take time to level out at the new dosage before attempting to reduce again because you may feel mild withdrawals from each reduction. Supplementing with natural supplements can help you to reduce your dosage with minimal withdrawal discomforts. Please be very gentle with this process so that your reductions come with ease and minimal discomfort. This will help to keep anxiety levels at a low. However, you want to make sure not to wait too long in between reductions, so once you begin to feel comfortable at your new dosage, you should plan your next reduction right away. Do not attempt this process alone under any circumstances. Speak to your doctor about your desire to reduce and detox, and discuss the different natural products that you would like to supplement with to ease the discomforts.

Preparing for Detox

Dosage reductions can oftentimes ease the transition physically and psychologically from active addiction to abstinence. It can also give you the opportunity to start gaining control of your habit. As you reduce to a low dosage, you'll begin preparing for the final stage of detox. For the final days of your reduction, you may decide that you want to start taking your substance in very small quantities every other day or even every three days, as you begin taking your detox supplements. Oftentimes this can be an extremely helpful method for easing into the final stage of detox, especially when detoxing from long-acting substances such as Methadone and Suboxone. **When designing a reduction protocol, always consult with your physician before beginning any stage of the process.** It may seem like you're making a safer choice than you would be if you weren't planning to get clean, but reducing the dose of a substance that you've been taking for an extended period of time can also be very dangerous, so don't take matters into your own hands.

When you decide that you are at the dose that you want to detox from, then it's time to make your final detox plans. Some people may do a dosage reduction before entering a medical detox center, rehabilitation center, or Ibogaine clinic. Others may be doing the final stage of detox at home. Whatever option you choose, please be sure to make a detailed detox and aftercare plan before beginning the final stage of detox. **Always keep in mind that this is a serious medical process, so if you or a loved one are reducing and/or detoxing at home, be sure to consult with your doctor before beginning any stage of this process.**

Part 2

Opiate Detox

Opiate detox seems to be the most difficult physical detox to undergo. When a person is physically dependent on opiates, they will go into an acute state of withdrawal if their opiate dosage is dramatically reduced or abruptly stopped. This physical withdrawal will include symptoms such as fatigue, irritability, anxiety, depression, insomnia, runny nose, sneezing, teary eyes, yawning, chills and sweats, body aches and pains, crawling skin, restless legs, upset stomach, abdominal cramping, vomiting, and diarrhea.

There are several pharmaceutical and street drugs that fall under the opiate category. Additionally, there are two types of opiates: short-acting and long-acting. 'Short-acting' means that within 12-24 hours of your last opiate intake you will be at the onset of withdrawals, and the peak days of detox will last approximately 4-7 days (or more), depending on the habit. 'Long-acting' means that the opiate is designed to stay in your system for a 'longer' time (such as Methadone), and withdrawal symptoms typically won't begin until two or more days after taking the last dosage. This type of detox can last anywhere from three to six weeks (or more), depending on the dosage and duration of use.

If you're detoxing at home, you can use herbs and natural supplements to help minimize withdrawal symptoms so that it isn't quite as overwhelming of an experience. Most people that I spoke with had positive feedback when using Heantos and Kratom during an opiate detox. They still experienced withdrawal symptoms, but it was typically a more tolerable level. In Vietnam, Heantos is administered along with Valium to manage severe opiate withdrawals because there's a synergy between the two that effectively seems to minimize withdrawal discomforts. If you're planning to detox from opiates, you may want to discuss this detox protocol with your doctor.

As I said earlier, it's very difficult to get a doctor in America to prescribe any type of pharmaceutical to assist a detox, but it never hurts to ask. Discussing the possibility of a week's supply of Valium with your doctor to assist an opiate detox at home, to be taken in combination with Heantos, could open up a line of communication between you and your doctor that shows your commitment and dedication to making the life-saving decision to get clean. It shows that you're trying to enter into your detox responsibly and with a structured plan set in place. If your doctor is interested in more information about this method of detoxing and the Heantos protocol, they can email Dr. Sung directly in Vietnam at tranvansungvhh@gmail.com.

Another option for detoxing at home is using a short-term Suboxone protocol prescribed by a doctor. While most people use Suboxone long-term, there **ARE** short-term protocols that can be used strictly for bypassing the peak days of detox. No one should ever have to suffer the effects of opiate withdrawal. Please take your time and research all of your options so that you can design a detox plan that will cause you the LEAST SUFFERING. I know it can be scary to admit to your doctor that you're battling addiction, but this is a decision that could literally save your life. In addition to Suboxone and the Heantos/Valium protocol, there are many other drugs being prescribed now to assist with opiate detox. The only way you will successfully navigate your way out of your addiction is to research every option that is available to you and create a plan that works best FOR YOU. Addiction Recovery is not a One-Size-Fits-All solution. The details of the addiction and life circumstance will be unique for each person. So, take your time, talk to your doctor, and make a really informed decision on how you are going to navigate this next chapter of your life.

Part 3

Methadone Detox

Methadone definitely seems to be the most difficult opiate to detox from. Withdrawals are typically more severe than any other detox I have witnessed, and they last for what seems to be the longest duration of time. In general, opiates are very difficult to detox from, but Methadone seems to be exceptionally difficult because it's long acting, and people typically take extremely high doses for long periods of time.

When doing a Methadone detox, withdrawals will typically begin 2 (or more) days after taking your last dose. The reason for this is because Methadone was designed to stay in your system for an extended period of time so that you'd be comfortable having only one dose a day. While this is a great concept for managing a heavy opiate addiction, it can create many challenges when deciding to detox from the Methadone. However, with proper planning and medical guidance, it can be achieved.

The half-life of Methadone is 24-hours, which means that every 24-hours you will have half of your Methadone dosage from the previous day still in your system. For example, if you take 60mg of Methadone, then 24-hours after taking that dose you will still have 30mg effecting you; 24-hours later you will still have 15mg of that dose effecting you; and 24-more hours later you will still have 7.5mg of that original dose effecting you, and so on.

As the days pass and you continue taking your daily doses of Methadone, you'll eventually saturate your system, so that when you decide to finally quit it will take several days for your last doses to fully wear off. For this reason, it's recommended to stay on Methadone only for a short time and at a low dose, if possible. The best way to achieve this is by combining the Methadone program with some form of intensive therapy or rehabilitation program. You want to use your time on Methadone very wisely, and quickly get to the root causes of your addiction, so that you can transition off of the Methadone program quickly and successfully.

Methadone has its purpose in the field of addiction recovery as a tool for Harm Reduction. Frequently when people are in the throes of full-blown addiction, it's too much of a shock to go from heavy drug usage to total abstinence overnight. Methadone (and other maintenance drugs) are beneficial when used to stabilize an active addiction so that a long-term recovery plan can be designed and implemented. Methadone will block withdrawal symptoms so you can remain comfortable while safely transitioning from dangerous patterns of drug usage, such as intravenous heroin usage. Sometimes people need a buffer period before they're ready for the shocking reality of sobriety, and there's nothing wrong with that. You have to design a plan that really and truly works best for you. So, if you're going to use Methadone, try your best to use your time on it wisely and take all the steps necessary to prepare for the next stage of recovery, which is detoxing from the Methadone and living a completely substance-free life.

Most people who are taking Methadone are patients at a licensed Methadone clinic. These clinics are extremely strict so you will need to discuss your desire to detox in detail with your Methadone practitioner. Oftentimes they will discourage you from detoxing from Methadone and will be concerned that your desire to discontinue their program could be an indication that you're intending to relapse, which is oftentimes the case for many people.

If you're serious about wanting to detox from Methadone so that you can fully embrace a substance-free life, then make sure to clearly state this to your practitioner. Do your research ahead of time and design a plan that shows your practitioner that you're serious and committed to your recovery. Together you can design a reduction protocol with proper medical guidance. If at any point reductions start to bring withdrawals that are overwhelming, then you can discuss this with your practitioner and slow down the reductions or take a break and level out for a period of time. However, depending on how high your dose is, you may want to plan for 6 months to a year before you've reduced to a low enough dosage to detox completely from.

It isn't very common for a person to purchase Methadone off the street, but if this is the case then I recommend seeking out a Methadone clinic to help you through the process of reducing and detoxing safely; they may or may not assist you, but it's definitely worth the try. They may decide to stabilize you initially on a specific dose so that they can do a proper intake and evaluation of your situation. Safety is the most important thing to consider now that you've made the decision to SAVE YOUR LIFE.

Part 4

Suboxone Detox

Suboxone is a prescription medication used to treat opiate addiction. Most people who take Suboxone are doing so under a doctor's care. If you have a Suboxone doctor, then talk to him or her about your desire to reduce your dose and detox. There's a safe reduction protocol that doctors can use to slowly wean you off in a way that brings minimal withdrawal symptoms. If you're purchasing your Suboxone off the street, then please contact your medical doctor and discuss a detox protocol so that you can safely reduce your dose and detox.

Unfortunately, Suboxone has become a popular street drug and people are taking it under the assumption that they've overcome their heroin or pain pill addiction, when in reality they're just becoming dependent on the Suboxone instead. Methadone and Suboxone have an important purpose for Harm Reduction; I would much rather see a person stabilized on one of these maintenance drugs as opposed to injecting dangerous street drugs every day. However, maintenance drugs should ideally only be used short-term while implementing an intensive recovery plan with a therapeutic component, such as trauma counseling or inpatient rehabilitation. At some point, the final goal will be to discontinue taking the maintenance drug as well. It's easy to take a maintenance drug and avoid doing recovery work, but the longer you stay on those drugs, the harder it will be to get off them when the time comes. So please use your time on maintenance drugs very wisely, and see it as a steppingstone, but not as the final destination.

People have asked me what my biggest concern is with maintenance drugs; if a person is stable then what's wrong with that? A few years ago, Hurricane Sandy swept through New York and New Jersey leaving total destruction. For several days, many of the Methadone clinics were closed due to all the flooding and dangerous winds. Thousands of homes were without power, and the hurricane was followed by a blizzard. Surviving a catastrophe like that is incredibly difficult, but to do it in withdrawals sounds unbearable. After a few days, workers stood outside the Methadone clinics and handed out 50mg doses to their clients. Unfortunately, a lot of people normally take well over 100mg daily, so abruptly reducing to 50mg left them in great discomfort, in addition to being without heat or electricity in freezing temperatures.

I appreciate the many benefits of maintenance drugs and have seen them help countless people slowly transition out of the cycle of active addiction. However, I have also seen these drugs turn people's lives into prisons because they became complacent on a high dose and were not implementing a therapeutic recovery plan. So, please remember that maintenance drugs are a TOOL in a recovery plan, but they alone should not be the full recovery plan.

The goal of recovery is to live free. When you're dependent on a pharmaceutical, you're not yet free. Some people feel very comfortable on these medications, and I'm truly happy for their positive experiences. However, not everyone enjoys being addicted to them; many people don't like the side effects, or the fact that they're still at the mercy of a substance. You might need a few years of being stabilized on Methadone or Suboxone (or any other maintenance drug) while undergoing some form of intensive therapy before you feel confident that you're ready to detox and be completely free from substances; there isn't a time limit on how long that should take you. Just keep in mind that at some point you may want to close that chapter as well.

Part 5

Cocaine & Amphetamine Detox

Cocaine and amphetamines (as well as crack and methamphetamines) seem to be much easier to detox from than opiates or maintenance drugs. The withdrawal symptoms for cocaine and amphetamine detoxes are usually not as physically intense, and oftentimes you may initially sleep for several days. In between periods of sleep, you'll typically wake up with a ravenous appetite, so be sure to have a lot of healthy, hearty food and hydrating drinks on hand. When you wake up to eat, this is a good time to take a vitamin and supplement regimen. The vitamins and supplements combined with extended periods of sleep can create a synergy of deep physical healing.

If you're experiencing these deep extended cycles of sleep, please be sure to intentionally wake up several times a day (if you're alone, you can set an alarm) so that you can eat, move around, and get the blood flowing. Remaining stagnant for the first few days will contribute to your body not feeling its best, so be sure to push yourself to take these steps. Ideally, you shouldn't sleep for more than 6-10 hour increments, and try to stay awake for at least a few hours before going back to sleep. It's easy to fall into a depression and stay in bed for days at a time, so you may need to really push yourself to get up and practice self-care. A regimen to consider in between periods of sleep would be waking up, taking a shower, eating a healthy meal, drinking a few glasses of water, doing a 10-minute Tai Chi routine, going outside for some fresh air and maybe a walk, then take some vitamins and supplements before going back to sleep.

Part 6

Kratom Detox

Kratom is one of the herbs that can be used to aid an opiate detox, but taking it daily for an extended period of time can cause a physical dependence. For this reason, I want to discuss how to safely use Kratom and what to expect if you've developed a dependency to it and need to detox. If you're taking Kratom daily and experience withdrawals when you discontinue using it, then be prepared for a detox similar to a short-acting opiate detox. Some people report that the withdrawal symptoms are milder, but some report that they're just as severe, depending on the dosage and duration of use.

There are several strands of Kratom, and oftentimes people take blends of multiple strands in concentrated high doses. I've read a few articles over the years about a strand of Kratom called Stem-and-Vein that can be taken for a week to neutralize a Kratom dependency and suppress withdrawal symptoms. I'm not sure if this is accurate information, I did speak to one woman who told me that she had successfully used this method several times. However, I did not witness this and can only recommend that if you have a Kratom dependency to go to your local Kratom store and speak with a trained professional on this matter.

If you don't have a Kratom dependency but you do have an opiate dependency, and you want to use Kratom to help manage withdrawal symptoms during an opiate detox, then just be very cautious when using this method. Try not to take Kratom daily for more than a week to ten days at the very most. A Kratom dependency can creep up on you quicker than you would expect, especially since it's a legal over-the-counter plant. So be very cautious and limited when using it to assist an opiate detox of any kind. After the peak days of opiate detox are over, you should be able to stop taking Kratom without experiencing any withdrawals from it as long as you limit your daily usage.

Kratom is a very versatile plant when used to manage an opiate detox because not only will it minimize withdrawal symptoms, but it can also be used to help manage the urge to relapse. I have spoken to several people who said that taking a single dose of Kratom when they were having a strong urge to relapse helped to interrupt that sensation. However, you don't want to rely solely on Kratom to overcome the urge to relapse. For example, if you're feeling a strong urge to relapse and you decide to take a dose of Kratom, when it kicks in and you're feeling physically better, go to a 12-Step meeting, or reach out to your support network. Perhaps a relaxing yoga routine or going for a jog will help to release some endorphins and get your mind right.

Relapse urges can oftentimes come on fast and furiously, so being prepared for those moments can be an extremely important measure in the early days of recovery. Kratom can be an excellent tool during this time, but again, this is not something you want to use regularly. It can be extremely helpful in critical moments where a full-blown relapse may have occurred, but it's only a temporary band-aid so please be sure to have a much more in-depth relapse prevention plan set in place.

Part 7

Work Schedule Detox Protocols

When planning a detox, it's recommended to plan for a minimum of two to three weeks to detox and recover, which includes several days set aside to rest and relax. However, in this day and age, that's not always an option and some people are forced to detox while maintaining demanding schedules. You may not be in a position to take off work, but don't let this deter you from making the decision to get clean. You may have to get a little creative with how you're going to execute your detox, but if you're completely committed to the process then it definitely can be done. It might take longer, but the key is to make a solid detailed plan and to execute it with full commitment and determination.

First, you will want to get yourself on a consistent dosage of your substance/s so that you can begin doing calculated dosage reductions. In a situation like this, your reductions will most likely be small because you don't want to be too sick to maintain your job or other responsibilities. Let's say you work Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm. Let's also say that the daily dose of your substance is 30mg in total. To begin your detox, you will want to split your daily intake into a specific schedule. For example, with your daily dose being 30mg, you can split that up as 10mg every 8 hours, or 3 times a day. For your first week of reduction, you may want to bring that dose down to 9mg every 8 hours. If you feel withdrawals throughout the day, you may want to supplement with very low doses of herbal products, such as Heantos. You will need to be careful not to take anything that will make you drowsy at work, so you may need to experiment with different products and dosages.

Once you've figured out how to do small reductions while staying functional at work, you can begin using your weekends to do heavier detoxing. For example, if you're now doing 9mg of your substance every 8 hours on weekdays, then when the weekend comes (if you're able to dedicate weekends to detoxing) you might do much smaller doses of your substance accompanied by larger doses of herbal detox products.

An example of this might be 9mg every 8 hours Monday-Friday, and then 3mg (or less) every 8 hours on weekends accompanied by higher doses of herbal detox products. You may experience withdrawal symptoms during the weekend, but at least you'll know that you're making progress at reducing the accumulation of toxins in your body, and reducing your tolerance to the substance/s, which will most likely give you the ability to make your next weekday reduction significantly lower. This method may take a while, so you'll need to be patient and committed to the process.

By Sunday night, it'll be helpful to increase the nighttime dose of your substance up to the dosage that you'll be doing over the next 5 weekdays. This will help you to get a good night's sleep and to feel more functional for the work week ahead. Taking the decreased dose of your substance all weekend will most likely have caused a lot of uncomfortable symptoms in your body. So, increasing the dose up to your new weekday dosage will help to alleviate those uncomfortable symptoms and feel more balanced in your body.

Now it's time to decide what your new weekday dosage will be. According to the above example, you were originally at 9mg/dose 3x a day, you reduced to 3mg/dose 3x a day over the weekend, so now you'll need to determine what will be a comfortable dosage to take for the coming week. The goal is to be comfortable enough to work and maintain responsibilities while keeping the dose as low as you possibly can so that you're continuing to make progress with the detox. Instead of increasing your weekday dosage back to 9mg per dose, you may only want to take 7mg per dose, or less. This will be unique for each person, so just be really honest with yourself when making that decision. Try to keep the dose as low as you can comfortably handle so that you can get this detox behind you and move forward with your new life. During the weekend of decreased dosage, not only did your body eliminate the buildup of toxins in your body, it also lowered its tolerance to the substance. This means that you won't need to take as much as you did before the weekend.

Determining what the size of your reductions will be can sometimes be a complicated decision to make. There isn't an exact formula for this, and it can be dependent on many factors, such as the dosage and duration of use, whether the substance is short-acting or long-acting, how severe your withdrawals are expected to be, your overall health and well-being, and whether or not you'll be taking herbal detox supplements to help manage withdrawal symptoms.

In addition to doing the weekday reductions and the weekend detoxing, please be mindful of what you're putting into your body. Try to drink more water than you normally would, because this will help flush toxins from your body. Also, eat extremely healthy food, stay away from processed foods and eat as many fruits and vegetables as you can. The more nutrients your body is intaking, the better you will feel overall. Also, the cleaner your diet is, the easier it will be for your body to eliminate toxins. You may also want to begin a daily vitamin and supplement regimen, as well as a fitness regimen. The idea is to integrate a variety of methods for healing your body, and to create a healthy new daily regimen that promotes overall health and well-being. If you listen to your body and treat yourself with TLC, you will eventually figure out how to manage this process comfortably. It may take a while, but if you're completely committed to the process then you CAN and WILL get through it.

Part 8

Night-Time Doses

Sleep is extremely important during detox and recovery because this is when your body will do the most healing. Insomnia not only depletes the body physically, but it can also be a trigger for a lot of people, oftentimes leading to relapse. People tend to become anxious and depressed when they can't sleep so it's important to avoid insomnia at all costs.

The overall goal of detoxing yourself is to put your body back into a healthy balance. One of the biggest factors in achieving this is your ability to sleep deeply every night. If you aren't getting enough sleep, it will be difficult to rebalance the body's energy levels. There are a variety of herbal products that can be used to help you fall asleep at night, but in most cases, herbal supplements alone might not be enough to ensure sleep. You will want to include as many additional methods for relaxing the body as possible. It may take quite a bit of effort, but if you succeed in figuring out how to get yourself to sleep every night, it will make the detox and recovery a lot easier.

Most likely, you will need to start preparing for sleep several hours before you plan to go to bed. For example, if you want to set your bedtime for 10:00pm, then you may need to begin preparing for this at 5:00pm. Let's suppose you're doing your detox at home, and that most of the day you've spent laying down. Around 5:00pm might be a good time to start your nighttime preparations. For example, at 5:00pm you can do some form of fitness so that you can exert energy which could begin the process of preparing your body for sleep later that night.

Depending how you are feeling in your detox, you may only have the energy to walk up and down the driveway a few times, or other low-impact activities. Or you might want to try going for a jog or doing more strenuous exercises, like pushups or jumping jacks. Try to push yourself to move around as much as you can. There are a lot of free Tai Chi and Yoga routines on YouTube that are done sitting or even laying down which can bring a tremendous amount of benefit to your detox, especially if you do them daily. Get as creative as you can and let all of your daily activities be focused on healing and rebalancing yourself through this very difficult experience.

Going back to the example above, if you do some form of fitness at 5:00pm, follow this by drinking a substantial amount of water and eating a nourishing dinner. After dinner, you may want to take a relaxing salt and essential oil bath. There are several essential oils that can be used to induce sleep, such as lavender, chamomile, and bergamot. You can either burn them in a diffuser or add a few drops to your bath water. You can also make a topical oil to wear on your skin after you get out of the bath. While taking your bath, you might want to listen to a relaxing meditation video. The combination of warm bath water, essential oil aromatherapy, and meditation can really set the stage for your body and mind to relax. Create a serene atmosphere and fully submerge yourself in the moment with the intention of relaxing yourself now so that you can fall asleep later. Try not to allow yourself to think about anything other than the meditation. Addiction and detox are oftentimes accompanied with racing negative thoughts. These loud thought patterns oftentimes contribute to insomnia, so shifting your thoughts to a calm meditative mindset can help your body to physically relax itself into the state it needs for sleep.

It's important to understand that in most cases, herbs alone won't be enough to induce a deep sleep during detox. Your body will need a lot of help from you to be able to fall asleep, especially during the peak days. If you're able to get the sleep you need, your body will recover so much faster. Insomnia can be a huge set back.

Going back the above example, now that you've exerted energy, drank water, ate a healthy meal, and took a relaxing meditative bath using aromatherapy, the next step might be to take your nighttime dose of detox supplements, which will hopefully relax you to the point of being able to fall and stay asleep. Heantos oftentimes seemed to be an effective aid for inducing sleep (in combination with additional herbs during an opiate detox) but there are many other herbal products out there that you can also research. Make sure your bed is comfortable and your room is completely dark. Thirty minutes to an hour after you've taken all of your nighttime supplements, you may want to lay down in bed and begin another meditation video. If you keep the volume low and the room dark, this could also help you to drift off into sleep.

Part 9

Post-Detox Maintenance

The weeks following detox will be extremely important, and if handled correctly, they have the potential to be the foundation for a strong long-term recovery plan. The following is a list of suggested areas-of-focus for the weeks following detox:

- Design a balanced long-term vitamin and supplement regimen
- Put a focus on nutrition and fitness
- Get your body on a regular sleep-wake cycle
- Begin some form of recovery work such as intensive inpatient or outpatient programs, support and recovery groups, counseling, etc.
- Implement new daily habits such as meditation, yoga, a hobby, a sport/exercise, reading, jogging, etc.
- Regularly reach out to your support system and avoid drug contacts at all costs
- Get to work on setting and achieving goals

The following is a list of vitamins, herbs, and supplements that can be beneficial post-detox:

- Heantos
- Vitamins C, D, B Complex, and B12 Sublingual
- Fish Oil
- Ashwagandha
- Gui Pi Wan

- 5HTP
- CBD

Part 10

Restless Legs

Restless legs are a common symptom for people withdrawing from opiates, especially Methadone. If this is a discomfort that you're experiencing, Epsom Salt® and Sea Salt baths can oftentimes greatly reduce this sensation. It's recommended to take at least 2 twenty-minute baths a day with 2 cups of either Epsom Salt or Sea Salt. Additionally, topical Magnesium Oil can be massaged into the legs regularly throughout the day to help ease the restless legs. A product called Hyland's Restful Leg® seemed to be helpful for many people. Sitting in a sauna or hot tub also seemed to help bring relief. A lot of people detoxing from Methadone suffered from severe restless legs due to the fact that it's stored in the bone marrow and detoxifies from the body extremely slowly. The result is oftentimes terrible pain, cramping, and twitching in the legs. Keeping yourself comfortable during a detox can come with many challenges, this is why it's important to prepare ahead of time for each withdrawal symptom that you may be faced with.

Part 11

Cold Plunging

Cold Plunging, or cold-water emersion, is the practice of submerging your body in ice-cold water, typically following a specific style of meditative deep-breathing. There are many physical and mental health benefits of doing this, which can be particularly helpful following a detox. This may be too intense of an experience to do WHILE detoxing, but following detox it can oftentimes speed up the recovery process substantially. This can be an especially helpful practice for anyone who is having extreme anxiety or challenges repairing/rebalancing their nervous system.

Some benefits of Cold-Plunging are:

- Anti-inflammatory
- Boosts endorphins / enhances mood
- Increase in dopamine production
- Helps to regulate sleep
- Stress reduction
- Pain relief
- Heals damaged muscles
- Detoxification
- Boosts immune system
- Regulates hormones

There are many resources online that can teach you how to safely Cold Plunge at home. Speak to your doctor or local Cold Plunge practitioner for more information on how this practice can be used to repair and rejuvenate your body post-detox.

Chapter 7

Warnings and Cautions

"I am not what happened to me, I am what I choose to become."

~ Carl Jung

Warnings and Cautions

The following is a list of Warnings and Cautions to consider when using herbal supplements to support a detox:

- Do not drive a car or operate any machinery while under the influence of supplements that cause drowsiness
- It's recommended to have someone administer your supplements during peak withdrawal days as confusion may occur
- Long-acting stomach coating medications could interrupt the absorption of supplements in the body
- Avoid alcohol a few days before and during the entire duration of the detox
- Consult with your physician before beginning any stage of detox
- Please be aware that there are many nutraceutical companies that claim to have herbal ingredients in their products, but many have been tested and found to be fraudulent. Please do extensive research on any herbal product that you plan to use for your detox.
- Please check the legal status of all supplements in your region of the world before ordering products online.
- Discuss all products that you are planning to use with your physician prior to taking them. Be sure to also discuss any additional medications you are currently taking. Although herbs are gentle on the body, they can oftentimes have negative interactions with certain medications or medical issues.
- When taking herbal products, never exceed the recommended dosage unless advised by your physician.

- Herbs usually require a consistent level in your body to achieve the best results. Be sure to take your vitamins and supplements consistently so that you will receive the most benefits possible to help you through this very complicated process.
- Once you've bypassed the initial detox, you may want to continue taking your herbal detox supplements for an extended period of time because oftentimes there will be lingering discomforts. However, you may want to reduce the dosage based on how you're feeling. The goal is to eventually discontinue taking the supplements, and to repair your body to the point that it feels comfortable and balanced without taking anything at all.
- Detoxing while pregnant can be extremely dangerous and should never be attempted alone. Always speak to your doctor if you are pregnant and in need of a detox. I know it will be extremely scary to admit that you have an addiction while pregnant, but safety is the most important factor to consider. Not only is your own life on the line, but also the life of your unborn child. Reaching out to your doctor for help will be one of the strongest decisions you can make as a parent, and it will set a positive tone for your journey ahead.
- Detox is not a 'one-size-fits-all' process. Every single person is unique and will require a customized plan based on the details of their situation. What works for one person might not work for another person, so please take your time and do the proper research and planning based on the details of your life and needs. Keep in mind that your medical doctor will be your greatest asset. I know it sounds scary to openly admit to your doctor that you're battling addiction, but try to shift your thinking to the mindset that addiction is a very serious medical condition. Ideally, a person in recovery should be equipped with a medical doctor, a nutritionist, an acupuncturist, a physical trainer, a massage therapist, an intensive psychotherapist, and a life coach. Most people won't have all of those options available to them, but everyone can at least access a medical doctor. Even if you don't have insurance, walk into your local emergency room or public clinic and ask for help. Doctors will at least be able to connect you to local programs that can help you.

Chapter 8

What to Expect During an At-Home Detox

"It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop."

~ Confucius

What to Expect During an At-Home Detox

Every detox is going to be unique for each individual. I can't tell you exactly what you'll experience, but I can share the common trends that were shared with me from people that detoxed themselves at home. Detoxing in a rehab or medical detox center is usually quite different because they typically use pharmaceuticals to alleviate withdrawal symptoms.

People who were diligent about purchasing the correct amount of supplements, who took proper time to prepare, took supplements on time, took salt baths regularly, and incorporated nutrition, fitness, and meditative arts, typically had tolerable detoxes. The level of withdrawal symptoms they experienced seemed to be comparable to a bad flu; uncomfortable but not unbearable. The goal is to rest through the peak days of detox just as you would if you had a cold or flu. Try to rest the mind and body, eat healthy, be in good company with a support system fully set in place, and detox in a safe sober environment. If you take the time to make all the necessary preparations and are fully committed to the process, then it can be a tolerable experience.

It's important to remember that most of the supplements that assist with a detox may cause drowsiness, so it's recommended to have all preparations for the peak days laid out accessibly. For example, have plenty of comfortable clothes and a change of sheets washed and ready, put all bathtub items beside the bathtub (sea salt or Epsom salt, candles and lighter, essential oils, etc.), and keep all herbs and supplements organized and accessible. It's helpful to prepare your bedside with a phone charger, electronics, a box of tissues, a heating pad, nighttime products, magnesium oil, a water bottle, music and movies, a journal, a book or magazine, snacks, etc.

Please make your bed as comfortable as possible. You'll need to prepare for fluctuations in body temperature, so be sure to have warm blankets, cool sheets, a fan and a heating pad. It's helpful to have extra pillows, especially to use between the legs or under both legs. You will need to eat, so it's helpful to have someone there to prepare your meals, as you might not have much energy to do this yourself. It's also recommended to have someone available to keep track of your supplements, prepare your baths and keep you company.

When people make all the necessary preparations and purchase the correct amount of supplements, they typically experience tolerable withdrawal symptoms during the peak days. It's very important to focus on fitness and nutrition during your detox. This will help speed up the recovery process and will help to prevent lingering withdrawals. If you are on a post-detox protocol (such as Gui Pi Wan and Heantos) and incorporate fitness and nutrition into your daily routine, you will begin feeling better and balanced much faster than someone who lays around and eats processed food all day. While in active addiction, chances are you were filling your body with a variety of poisons. Recovery is the time to break this habit and begin putting only healthy, nourishing substances in your body, which includes all of the food that you eat.

Oftentimes detox is accompanied by extreme depression and anxiety. For many people, the initial days of sobriety can come with racing negative thoughts which can oftentimes invoke feelings of despair, regret, shame, self-hatred, worthlessness, and sometimes even thoughts of suicide. Please have a plan set in place to cope with the range of emotions that you may experience. Suggestions for managing this are listening to positive affirmations and guided meditations, watching comedies to invoke laughter, and reaching out to a counselor or your support system.

Preparing for your detox and anticipating what your needs will be is an important part of this process. Take your time making your preparations, because if you plan well, it can be a tolerable, manageable experience. This is the time for you to design a nurturing and therapeutic atmosphere for yourself, focusing on your needs and your comforts. **Loving yourself is key!**

Chapter 9

Designing an Aftercare Plan

*"I have learned over the years that when one's mind is made up,
this diminishes fear."*

~ Rosa Parks

Designing an Aftercare Plan

Designing an aftercare plan is ***mandatory*** when preparing for any method of detox, whether it's an Ibogaine detox, medical detox, or cold-turkey detox. An Aftercare Plan is a plan that you design which outlines how you will live your life once the detox is complete. It will outline things like where you'll live, what type of therapy or counseling you'll have, fitness, nutrition, employment, and much more. It might also include vitamin and supplement regimens. There are many resources that you may consider adding to your aftercare plan. Some will be intensive, and some will be designed around full-time jobs and demanding schedules. Get creative with this process and design a plan that will bring you healing and happiness!

The following is a list of options to explore (and combine!) when designing your aftercare plan:

- Inpatient rehabilitation centers
- Intensive outpatient recovery programs
- Halfway houses / sober living houses
- Psychotherapy (virtual or in-person)
- Recovery groups (12 Step or SMART Recovery)
- Online recovery / support groups
- Retreats – Holistic, Spiritual, Yoga, Silent, etc.
- Plant medicine therapy such as Ibogaine, Ayahuasca, and Kambo

- Acupuncture / massage / sauna
- Stem Cell Therapy
- Ketamine Infusion
- Creating new daily habits
- Nutrition and fitness
- Religion and spirituality
- School or training programs
- Seeking employment / career change
- Creating a support network
- Meditation groups
- Yoga and Tai Chi classes
- Reading self-help books
- Listening to motivational speakers and positive affirmations (free on YouTube!)
- Journaling
- Taking up a hobby
- Community service / volunteer work
- Creative endeavors
- Gardening
- Travel
- Relocation

There are many ways to design an after-care plan that will be customized to meet your individual needs and resources. You can begin by evaluating what your needs are and what resources you have available to you.

It's recommended to take at least two to three weeks (or more) to focus on detoxing, resting, and regaining your strength before implementing your aftercare plan. There's an adjustment period needed, and if you allow yourself the necessary time to catch up on rest and bypass withdrawal symptoms then you'll have a much better chance of achieving long-term success. However, once the withdrawal symptoms start subsiding, it's important to begin at least a few of your aftercare plans, such as creating a daily fitness regimen and listening to motivational speakers. You need to use this time very carefully because if you begin nourishing your mind and body right away, you will get through this transitional stage quicker. The goal is to get to that point in your recovery where you genuinely feel better, mentally and physically, and you're working towards goals. Some aftercare plans that you can implement right away are focusing on nutrition, making healthy smoothies, juicing, drinking a lot of water, and eating as many raw fruits and vegetables as possible. Also, you may want to start a vitamin and supplement regimen to help combat lingering withdrawal symptoms and to rebalance the body. Another helpful tool during this time is doing some sort of daily meditative art, such as Qi Gong or Tai Chi, Kundalini or low-impact yoga, and/or guided meditations. If you're still very weak and don't have energy to stand, you can search for things like 'Sitting Qi Gong' or 'Sitting Kundalini Yoga' on the internet (YouTube is a great resource). There's a wide variety of videos online that teach these practices for free. If you begin practicing daily, even if it's only for a few minutes a day, you will most likely see a huge difference in how quickly your body heals from the addiction and the detox. I definitely recommend adding one of these meditative arts as soon as possible, even if you're still in active addiction, and make sure to practice daily to receive the best benefits, even if it's only for 10 minutes a day. However, the ideal way to practice would be twice a day, morning and night. This is how you would receive the most benefits, which can be really beneficial physically and mentally.

For some people, designing an intensive aftercare plan may not be an option because of work and other responsibilities, so they'll need to design a plan that's more versatile to meet their specific schedule restrictions. However, some people might prefer a deeper level of therapy and structure, and may include inpatient facilities or intensive outpatient programs into their aftercare plan. When the physical detox is already completed, it's much easier to focus on the therapeutic components that different recovery programs offer. You will be more clear-minded and present, rather than sick or medicated. This gives you a window of opportunity to absorb what's being taught so that you can learn how to redirect your old daily habits and thought patterns while integrating therapy and support. Once you're ready to reintegrate back into the world, you'll be starting with a strong foundation.

There are a wide range of aftercare options that you can combine to create a well-rounded, customized plan. Many people have limited resources and feel that they're unable to design an aftercare plan, but with a little creativity you should be able to put together a plan that will work well enough to get you through this critical stage in your recovery. The most important factor is your total commitment to the process.

The following is an example of a low-cost aftercare plan:

- Attend 12 Step meetings every day for ninety days (free)
- Do Qi Gong or Tai Chi every day for ninety days on YouTube (free)
- Join a SMART Recovery online chat room (free)
- Attend a meditation group once a week (usually \$5-\$10, or free on YouTube)
- Listen to daily motivational speaking videos on YouTube (free)
- Vitamin and supplement regimen (\$25-\$75/month)
- Volunteer twice a month (free)

- Evening jog (free)
- Reading self-help books (free)
- Recite ten positive affirmations three times a day (free)
- Journaling (free)
- Guided meditation on YouTube every night (free)

As you can see in the example above, for under \$100 a month, you can design a strong aftercare plan for yourself. You may need to get creative, but it can be done. Typically, when a person is in active addiction, it consumes a lot of their time. If you detox and do not design an aftercare plan, you may find a lot of spare time in your days where you become bored, edgy, and may start craving that old high-energy lifestyle. Keeping yourself busy with positive activities is a great way to redirect old habits and to create new daily routines. Some people are fortunate enough to be able to afford counseling or inpatient programs, and I encourage everyone that has that option to do so, it will bring so many benefits. However, with a little creativity, anyone can design an aftercare plan regardless of their financial situation.

I want to briefly discuss traditional 12 Step programs, such as Narcotics and Alcoholics Anonymous®. Many people will say that they don't align with the core principles of these programs, such as affirming addiction and powerlessness, or being required to accept a Higher Power. Even if you don't resonate with everything that these meetings teach, it's still a great option to consider. You'll be among a community of people who can relate to what you're going through, many who share their experience and advice, and sober events that you're always welcome to attend. Surrounding yourself with a sober community is a very powerful tool to have in your recovery toolbox. You're not required to work the steps if it doesn't interest you, but it can be helpful to know that there are meetings available daily for people who are coping with the same challenges that you are. Socialization is critical to a successful recovery because many people feel a strong urge to isolate, so please be open to attending meetings, at least just to make some sober friends and to be accepted and embraced for what you're going through.

If you decide to attend 12 Step meetings, please do so with an open mind. A lot of people are court ordered to be there and may not have the same goals that you do, but if you take time to get to know people, you will find those who are genuinely dedicated to their recovery and to helping others who are new in recovery.

SMART Recovery is a great option for those who don't resonate with the principles of traditional 12 Step programs, or who are seeking more than one support program. They offer meetings in person and online, and 24/7 recovery chat rooms (www.smartrecovery.org). This will also be a great option for someone with schedule or transportation challenges. It's important to take your time and do the research necessary to design an aftercare plan that best meets YOUR needs; one that resonates with your beliefs and goals, and that will encourage inspiration and determination on your journey of recovery and self-discovery.

The aftercare plan is such an important component in your recovery journey. The detox is the first step in the process, but once that's complete, the real work can begin. Some people have been in active addiction for years or even decades, so redirecting those daily patterns is going to require a lot of effort and commitment. Please take your time when designing an aftercare plan because once your detox is complete, it will be time to create a life that you no longer need to escape. This is the period of time where you re-design your life, and if you dedicate yourself to the process, it can be a very empowering and life-changing experience!

Chapter 10

Creating a Support System

"Encourage, lift, and strengthen one another. For the positive energy spread to one will be felt by us all. For we are connected, one and all."

~ Deborah Day

10

Creating a Support System

Having a support system is critical during the journey of detox and recovery. Addiction and recovery are very difficult times in a person's life so having a system for support and comfort can help in a multitude of ways. Addiction can oftentimes make a person feel disconnected or isolated from others. Creating a system of support can help to bring a feeling of re-connection to the detox and aftercare stages.

The following is a list of suggestions for designing a support system:

Detox support – It's recommended to have someone physically present to take care of you for at least the first week if you're detoxing at home. A caretaker will be responsible for keeping track of supplements and dosaging schedules, preparing meals and baths, changing bed sheets, keeping you company during moments of insomnia, high anxiety and discomfort, helping to keep your spirits lifted, encouraging you to do some form of fitness every day, and generally watching after you on a close monitoring basis.

Long term support - After the first week or two of detox, you most likely won't need 24-hour care (unless you're concerned that you'll relapse if left alone), but it's important to have a solid long-term support system set in place . It's recommended to build this network as extensively as you can.

The following is a list of examples of people who can be included in your support network:

- Family members
- Sober friends
- Twelve Step members and sponsors
- Local groups (meditation groups, yoga classes, cooking classes, etc.)
- Recovery / life coaches
- Religious teachers and spiritual guides
- Physicians
- Counselors
- Social workers
- Recovery community members
- Online friends / groups
- Pen pals
- Neighbors
- Coworkers
- Classmates
- Teachers / professors

Creating a contact network - Once you've decided who will be included in your support system, you'll need to document methods for contacting each one. It's important to have as many easily accessible methods for communicating as possible, such as text or email, so you can easily alert everyone if you're suddenly having a bad or overwhelming moment. Be sure to reach out to each person and let them know about your desire to have them in your support system. It's important to mention that not only will you be potentially reaching out to them in times of need, but it will also be helpful to have each person randomly check on you as well.

Emergency contact - If you're working with a caretaker, it's important to provide them with a list of support and emergency contacts.

Medical professionals - It's important to discuss detox plans with your medical professional. Medical monitoring, guidance, and support are critical when undergoing a process as serious as this.

Virtual network - Virtual networks are a wonderful way to connect with a range of support options. SMART Recovery is an online program that provides online support groups as well as 24/7 chat rooms (www.SmartRecovery.org). There's also many social media recovery groups that can be helpful platforms for finding support. These groups can be educational and supportive; minds from across the globe communicate in these forums on all matters and methods of detox, recovery and support.

Chapter 11

Caretakers and Facilitators

"Help people, even when you know they can't help you back."

~ Heidi Dellaire

Caretakers and Facilitators

If you're planning to look after someone who will be detoxing at home, you'll need to prepare for the days or weeks ahead. It's recommended to have 24/7 care available for anyone undergoing this process because the person will be battling not only the physical symptoms of withdrawal, but also the deeply emotional and psychological symptoms. Having a caretaker always makes the experience so much easier to get through.

Detoxing alone is very difficult because this is a time when you need to be surrounded by love, support, understanding, and care. If you are a friend or family member who has been negatively impacted by your loved one's addiction, being loving and supportive during the detox does not mean that you're approving of the negative behaviors that may have occurred. It simply means that 'at this time' the focus is to safely guide the person through the physical sickness without resentment or judgement. This will undoubtedly be very difficult at times because the behavior of a person in active addiction can oftentimes be very harsh and hurtful. Once they pass through the initial detox stage and begin implementing their long-term recovery plan, you may want to begin addressing the damage that may have been done to your relationship. However, keep in mind that when dealing with this difficult topic, proper timing will be vital.

I'm a firm believer that over time and with a lot of effort, the damage between relationships that were negatively impacted by addiction can be repaired. However, the first stage of detox is not the appropriate time to address those issues. During this stage, not only is the person physically ill, but mentally their mind may be clearing for the first time in a very long time. They may be flooded with the memories of all that has transpired throughout their addiction (and leading up to it), and oftentimes this is accompanied with guilt, shame, regret, and self-loathing. Drugs and alcohol have this remarkable way of allowing one to forget quite a bit, but once the clarity returns, the mind can oftentimes be flooded with harsh memories, and the depression can become quite deep. Therefore, it's critical to project ONLY love, support, and non-judgement during the days of detox, and then you can plan to address the deeper issues later down the road.

It's recommended to have a caretaker present for at least the first week of detox, but preferably for two full weeks (or more). The following is a list of the caretaker's duties:

- **To guide the detox** – When a person is in acute withdrawals, they typically revert to a very fragile state. They oftentimes become extremely depressed and, in some cases, won't be diligent about caring for themselves through the detox. The caretaker will essentially oversee and guide the entire experience, treating the person with gentleness and concern.
- **Keeping track of supplements** – It will be a great help to the person detoxing if their caretaker prepares all supplements and dosages, and keeps a written log of everything that is taken (including date, time, name of product and dosage – see Appendix 5: Dosage Chart).

- **Preparing meals** – It's extremely important for the person detoxing to eat healthy nourishing meals and snacks throughout the duration of detox. People detoxing from opiates will need high fiber diets that promote healthy digestive function. People detoxing from cocaine and amphetamines typically have ravenous appetites and will need healthy, hearty meals in between long stretches of sleep. You may need to get creative if the person doesn't have an appetite, in which case smoothies and vitamin-rich soup broths might be an option. Please remember to provide plenty of water and hot herbal teas, and to stay away from sodas and sugary juices.
- **Preparing baths** – Salt baths are extremely beneficial during a detox. It's recommended to take 1-2 baths a day during the peak days of an opiate detox due to the level of physical discomforts. You can add 1-2 cups of either Sea Salt or Epsom Salt to the bath water, as well as essential oils such as lavender, sandalwood, yarrow, bergamot, chamomile, rose, citrus oil, or others. You can also prepare baths that have a half cup of Apple Cider Vinegar and 1 cup of sea salt. Soak for twenty minutes and then rinse off. These types of baths draw out toxins from the body, help to regulate body temperature, and bring general relief to body aches and restless legs. If at any point during detox the person is feeling extreme discomforts, they can take their next dose of supplements and then immediately take a bath so that while they are waiting for the supplements to take effect, they will have a relief of symptoms from the bath water. It's also beneficial to listen to a guided meditation while bathing to help relax the mind and body, and to maximize the healing benefits of the bath.

- **Incorporating fitness** – While rest is an extremely important part of the detox process, incorporating fitness is JUST as important, especially as the peak days pass. For opiate detox, there may be a lot more restless and sleepless time than with other detoxes, so encouraging the person to take short walks or to do low impact fitness routines such as Qi Gong or Tai Chi will be a great way to pass that time. For people detoxing off cocaine and amphetamines, you'll have to make sure they're getting up and moving around during those first days of extended deep sleep, otherwise they may want to stay in bed for a week or more. Laying around for extended periods of time without stretching and moving around will eventually cause pain and soreness in the body. This can oftentimes be confused with lingering withdrawal discomforts and can prolong the recovery period, as well as cause cravings. The more activity a person can incorporate into their days of detox, the better. Activating the body's innate healing abilities is critical during this time, and fitness is one of the best ways to achieve this.
- **Safeguarding from drug contacts** – An important task of the caretaker is to ensure that the person detoxing is not in contact with anyone associated with drugs. Please be very diligent about this. All it takes is one split second to pass drugs. It is *mandatory* that this doesn't happen, or it can throw off the entire balance and progress of the detox. So, please be sure to monitor all contact with the outside world as depression and panic could cause the person to try and obtain drugs. During the detox, they may get upset with you for preventing that from happening, but I assure you they will thank you later. People oftentimes can't think clearly or make strong choices for themselves when they're in the throes of severe withdrawals, so your intervention and attentiveness is critical.

- **Support and company** – Detox is a very emotionally, psychologically and physically draining experience. Having someone there to keep spirits lifted will bring a lot of benefit to the person undergoing this process. They say laughter is the best medicine, so try to find comedies that you can watch together, or maybe a new Netflix® series that you can binge watch together to pass the time. The goal of detox is to bypass the specific window of time that it takes for the drugs to be eliminated from the body, so try to fill this window of time with as many entertaining and uplifting things as possible. Additionally, try to be mindful of the person's moods. It's very easy to slip into a deep depression during this time, so if you see signs of this, please be sure to intervene and shift that energy. Reach out, offer support, listen, and respond with love and gentleness. Sometimes just getting out of the house for a car ride can shift a person's mood. So, try to think of little things that can help to pass the time and keep spirits lifted.
- **Creating a serene environment** – Please be sure to keep the environment serene and harmonious. You can play meditative or relaxing music, burn candles and sage, diffuse essential oils, dim the lights, do everything you can think of to create an environment that promotes serenity, relaxation and healing.
- **Going on outings** – The days of detox can really seem to linger for some people and small outings can help pass the time and keep the spirits lifted. Use your judgement, if it seems that the person should be in bed that day, then that's fine. But if they've been in bed for several days and seem like they could use a change of scenery then you may want to plan a little outing. Energy levels will most likely be at a low so outings may have to be simple, such as relaxing at the beach (very beneficial, sunlight and salt water), sitting in a park, going to the movies, or even just going for a nice drive through the country. A trip to the massage parlor or a meditation group might be just what the doctor ordered! Get as creative as you want, just be sure that the person isn't over-exerting themselves.

Some people may find themselves in a position where they want to support a person through a detox, but the person has spun so far out of control in their addiction that they can't even participate in the process of planning and preparing for the detox and recovery. As a friend or family member, you may need to plan the entire detox, order all products, book all appointments, and take care of whatever the person will need done. Some people that are deep in an active addiction just need someone to rip them completely out of that world, and get them to safety.

There are many ways to approach a situation like this. An example would be, if you decided that doing an at-home detox would be the best option, then you may need to book a hotel somewhere remote, order all of the herbs and supplements, pack all of the bags, and when all of your preparations are done, you can abruptly take the person to the hotel and begin the detox. The person who will be detoxing obviously needs to know your plans because in order for this to work, they need to be in agreement that this needs to happen. They just might not have the strength or the focus to do all of the planning and preparing.

People can oftentimes feel very defeated when they're in active addiction. Oftentimes people have already tried several times to get clean and failed, leaving them to believe that they won't ever succeed. People in active addiction can sometimes have trouble focusing, thinking clearly, or seeing past their addiction. So, for many people, they may need someone else to make all of the preparations, not because they don't want to get clean, but more because they feel completely hopeless.

Creating a rescue plan like this can be extremely challenging and will require a collaboration between you and the medical practitioner who will be guiding the process. You may need to have a waiver signed granting you permission to speak directly to any medical or addiction professionals who may become part of the recovery journey.

Chapter 12

Redirecting Negative Thoughts

"You have everything you need for complete peace and total happiness right now."

~ Wayne Dyer

Redirecting Negative Thoughts

For many years, I suffered from severe clinical depression. My mind was like a prison and I desperately needed to learn ways to redirect my persistent negative thoughts. I started reading and listening to Dr. Wayne Dyer and learned a lot about overcoming my negative thought patterns. I implemented a few steps into my daily life, which turned out to be some of the most effective tools for overcoming the pattern of deep depression that I had always known.

Until I started paying attention to my thoughts, I never realized how negative they were. Every day, from the moment I woke up until the moment I went to sleep, all of my thoughts seemed to be self-defeating, self-critical, regretful of everything I had done wrong in the past, and afraid of anything bad that could potentially happen in the future. What I didn't realize was that I was creating severe anxiety within myself by constantly entertaining these negative thoughts.

Once I became **aware** (consciously realizing that a negative thought was occurring) of my repetitive negative thoughts (which was quite a challenge in the beginning), then the priority was to learn ways to immediately redirect the negative thought/s. At first it was very difficult to catch myself thinking a negative thought, because it had become so normal for me to think that way, like a mental default setting. As soon as I began paying closer attention, I would catch myself in negative thought loops. There are many books and documentaries that discuss this topic, such as 'The Power of Intention' by Dr. Wayne Dyer, 'The Power of Now' by Eckhart Tolle, and 'The Law of Attraction' by Esther and Jerry Hicks.

I recommend researching this as much as you can so that you can discover methods that will work for you. I can't express enough how important this step is in the recovery process. It's critically important to gain control of your destructive thought patterns because the only way to find happiness in sobriety is to have a body that is comfortable and a ***mind that is at peace***. Once you can achieve this, you will find that living in a sober body is actually a very rewarding and liberating experience.

When I first began redirecting my negative thought patterns, the first step was catching myself thinking a negative thought. I had to **consciously realize** that I was stuck in a negative thought loop, and the more I would practice this, the quicker I would realize it was happening. Once I'd catch myself, I would do one of two things; I would either turn the negative thought into a positive present-tense statement, or I would begin reciting a mantra either silently or out loud.

Here are some examples: If you're worrying about finances, you could recite, "I am attracting financial stability into my life" or "I am attracting prosperous opportunities"; If you're dwelling on self-criticism, you could recite "I am worthy of love and joy" or "I am healthy, happy, and whole"; If you're craving drugs, you could recite "I attract freedom and healing in all areas of my life and being" or "I invoke protection all around me". Get creative, and also focus on slowing down your breathing while you're reciting your positive present tense affirmations. You can recite the affirmations either silently or out loud; do whatever you feel most comfortable with.

There's an interesting phenomenon that happens when you begin reciting a positive present-tense affirmation; it's as if you begin to pull yourself out of the rut just by changing your thought! Your subconscious mind will begin to believe this new message that you're programming yourself with, and your mood can actually shift! It may not happen in the early stages of this work, but with time and consistency you may really begin to notice a shift in your mental well-being.

The other method I use to redirect my thoughts is reciting mantras. Mantras are sacred sounds, or chants, that are believed to bring a healing energy with the vibration of the sounds. Sound Healing is a field of therapeutic practice that you may also want to research. This practice is closely linked with trauma being locked in the muscles, and using sound to release it. If you memorize a few mantras then you can try to make them your default thought, meaning, when you're not thinking about something important, you can try to keep your mind occupied with mantras instead. This can help to prevent useless negative thinking. It's important to use your thoughts wisely and carefully so that you're always manifesting healing and positivity.

Life is by no means perfect for me and it will not be perfect for you just because you begin changing your thoughts. Life will always be filled with stress and struggle, but it's how we *respond* to it that can be transformed. Try to take life one moment at a time and find quiet moments of meditation as often as you can. It's in silence that we recharge and find our center.

A helpful tip for redirecting negative thought patterns is to hang affirmations and mantras on pieces of paper all around your home and workspace. Doing this allows you to constantly see and be reminded of positive messages, so that you can read and recite them, initiating positive thoughts throughout your day. I keep affirmations on my bathroom mirror so that every time I brush my teeth or wash my hands, I read them and get a little recharge. I also keep them next to my bed and in the kitchen, and it gives me little reminders throughout the day of everything that I want to manifest and experience in my physical world. Sometimes you may not realize that you're stuck in a negative thought loop, especially in the early days of doing this type of work, so seeing a positive affirmation or mantra on the wall can instantly snap you out of the negative thought/s that you were thinking. It can be a reminder to do a quick inventory of what your thoughts are.

The journey of detox and recovery is a time of personal transformation. Reciting positive affirmations is a form of positive self-talk and is one of the most transformational tools a person can utilize. Our minds are very powerful, and the thoughts that we allow ourselves to think can change our lives - for the good or the bad. Addiction oftentimes consumes a great deal of a person's thoughts; they'll think about craving their substance, how and when they'll get it, how they'll pay for it, how they'll keep it a secret, etc. Early in recovery, the sober-mind is oftentimes flooded with thoughts of fear, regret, shame, self-hatred, guilt, insecurities, cravings, and other images that lead to the desire to 'escape'. The journey of recovery is the time to learn how to identify and redirect all of your negative and unhealthy patterns, including mental patterns. It's important to begin the habit of reciting positive affirmations and/or mantras, and to only allow positive thoughts to cycle through your mind (to the best of your ability).

The following is a list of examples of positive affirmations. Select ones that resonate with you and hang them up in your living and workspace, reciting them often throughout the day. Get creative and write your own affirmations as well!

- I love and approve of myself
- I am free
- I am complete and whole
- I am lovable
- I have a mission and a purpose
- I am important
- I am beautiful
- I create my happiness
- I am manifesting an abundant and fulfilling life

- I am a magnet for miracles
- I am healing
- I am grounded and centered
- I am attracting love and happiness into my life
- I am surrounded by the divine light of the universe
- I am safe and protected
- I attract happiness, success, and abundance into my life
- I believe in myself
- I am of great worth
- I am grateful for everything in my life
- I m worthy of greatness
- I am balanced and whole

Chapter 13

Dealing with Relapse

*"Part of recovery is relapse. I dust myself off and move forward
again."*

~ Steven Adler

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Dealing with Relapse

re·lapse

VERB

1. (of someone suffering from a disease) suffer deterioration after a period of improvement.

synonyms: get ill/worse again · have/suffer a relapse · deteriorate

NOUN

1. a deterioration in someone's state of health after a temporary improvement:

"he suffered a relapse of schizophrenia after a car crash"

synonyms: deterioration · turn for the worse · setback

www.oxforddictionaries.com

Relapse is unfortunately a part of many people's recovery journeys. It doesn't mean that you've failed, it just means that you have not yet designed the **best** recovery plan that meets **all** your individual needs. If you experience a relapse, there are ways to manage it that will allow you to get things under control without falling too far back. A brief 'lapse' in your recovery does not have to lead to a full-blown relapse. Spiraling out of control is not inevitable. After you slip, you have not unlearned all that you've already learned, you may just need to figure out how to restructure your recovery plan to better meet your needs. However, it is critical to understand and evaluate how and why the relapse occurred.

It's important to try to pinpoint the triggers that may have led up to the relapse. Every experience in your life can be used as a learning experience, even relapse. Try not to get too discouraged, and instead evaluate the situation as best as you can so that you can determine what led to the relapse, what changes still need to be made, and what you can do to prevent it from happening again.

Physically, what is your body experiencing? How can these symptoms be managed and eliminated? What tools or supplements are available to you? Also, what factors in your environment may have contributed to the relapse, and what changes need to be made to not only prevent this from occurring again, but to also use this relapse as much to your advantage as possible? What can be learned or discovered about yourself? The goal is to understand yourself, on all levels, and to learn how to micromanage every detail of your life. It's not an easy task, and up until now you may have been trying very hard to avoid it, but your life now depends on it. It's not easy, and it's going to take time and commitment, so be gentle with yourself and be understanding of the times you fall. Reach out to your support system when you feel yourself becoming too discouraged or defeated. You don't have to go through this alone!

The following is a list of questions you may want to consider when trying to determine the cause of your relapse:

- How were you feeling physically, emotionally, and psychologically prior to the relapse?
- Were you in contact with active drug users?
- Were you diligently working your recovery plan?
- Were you experiencing a high level of stress?
- How was your physical health prior to the relapse?
- Was there a specific incident that led to the relapse?
- How were your appetite and sleep patterns prior to the relapse?
- Who were you associating with prior to your relapse?

Understanding the cause of the relapse is key to preventing it from occurring again. Now that the relapse has occurred, it's also important to manage the physical symptoms that you may be left with. Some relapses are brief, such as a one-time or a few days of relapse. Some relapses can last weeks or even months. Once you've regained control and have decided to get back on track, you may want to begin taking detox supplements again to help manage the physical discomforts, depression, or anxiety that may be experienced following relapse.

If you're back in the cycle of withdrawals, then you may need to undergo another detox. If you're not experiencing full-blown withdrawals but you are experiencing mild withdrawal discomforts, then you may want to take low doses of supplements for several weeks to help get your body back into balance. Sometimes relapse occurs because the body still has deficiencies or imbalances, which can cause physical or psychological side effects. It may be helpful to get examined by a doctor and have bloodwork done to pinpoint anything that may have contributed to the relapse, such as vitamin deficiencies or chemical imbalances.

Once the relapse is under control, it's recommended to re-evaluate your recovery plan. If you've been following your recovery plan diligently, and still experienced a relapse, then you will need to increase its' intensity. For example, if you've been going to three support groups a week, then you may want to increase it to daily meetings for a while. If you've been seeing a counselor every other week, you may want to increase it to every week or even twice a week. Some people may discover that they need to relocate or enter a residential program because recovering at home creates too many opportunities to relapse. Oftentimes recovery is a trial-and-error process. If your recovery plan is not effective enough, then don't be afraid to try something new, and really dedicate yourself to this process. Recovery is the most important thing in your life right now, so give 110% of yourself to the process. If that means spending thirty or sixty days in a facility you don't necessarily want to be in, then just do it, because your life might literally depend on it. Ask yourself this, "Do you want to stay clean? Is your deepest desire to overcome your addiction?" If your answer is yes, then do ***WHATEVER IT TAKES!***

Chapter 14

Post Detox Psycho-Spiritual Treatments

"Instead of thinking outside the box, get rid of the box."

~ Deepak Chopra

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Post Detox Psycho-Spiritual Treatments

Once a person has completed the detox stage of their recovery, they are often left with a lot of raw emotions which could become overwhelming. Most people use substances to avoid the suffering of life, but once the substances are removed, they can be left with the memory of all they were trying to avoid. Counseling and self-reflection are very effective ways to combat this, but for many people, it just isn't enough.

Around the world, there are plant medicines and alternative therapies that are being used to help people heal on a deeper level. Indigenous tribes most commonly use plant medicines to aid in transitional times throughout one's life, such as the transition from childhood to adulthood. Transitioning from active addiction to sobriety can be an extremely challenging chapter in a person's life. Once the detox is complete, it may be helpful to seek out plant medicine ceremonies or alternative treatments, such as Ibogaine treatment, Ayahuasca ceremony, Kambo treatment, and Ketamine Infusion. Unfortunately, in the U.S., most of these medicinal treatments are not permitted, but luckily, they are available in Canada and Mexico.

The following is a list of natural and alternative treatments that may be helpful post-detox for combatting depression and working through the underlying causes of the addiction:

Ibogaine – Ibogaine is a psychoactive substance and has been commonly known to invoke a deeply introspective examination of one's subconscious and conscious mind. This oftentimes leads one to the discovery of the underlying emotional damage and offers them the opportunity to find closure to trauma. Ibogaine has proven to be very effective at treating addiction, depression, and oftentimes PTSD. It can also be used for spiritual purposes, such as seeking spiritual healing or growth. It can be used as the primary method of detox, or it can be used post detox in a lower dose for psycho-spiritual and therapeutic purposes.

Ayahuasca – Ayahuasca is an entheogenic tea that is used as a spiritual medicine in indigenous Amazonian tribes. It is used in healing ceremonies and is known to be a powerful tool for treating depression and trauma.

Kambo – Kambo is a medicine that is extracted from the skin of the Giant Monkey Frog in the Amazon. It's not psychoactive, but it has powerful healing agents that are recommended post-detox. Kambo purges the build-up of toxins while strengthening all systems within the physical body. It has been known to help with a range of physical ailments and discomforts and can be a great tool post-detox. Kambo is legal in the U.S.

Ketamine – Ketamine is a new medical treatment that is being used to treat severe depression and can be a great tool in combination with Behavior Modification Therapy. Although Ketamine can be sold as a street drug and is oftentimes abused, when it's properly administered by a medical professional it can have extremely therapeutic results. There are many Ketamine clinics worldwide, including the U.S., that could be a great addition to your aftercare plan.

Chapter 15

Incorporating Metaphysics into Recovery

"Nothing can dim the light that shines from within."

~ Maya Angelou

Incorporating Metaphysics into Recovery

For those who are interested in incorporating metaphysical methods into their recovery plans, I want to provide some helpful information for your amazing journey of re-alignment and energy balancing. These tools are especially nice to have during an Ibogaine, Ayahuasca, or Kambo treatment.

Crystals and Gemstones

Crystals and gemstones are believed to have many healing properties which can be used to aid in all stages of the recovery process. Crystals and gemstones can be used in many ways, including:

- Chakra alignment
- Absorb / transform negative energy
- Balance and align energy physically / mentally / emotionally / spiritually
- Balance and align energy within the home / office
- Create barriers of protection / heightened energy
- Promote a sense of calming and relaxation

The journey of detox and recovery is a time of transformation. This can be a great time to begin learning how to do energy work, such as meditation, Tai Chi / Qi Gong, working with crystals and gemstones, Reiki, smudging, and other similar practices. It's important to put focus on keeping a balanced and serene energy around you as often as possible because this can help to transform your life.

Crystals and gemstones can be worn on your body (as jewelry or in your pocket) and placed around your home, car, office, and anywhere else that you might spend your time. You can place them anywhere in your bedroom, including under your bed or at your bedside to enhance the healing that your body experiences while sleeping. Crystals and gemstones are believed to absorb negative / unwanted energy, so it's important to clean them weekly either in salt water, sunlight, moonlight, or sage smoke (smudging). There's an abundance of information online regarding the use of Crystals and Gemstones in your everyday life, and the uses and meanings of each stone. Below is a list of crystals and gemstones that can be used to aid in the transformation process:

Crystals and Gemstones that can be helpful in recovery:

Amethyst - Believed to "pull" the addiction from the body, meditative and calming, protection, improves brain function, enhances psychic abilities.

Selenite - Improves mental clarity, quiets racing thoughts, cleanses the mind of negativity, protects from the negativity of others, balances and stabilizes the body and emotions, balances and stabilizes energy in the home when placed in the four corners of the home.

Hematite - Dispels negativity, organizes thoughts, develops healthy thinking skills, grounding.

Rose Quartz - Opens the heart chakra, unconditional love, promotes self-love, improves emotional health.

Quartz Crystal - Aids in healing, purification, "master healing crystal", strengthens the aura, balances chakras and energy centers, stimulates the immune system

Septarian - Promotes confidence in oneself, grounding stone, promotes tolerance and patience, aids in healing the body, absorbs and transforms energy

Jade - Blessing stone, dream stone, protection, a powerful healing stone, prosperity

Smudging

Smudging is a traditional Native American practice of burning sage and other dry herbs for the purpose of cleansing energy before ceremonies and healing rituals. The dry herbs are burned, creating a thick smoke wherever the energy work is being done. Burning sage oftentimes brings a very calming effect and can be great to do before, during, and after detox. It smells good, it's relaxing, and it removes old, stagnant energy that's believed can slow down your healing process. The journey of detox and recovery is a very delicate process, so the person should be kept in a very protective and nurturing space. Smudging is a great way to create that sort of atmosphere.

Smudging is an excellent tool for 'clearing out' old, unwanted energy and making room for new, positive energy to come in. It's similar to dusting; you can remove all of the dust in your home but within days there will be new dust. If you dust frequently, then there will never be *too* much, but if you *never* dust then there will be an overwhelming amount of dust everywhere. The same is true for the human aura and the accumulation of negative, unwanted, and stagnant energy. Our energetic fields are believed to be magnetic, and we accumulate energy throughout our entire lives – there's no avoiding it. Just like dust, it can accumulate and accumulate, until you reach a point of having an abundance of this unwanted energy that you 'drag around' with you everywhere you go. You sleep in it, you work in it, it's always attached to you. Energetically, we begin collecting and storing energy in our auras from the moment of conception. This can be good *or* bad, depending on your surroundings.

Unfortunately, in our modern society, it's difficult (if not impossible) to avoid accumulating unwanted energy. Having a lot of negative unwanted energy does not mean you're a bad person, it just means you've been exposed to too many harmful things, whether big or small, which is unfortunately unavoidable in the world today. Examples of negative energy are as follows:

- Being abused physically / emotionally /psychologically / sexually
- Being exposed to anger, rage, hatred, injustice, hostility, etc.
- Being exposed to chemicals in the environment, food, water, drugs, etc.
- Being exposed to negative media, propaganda, a saturation of advertising and fear-based messages, lies
- Living in a negative environment / not being content with where you live / who you are living with / being afraid in your home
- Worries, fears, concerns about survival
- Poor health
- Arguments, violence
- Dangerous situations which invoke fear, anxiety, panic, trauma
- Being lonely, sick, depressed, fatigued
- Living in densely populated areas, being exposed to too many people and toxins
- Being surrounded by an abundance of electricity, plastic, household chemicals
- Being constantly exposed to WIFI and 5G frequencies
- Being hurt, misunderstood, abandoned
- Having difficult relationships with family, friends, teachers, bosses, coworkers, peers, neighbors, authorities, or yourself
- Insecurity, weariness, disappointment

How to Smudge Your Home

It's recommended to thoroughly clean your home before smudging (burning sage and other herbs), or even change the furniture/decorations around to give each room a new "feel". This is a way of cleansing and shifting the stagnant energy in your home (you may want to also research 'Feng Shui'). Make sure all outside doors and windows are closed, and all inside doors, cabinets, and closets are open. Light the bundle of sage or the plate of dry herbs until a thick smoke forms. It may take a minute or two to get the sage and/or herbs fully lit. Be sure to always have the lit sage or herbs in a heat-proof container. Once the fire is extinguished and the smoke is rolling, hold the container and stand at your front door. It's best to do this while reciting prayers, listening to mantras, listening to spiritual or peaceful music, or just simply thinking peaceful loving thoughts.

Stand at your front door and allow the smoke to cover the door. Then slowly walk clockwise throughout your entire house, covering as many walls and objects with smoke as possible. Put a great deal of focus on beds, couches, chairs, even toilet bowls and bathtubs. Try to "smudge" as much old energy off everything in your home, especially areas where you do your most stressing (sofa, bed, etc.). When you're done, either allow the sage or herbs to burn out on their own, or you can extinguish them with water. You may want to repeat this process every few days to remove the years or even decades of accumulated energy.

After twenty minutes or so, open some of the outside doors and windows, and release the smoke. Let it carry all of the accumulated energy right out of your living space. You can replace that old energy with sunlight, fresh air, mantras, crystals, sweetgrass, incense, love, healing, and positive changes.

How to Smudge Your Body

Stand outside with your legs spread slightly and your arms straight out beside you. It's easier to have someone else smudge you, but it is possible to smudge yourself. Light the sage and herbs, and get a thick smoke forming. Cover the entire body with smoke, starting at the top of your head, then moving down the front of your entire body, up and down both sides, under the arms, and then down the back side of your body. Cover all sides of your hands in smoke, then lift one foot at a time and cover the soles of each feet with smoke as well. If you're smudging yourself, you can get a heavy smoke in front of your body and then slowly turn in circles so that all sides of your body are touched by the smoke. It's best to do this under the sunlight or the moonlight while reciting a prayer, mantra, or positive affirmation. Smudging your home and body can oftentimes give a sense of renewal and cleansing. It can really be a great addition to your recovery journey and the embarking of your new chapter in life. If you don't feel comfortable doing this outside, it's also effective if done inside.

Chapter 16

Contingent Suggestions

"Growth is painful. Change is painful. But, nothing is as painful as staying stuck where you do not belong."

~ N. R. Narayana Murthy

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Contingent Suggestions

There's a lot to discuss and prepare for when beginning the journey of addiction recovery, so this section is dedicated to random tips, tricks, and suggestions. This list does not have any rhyme or reason to it and is simply a list of random information that could possibly aid in your process.

- When using herbs and natural products to aid a detox, it's best to take them on a very consistent schedule. Maintaining levels in your body will bring the best results. Even if you aren't feeling withdrawals in that moment, if it's time for your next dosage, then go ahead and take it. This will help to prevent symptoms from coming on too strong. You don't want to wait until you're feeling miserable to take your next dose of herbs; do your best to prevent withdrawals from ever becoming too strong by keeping consistent levels of herbs and supplements in your system.
- It's not recommended to take more than one product at a time, you should typically spread out doses of the different products. It's best to let each product get digested and processed in the body before taking the next one. In some cases, especially harder moments, you may want to take more than one product at a time, but in most cases, you should spread products out. For example, if you want to take Heantos, Kratom, and Chamomile before bed because you're really struggling with insomnia, you can take the Heantos 90 minutes before bed, Kratom 60 minutes before bed, and Chamomile 30 minutes before bed. Do your best to strategically space out each product that you take.

- When using Kratom in your detox protocol, there are several ways to ingest it. If you purchase Kratom that isn't an extract, it will typically come in powder form. One way to ingest Kratom in its powder form is to put it in capsules. Another method is to use a thermos or water bottle, add Kratom with 4-6 ounces of juice or water, shake vigorously, and drink quickly. Be sure to have an additional glass of juice or water ready to wash it down with. You can also purchase concentrated liquid extracts so that you can easily put a dropper full under your tongue. This option is much easier than ingesting several grams of powder throughout the peak days of detox. Quality Kratom is very hard to find so please be sure to do thorough research and test it out BEFORE beginning your detox.
- Be mindful of the foods you eat. Anything that you put into your body will either help or hinder the detox process. Detoxing your body means *repairing* your body, and diet plays a huge role in this. A lot of people won't have an appetite for the first several days of detox, but there are ways you can still get nutrients in your body. You can take vitamins, snack on a fruit or veggie salad, make juices or smoothies, or prepare homemade soup broths with a lot of vegetables in it. Try to avoid fried, processed, or GMO foods, especially during an opiate detox, as it's critical to re-stimulate the digestive system. The best way to achieve this is with healthy foods that are high in fiber and nutrients.
- Supplements typically take approximately an hour (or longer) to take effect, so be patient when waiting for relief. If you're having a difficult moment and are impatiently waiting for a supplement to take effect, that's a great time to slip into a nice salt bath and relax your uncomfortable body. Take your time and listen to a guided meditation during your bath so that hopefully you'll be feeling the effects of the supplement/s by the time you get out of the tub.

- The best medicine is laughter, so keep some funny movies and happy friends on hand.
- Laying in the sunlight, in the grass, under a tree, on the beach, or anywhere outside can help you to reconnect with nature and receive its energy and healing directly. Please spend quiet time resting or sitting outside if weather conditions permit.
- Active addiction is typically a very fast-paced, high-anxiety lifestyle. There are a lot of stressful lows that come along with a lifestyle full of highs, so finding a new balance of highs and lows is critical during this next stage of your life. Taking time to rest and embrace solitude is very beneficial for anxiety levels and depression, but it's just as important to incorporate physical activity, so try to keep things at a moderate balance.
- Always take a tester dose of all supplements being used prior to detox. The main reason for this is to help you determine the proper list of supplements and dosages to add to your detox support protocol. Prior to detox, you can skip one of your typical drug doses and replace it with a supplement (one at a time). This will help you determine what dosage works best for you and allows you to have a better understanding of what to expect from each product.
- It's recommended to have a medical exam before and after detox. Having bloodwork done will help you to determine imbalances or deficiencies in the body. It's common to be left with vitamin deficiencies post-detox because active addiction and detox are both very taxing. Oftentimes, vitamin deficiencies create symptoms that resemble the symptoms of post-acute withdrawals, so please take this very important step after you complete your detox.
- It's recommended to take prebiotics and/or probiotics during and after detox. This will help to aid the digestive system and to ease stomach discomforts. Bananas are a natural prebiotic, stimulating the body to naturally produce probiotics.
- Kombucha is an excellent beverage to drink before, during, and after detox. It's known to support detoxification, to aid the digestive system, the kidneys, liver function, and the nervous system. It also replenishes energy and boosts the immune system.

- Vitamin C has been known to eliminate opiate withdrawal symptoms in large doses, so it can be helpful to incorporate Vitamin C into your detox regimen. The following are examples of foods that are rich in Vitamin C: oranges, grapefruit, raspberries, kale, kiwi, broccoli, and brussel sprouts. For more information about high-dose Vitamin C protocols used to treat opiate withdrawals, speak with your medical doctor.
- I want to recommend the use of essential oils during your detox and recovery period. Essential oils are very effective at supporting not only the person who is detoxing, but everyone in the home. They can be taken orally to ease discomforts such as stomach and intestinal issues, they can be used topically to ease symptoms such as muscle pain and headaches, and they can also be burned in a diffuser to promote a relaxing and uplifting atmosphere. I want to recommend learning more about the use of essential oils but be sure to do your research and purchase a quality brand so that you're getting authentic medicinal oils and not perfume imitations.
- Please be sure to drink a lot of water during your detox. The detoxification process *is* the elimination of toxins from the body. Drinking plenty of water and staying hydrated is going to speed up this process by allowing the toxins to be flushed from the body more easily.
- There's an old Twelve Step tradition called '90 Meetings in 90 Days®'. This is the practice of attending one meeting a day for 90 days. It's believed that it takes the human brain 90 days to develop new habits, and this is why this practice is recommended. I'm definitely a fan of integrating a variety of recovery tools and methods together to find a greater level of success, so I'd like to suggest '90 Meetings *and* 90 Tai Chi or Yoga Classes in 90 Days!' I really think THIS practice will take things to the next level in your healing journey!

Appendix 1:

Ordering Information

Heantos 4 – Heantos 4 can be ordered at <https://heantosworldwide.com/> or by emailing Dr. Sung directly at tranvansungvhh@gmail.com.

Kratom – You can order Kratom online or purchase it at local smoke shops. If ordering online, please make sure to diligently research the company because there are a lot of fraudulent Kratom vendors.

Herbs and supplements – Health food stores typically have a wide range of products that will aid in the process of natural detox support. I recommend visiting your local health food store prior to your detox to see if they can recommend any additional products or herbs.

Essential Oils – You can purchase these online or in some pharmacies. Please do diligent research on the oils you purchase to ensure that they are authentic essential oils and not perfume imitations.

Appendix 2:

The Twelve Steps Revised

Everyone is unique and will need a diverse range of recovery options available to design an individualized recovery plan. I'm an advocate for any form of positive support that people find helpful, and many people are fortunate enough to find that in a traditional Twelve Step program. Unfortunately, there are many people who don't feel aligned with the core principles of this program. I will always support and encourage people that find fulfillment from traditional Twelve Step groups, but since many people struggle to align with their steps, I revised them in a way that promotes a new age concept of self-empowerment and openness to all belief systems. I hope that this revised version can meet the diverse cultural views and beliefs of today's society.

The Twelve Steps Revised

- I admit that I am not powerless and that I have all the tools available to design a manageable life for myself.
- I am free to believe that there may or may not be a power greater than myself at work in my life but seek to find meaning in all my life experiences.
- I have made the decision to gain control of my life.
- I will evaluate my life and begin setting goals for myself.
- I will redirect my negative thought and behavior patterns.
- I will take an honest and fearless moral inventory of myself.
- I will admit to myself the nature of my wrong doings.

- I am ready to repair these defects of my character.
- I am ready to set a plan in motion and move forward towards a rewarding life.
- I will seek through meditation (and prayer, if it's within the boundary of my beliefs) to improve my conscious connection with mankind and nature.
- I will live an honest life.
- I will do my best to practice these principles in all my affairs.

APPENDIX 3

Outline for Designing a Recovery Plan

Outline for Designing a Recovery Plan:

Set goals and create a timeline – Take some time to think about your recovery goals and create a timeline of steps that will allow you to achieve those goals.

Examples of goals:

- Detoxing
- Getting into a residential program
- Joining support groups / meetings
- Scheduling holistic treatments
- Improving nutrition and fitness
- Getting a physical from your doctor
- Moving / relocating
- Finding a new job / embarking on a new career
- Going to school
- Going on a vacation or retreat
- Starting a new hobby
- Reaching out to friends / family / professionals
- Traveling
- Journaling
- Reading / writing a book

Purchase a calendar to keep track of appointments and daily tasks, as well as a notebook so that you can begin a recovery journal. In this journal, you can keep track of all important information, including information regarding each recovery program that you are considering, to-do lists, information about herbs and supplements (including costs and ordering information), holistic tips and tricks, keeping track of goals and timelines, support system contact info, doctor / program contact info, discussion questions from coaching programs, positive affirmations and quotes, prayers and/or mantras (if applicable), 12-Step-Work® (if applicable), and any other type of journal entry that you may want to make. This will become your recovery guide so that you can flip through it anytime you need a positive thought or reminder. Think of detox and recovery as a very transformational process in your life, like a Rite of Passage. It needs to be your priority, and it needs to be handled with a lot of care and organization because it has the potential to be the most important and transformational chapter in your life. Addiction can feel like a suffocating wall around you, and recovery is like breaking out of that prison – it represents freedom, like the butterfly emerging from the cocoon. So, examine your life in detail and identify *everything* that needs to be transformed. Then, set goals and create a timeline of steps that you can take to achieve those goals. Keep everything documented so that you can refer back to it, and make changes as needed. Once you purchase your journal, your first entry might be your list of goals and your timeline of steps. This may change over time, but this is 'Day One' of what hopefully will be a very long-term and transformational chapter in your life.

1. **List and research all recovery resources available** – Once you've set your goals, you will need to evaluate all resources and options that you have available to you. For some, this may be a very limited list, but for others it may be quite broad. The basic components in recovery are the physical detox and the long-term aftercare plan. Please research any-and-all resources that could potentially aid you in any stage of the recovery process.

Examples of resources:

- Traditional or holistic treatment centers
- Aftercare centers
- Detox and recovery coaches
- Inpatient and outpatient programs
- Sober living homes / halfway houses
- Counseling / psychotherapy
- Friends / family members
- Medical professionals
- Nutritionists / Acupuncturists / Massage Therapists
- Herbal products
- Community outreach programs
- Support groups / meetings
- Churches
- Meditation / Yoga / Tai Chi classes
- Retreats
- Employment and education
- Resources for relocation

Evaluate all options, narrow it down to the final choices, and make any appointments, reservations and/or arrangements that need to be made. Keep track of all of this in your journal and write down any appointments or scheduled dates on your calendar. Include all confirmation numbers and contact information. Highlight or bookmark any important contacts or information in your journal so that it is easier to locate if needed.

2. **Research all supplements and design a protocol** – If you're planning to use herbal supplements for any stage of detox and recovery then you'll need to spend time researching all products that can be used to aid in the process. If you're unable to get into a treatment center and you have no choice but to detox at home, then you can use a variety of over-the-counter supplements that will help target and minimize the discomforts of withdrawals so that you can more tolerably pass through the peak days of withdrawals. Please do not rely 100% on supplements, you will want to incorporate as many natural healing methods as possible. This can include salt baths, topical magnesium oil, essential oils, meditation, Tai Chi / Qi Gong, sun gazing, self-healing techniques, fitness and nutrition, and even positive affirmations and mantras. It's recommended to speak with someone who has experience with any product you are considering so that you can make responsible decisions regarding your detox protocol. **Please consult with your doctor before beginning any stage of detox. This is a medical process and needs to be approached with caution and preparation.**

Keep track of all products in your journal, including recommended dosages, contact information, cost, etc. It's important to test every product before beginning any stage of detox. **Please do not begin any stage of detox until you have discussed your herbal regimen with your doctor and/or addiction specialist.**

You can keep track of all products and dosages using a chart that looks something like this:

Date	Time	Product	Dosage	Notes
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You may want to alternate different products so that you receive around-the-clock relief from symptoms. As one product wears off, you can take the next product, and slowly work your way through the peak days of withdrawal. It's important to keep a log of 'when and what' was taken because drowsiness and confusion may occur. It's recommended to have someone there with you to keep track of the supplements you are taking, as well as prepare meals, baths, and just generally look after you and keep you company. The week/s of detox should be all about self-care, nourishment, and rest. This is a time of healing and rebalancing. It isn't an easy process, and it will take total commitment, but it can be done if you just stick with it and make all of the necessary preparations.

3. **Create a detox plan** – Once you've set your goals, selected all resources you will utilize, ordered your supplements, and designed a protocol (if applicable), the next step will be making all preparations necessary for your detox. If you're doing a medical or Ibogaine detox, then you will need to make all reservations and/or travel arrangements.

The following is a list of preparations that will need to be made before beginning an at-home detox:

- Setting and location
- Ordering and testing all products
- Separating dosages
- Diet before and during detox
- Preparing the mind and body
- Intestinal cleanse
- Creating a support system
- Designing a detailed aftercare plan

Journal Entry:

In your journal write a detailed detox plan, including where you will be detoxing, what date you plan to begin, and who will be with you if you're detoxing at home. If you're going to use herbal products to help alleviate withdrawal symptoms, you will need to test each product before you begin detoxing so that you know what to expect and what dosage works best for you. The best way to test a product is to wait until you're ready for your next drug dose (on days prior to detox, when you're still actively using) and instead of using your substance, you're going to skip the dose and replace it with an herbal supplement that you will be using for your detox. It's recommended to only test one product at a time, so if you're planning to use multiple products for your detox then the testing process may take a few days. Remember, it'll take about an hour for the herbal product to kick in, so you may feel uncomfortable for a little while, and that's okay. Try to push yourself through any discomforts in preparation for the withdrawal discomforts you will most likely experience during your detox. This is an important step in the process. After an hour or so, you can evaluate how you're feeling and if the discomforts were eliminated. You'll want to keep a log of each product and the dosage that works well for you. You may also want to separate dosages of the different products and make any preparations necessary. For example, some people will use powdered Kratom during the peak days of an opiate detox. If you prefer to take this in capsule form, then you would want to prepare all capsules prior to beginning the detox so that you can easily grab your next dosage without having to take the time to fill and measure the capsules. Diet during and after detox will be a very important part of this process as well. A poor diet could hinder the detox and prolong withdrawal symptoms, so please be sure to eat a nutrient-rich, high fiber diet. It's important to drink a lot of water and to keep processed, sugary foods to a bare minimum. **Be sure to speak with your doctor before testing any supplements.**

In your journal, make a list of all foods that you would like to have before, during, and after detox. Preparing the body and the mind are critical steps to take prior to detox. Another important preparation for the body is to ensure that you're using the bathroom regularly. Opiates can oftentimes cause severe constipation, so please be sure to do intestinal cleanses to begin the process of eliminating toxins. Elimination is key to detox; the longer the toxins remain in the body, the longer the withdrawals will last. Using the bathroom regularly is an important way to eliminate toxins. Also, taking regular Epsom Salt© or sea salt baths during detox will help to draw toxins from the body. Please use as many natural methods as possible so that you can get through these days as quickly and comfortably as possible.

Preparing the mind is also an important step in the preparation stage. Once you're detoxed, you will need to be mentally prepared for coping with day-to-day life and challenges in a sober mind and body. In your journal, make lists of coping mechanisms that you will want to start utilizing. For example, you may want to make lists of positive affirmations that you can recite during harder moments, or prayers / mantras. You may want to include titles of free YouTube videos such as guided meditations, Qi Gong instructional videos, motivational speakers, etc. You may also want to make lists of support groups that you can attend or reach out to, such as 12 Step groups or SMART Recovery groups. One of the main purposes of your recovery journal is to have an abundance of helpful information that you can easily turn to during difficult moments. For example, if you're having a stressful day and are feeling overwhelmed, you can find a quiet place to sit, light a candle, put on relaxing music, and flip through your journal, reading through lists of positive affirmations, prayers (if applicable), goals, recovery quotes, etc. Oftentimes, you can redirect that feeling of being overwhelmed, take several deep cleansing breaths, and continue on with your day. It may take some time to acclimate to this new way of coping with life, and eventually you may not need to refer to your journal, but in the beginning stages of recovery it can be incredibly helpful to have all of these positive reminders combined in one easily accessible place.

4. **Create a Support System** - you'll want to take some time to design a support network. The following is a list of examples of people who you may want to include in your support network:

- Family members
- Sober friends
- Local groups (meditation groups, church groups, etc)
- 12 Step friends and sponsors
- Religious teachers or spiritual guides
- Physicians
- Counselors
- Social workers
- Recovery coaches / support specialists
- Online friends / support groups
- Pen pals
- Neighbors
- Co-workers
- Classmates
- Teachers / professionals

Once you've created a list of people that you would like to include in your support network, in your journal you can write down all of their contact information, including home phone, cell phone, email address, social media profiles, etc. It's recommended to reach out to everyone in your support network to let them know you're about to begin your recovery plan and that you have them listed in your support network. This will let them know that you may be reaching out to them for support in the days, weeks, or months ahead. The more people who are supporting you through this process, the better. This is a time in your life where you will need to reach out and make healthy connections in the world around you.

5. **Create an aftercare plan** – Once the details of your detox plan are set in place, you'll want to spend time making your aftercare plans. For some, this will include staying with friends, going into a residential or halfway house program, or it may mean continuing to stay where you currently live and incorporating recovery work into your new daily routine. Everyone's situation will be unique, so you'll need to design an aftercare plan that works best for YOUR unique needs and circumstances. You'll want all preparations made ahead of time so that as your week/s of detox come to an end, you can transition right into your aftercare plan, remaining in a safe, sober environment at all times.

Examples of aftercare plans are as follows:

- Inpatient programs
- Intensive outpatient recovery programs
- Halfway house / sober living environments
- Psychotherapy (in-person or online)
- Recovery groups / meetings
- Online recovery / support groups
- Spiritual / religious retreats
- Ibogaine, Ayahuasca, Kambo, Stem Cell, or Ketamine treatments
- Creating new daily habits
- Nutrition and fitness
- Religion and spirituality
- School or training programs
- Seeking employment / career change
- Staying with friends or family members
- Local groups and classes (meditation, Yoga, Tai Chi, churches, spiritual centers, etc.)

- Journaling
- Starting a hobby or sport
- Community service
- Creative endeavors
- Travel
- Relocation

When designing your aftercare plan, spend some time contemplating what an 'Ideal New Life' would look like to you, and take every necessary step to manifest that in your next chapter of life. If this means spending 30-60 days in a treatment center so that you can prepare yourself for the next chapter, then so be it. Utilize every resource available to you and design the most transformational recovery plan that you can imagine!

Journal Entry

Create a detailed aftercare plan that will outline the next chapter of your life. If you will be going into a treatment center, then your aftercare plan may want to include all information regarding the treatment center, followed by where you will go once you're done with treatment and what types of recovery work you will be incorporating into your daily life. Or, if you'll be staying home for your aftercare plan, then design a detailed plan for each day. For example: start your day with a healthy breakfast and an herbal supplement / vitamin regimen, meditate for 15 minutes, do a 15-minute Qi Gong video, go to a 12 Step meeting or log onto SMART online recovery groups, work / school / job search, recite positive affirmations 3x a day, go for an evening jog, write in your journal, and finish the day with a bedtime meditation. Other than the cost of the vitamins and supplements in that example, it's a completely free and well-balanced recovery plan. If you can commit to that for ninety days, your life could very well transform. But, you **MUST** do the work - you **MUST** be 110% committed to doing **WHATEVER IT TAKES TO STAY CLEAN.**

6. **Design a long-term maintenance protocol** – Whether you're doing a medical detox, Ibogaine detox, or at-home detox, it's recommended to have a regimen of herbal supplements and vitamins for at least thirty to ninety days following detox to help re-balance your body and to manage lingering withdrawal symptoms (also called Post-Acute Withdrawal Symptoms, or PAWS). Chemical dependency causes a lot of lingering side effects that can oftentimes be managed with natural products. Please do extensive research on how to design an herbal and vitamin regimen to help you feel your best!
7. **Make all final preparations** – Now that you've come this far - you've ordered herbal products and designed protocols, you've set goals, created a timeline of steps, designed a detox and aftercare plan, created a support network, and have documented a lot of positive information in your journal – it's finally time to make final preparations and move forward with this process. Final preparations may include the following:
 - Confirm all appointments
 - Thoroughly clean your home and space of **all** drugs, paraphernalia, and reminders of drug use
 - Delete drug contacts from your phone, email, and social media
 - If you'll be going into a treatment center or somewhere other than home to detox, pack your bags and make all travel arrangements
 - If you'll be detoxing at home, go grocery shopping for at least a week and get your home cleaned up and cozy for a week of resting and recuperating
 - Make sure you've tied up as many loose ends as possible so that you don't have too much added stress on your mind during your detox.
8. **Time to begin!** – Finally, the time has come to put all of this hard work to use and begin your detox and recovery plan! Remember to plan for the future, but don't let it overwhelm you. Take this journey one day – sometimes one hour – at a time. **Your total commitment is key to achieving your goal of long-term recovery.**

APPENDIX 4

SOWS and OOWS Scores

The following questionnaires were retrieved from: Handelsman, L., Cochrane, K. J., Aronson, M. J., et al. (1987) Two new rating scales for opiate withdrawal

I recommend using these score sheets when undergoing an opiate detox at home. They can be helpful when determining the level of withdrawals that are being experienced. It's not required to do this, but some people like to keep very detailed logs of the days of detox so they can review it at a later date to determine which days were the smoothest and which products and dosages seemed to work best. When using these score sheets, I recommend doing it before taking a detox aid and then approximately an hour and a half after taking it, so that you can determine the level of relief that was experienced. This can be quite helpful if you decide to support someone else through their detox, or if you need to detox yourself again later down the road.

Subjective Opiate Withdrawal Scale (SOWS)

This questionnaire should be filled out by the person who is detoxing, based on their personal evaluation of the symptoms that are being experienced.

Name:

Date:

Time:

Notes:

Instructions: Answer the following statements as accurately as you can. Circle the answer that best fits the way you feel now.

0=not at all

1=a little

2=moderately

3=quite a bit

4=extremely

1) I feel anxious. 0 1 2 3 4

2) I feel like yawning. 0 1 2 3 4

3) I'm perspiring. 0 1 2 3 4

4) My eyes are tearing. 0 1 2 3 4

5) My nose is running. 0 1 2 3 4

6) I have goose flesh (bumps). 0 1 2 3 4

7) I am shaking. 0 1 2 3 4

8) I have hot flashes. 0 1 2 3 4

9) I have cold flashes. 0 1 2 3 4

10) My bones and muscles ache. 0 1 2 3 4

11) I feel restless. 0 1 2 3 4

12) I feel nauseous. 0 1 2 3 4

13) I feel like vomiting. 0 1 2 3 4

14) My muscles twitch. 0 1 2 3 4

15) I have cramps in my stomach. 0 1 2 3 4

16) I feel like shooting up now. 0 1 2 3 4

The Subjective Opiate Withdrawal Scale (SOWS) consist of 16 symptoms rated in intensity by clients on a 5-point scale of intensity as follows: 0=not at all, 1=a little, 2=moderately, 3=quite a bit, 4=extremely. The total score is a sum of item ratings, and ranges from 0 to 64.

Mild Withdrawal is considered to be a score of 1 - 10.

Moderate withdrawal is considered to be a score of 11 - 20

Severe withdrawal is considered to be 21 - 64.

Objective Opiate Withdrawal Scale (OOWS)

This questionnaire should be filled out by the person who is observing the detox, based on their personal evaluation of the symptoms that the client is experiencing.

Name:

Date:

Time:

Notes:

Scores: Absent – 0 Present – 1

Yawning - one or more during observations

Rhinorrhoea - runny nose - greater than three 'sniffs' during observation

Piloerection – gooseflesh/goosebumps – observe patient's arm

Lacrimation - tears

Mydriasis - dilated pupils

Tremors - hands

Hot and cold flashes - shivering or huddling for warmth

Restlessness - frequent shifts in position

Purging - vomiting

Muscle convulsion - twitching muscles

Abdominal cramps - holding stomach

Anxiety:

Mild - scores one

Moderate - scores two

Severe - scores three

TOTAL SCORE (maximum 14)

0 - 3 Mild

4 - 9 Moderate

10 - 14 Severe

Appendix 5

Dosaging Chart

Below is an example of a chart that you can use to keep track of supplements during any stage of detox and recovery.

Date	Time	Product	Dosage	Current Symptoms

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About the Author



Jennifer Rose is a pioneer in the holistic recovery field, utilizing unique organic protocols for all stages of addiction recovery. She is the founder of Design Your Detox, a grassroots recovery project designed to spread awareness and information regarding holistic addiction recovery methods and support. She is a mother, a coach, and a facilitator of several platforms involving traditional rites of passage with a focus on addiction. She received her Bachelor of Science in Human Services and has been an advocate for foster children, the elderly, and people in addiction recovery for more than a decade. Over the last 30 years, she has studied a wide range of holistic healing techniques and integrates them into her social work practice. Her mission is to positively influence the stigmas and stereotypes associated with addiction in western culture. She strongly believes that addiction recovery is a unique journey of self-transformation and discovery. She devotes her time to executive management of the Design Your Detox project and advocating for people in recovery worldwide.

Design Your Detox

An International Guide to Holistic Drug Detox and Recovery Support

This book was designed to be a reference to help on the journey of overcoming addiction. It outlines ways to integrate a variety of Traditional and Holistic recovery methods to ensure the best chance at long-term success. This book is meant to be shared with anyone who is battling addiction, or with their friends and family members. For more information, please visit www.DesignYourDetox.com.

