



Steps to Develop a Plan

Goals of developing a plan:

- Get all responsible parties to determine, in writing, what the current situation entails, including past and present issues as well as proposed future changes. This document will be reviewed with Biblical, wise, counsel in order to be refined.
- A proper plan that is successfully implemented will result in the parent or spouse getting their life back where they can focus on their true purpose of glorifying God. They can begin to lead their self well. That is the only guarantee as we can not control others, including our prodigal. Such a plan, even perfectly executed will not guarantee the successful return of your prodigal.
- Only God can control the outcome of any person's life. All you can do is be faithful. You can have peace and hope in the midst of the chaos.

Disclaimer:

- Please know that the implementation of any plan for most prodigals will result in escalation and manipulation by the prodigal in a fierce way. This often leads to threats and even mention of suicide. You need to be aware that prodigals that fail to live by these plans and are forced to suffer the consequences may be forced to the street in many cases. This time will be the scariest time in your lives. It will either be the road to recovery, or the road to prison, insanity, or death. In order to be successful you must deal with these fears and be committed to the plan
- You must ask yourself if you currently like where you are. If you do like where you are, then continue doing what you are doing. Most likely you are trying to implement a meaningful plan at this time because you have hit your bottom and realize either you have no plan or your current plan is not working.
- One thing many parents or spouses do not realize is that their enabling and rescuing ways may actually lead their children or spouses deeper into drugs, sex, and despair. Make no mistake, prodigals are responsible for their own actions, but if you enable them you are responsible for the outcome as well. (Ezekial 33:1-10)
- By trusting God, we hope you will be able to change your current strategy and realize loving your prodigal well looks different than how you have envisioned it and how you have done it in the past. This frees you from this judgment and also frees you to serve fully the only purpose you have in this life, to glorify God in all things.



- e. List the number and type of arrests that have occurred
 - i. Include any punishment for these incidents
 - ii. Include times and location of rehab

3. Describe why you are in need of a plan at this time specifically.
What has brought you to this point today ?

4. Describe your role in this process
- a. How have you parented well
 - i. List your boundaries
 - ii. How have you enforced consequences

- b. How have you not parented well?
 - i. Have you enabled your prodigal ?

- ii. Have you set plans in the past that have failed ?

- iii. how have they failed and why ?



5. List what you are currently providing for your prodigal in support.
 - a. Money?
 - b. Insurance?
 - c. Vehicle?
 - d. Room?
 - e. Tuition?
 - f. Cell phone?
 - g. Food?

6. What are your goals in defining this plan ? (ie...what does a “win” look like for you)
 - a. Please note that there may be short term plans, but the long term “ win” should be for them to be walking totally independently and self supportive in every way. Their only dependence should be on God as they walk with Him daily. That....is the only win we should desire as a parent.

7. Define and list your fears in implementing this plan. Answer honestly if you feel you could still carry out this plan if your prodigal walked away from your life in the process or if they threatened suicide. (Please note that this possibility is mentioned because in our experience such a statement is the norm rather than the exception.)



Developing A Plan **(based on the Questionnaire)**

In answering question #5 please see the following issues that usually need to be addressed and you must decide.

1. What actions has your prodigal carried out within the last 3 months to allow him to be trusted in any way ?

2. Based on the answer to #1 directly above regarding their actions recently and also taking into trends in their actions over the last year you must define and list
 - a. all the ways you are supporting your child currently

 - b. define the change of that support immediately
 - i. what will you continue to support
 - ii. what will you not continue to support
 - iii. what will you support for a time and then wean (this should include all support eventually)

 - c. define the responsibilities as simply as possible that will allow such support to continue...
 - i. make it simple depending on your current situation
 1. grades for college
 2. drug free (determine how best to test and how often)
 3. curfews
 4. job (we suggest you also set clear responsibilities of being responsible for some type of payment amount each month. Many parents make the mistake of taking a portion of whatever job they acquire. This position puts no burden on the prodigal to do more



than wait tables one night per week. If you set a reasonable amount that must be made to pay for insurance, rent, or whatever then the prodigal has a goal and can not be lazy in this effort.)

3. Some examples of boundaries you want your prodigal to be aware of and follow
 - a. Living options
 - i. Living independently with no financial support from you.
 - ii. Living with you ?
 1. If yes then what are the rules,
 - a. Curfew?
 - b. Drugs in the house?
 - c. Chores, duties
 - d. Communication tone..
 2. Rent payment to you?
 - iii. Living away from home with some financial support.
 1. How much financial support from you?
 2. How much financial support from your prodigal?



3. What are the requirements that must be met (responsibility) in order for your continued financial support?

4. How long will you provide financial living support ? When will your prodigal need to be totally financially supportive?

b. Continuing in School

- i. Drug free
- ii. Arrest free
- iii. Bottom line grade point average
- iv. Certain # of hours maintained
- v. No disciplinary action by school or law enforcement
- vi. Etc...

Wise Counsel (Processing the Plan in Community)

- Your detailed plan should be submitted in writing to the Prodigal team and you will meet with two members of leadership to review.
- Everyone that has an impact in the Prodigal's situation should be in attendance. (everyone that can set boundaries and will enforce consequences or could blow up this plan by not enforcing consequences...ie enabling) .
- Wise counsel will give you general direction and food for thought. The specific details of financial support, boundaries and consequences will be up to you as the details are less important than following the plan devised.
- If you can not follow the plan outlined do not even start as it only weakens the caregiver or parent' s position and credibility and empowers the prodigal. At that point, we suggest you delay any plan or come up with a plan that you can carry out.