

Professionals Packet - Getting Started

Recovery International's self-help program is an excellent adjunct to professional care. The structured Four-Step Method uses cognitive behavioral tools to help patients deal with avoidance behaviors and manage the little things in daily life, which allows time for you to process and explore primary triggers and deeper issues during your sessions. Participants are expected to follow the advice of their health professionals regarding diagnoses, treatment and medication.

This "newcomer" packet will cover main concepts, the Four-Step Method, and provides a sample of tools or "spots" that participants use in the program.

RI meetings are led by trained volunteers and provide a structured process. It is objective and succinct, not confessional in nature. Leaders are trained in guiding participants through the Four-Step Example, and eliciting input from others using specific tools we call "spots." Meetings allow for:

- a safe place to practice
- reassurance of peers who have recovered or are recovering
- encouragement to keep trying.

We invite you to join a meeting. We especially recommend a "Welcome Meeting" for newcomers so you can learn the concepts and Method with others.

We hope to see you again. If you have questions, comments or concerns, please contact **professionals@recoveryinternational.org**

What To Expect at Recovery International Meetings

- Meetings will start and end on time.
- Please turn off your cell phone or other communication device.
- Meetings are facilitated by volunteer leaders trained to demonstrate the Recovery International Method.
- A Recovery International meeting is a safe place to share. All personal information disclosed during meetings is held in strict confidence.
- All Recovery International meetings follow a standard, structured format.
- Written information will be distributed to help you understand and participate during the meeting. Additional RI literature, membership information and materials will also be available.
- You may take notes on RI tools and principles during any portion of the meeting EXCEPT during the giving of an example.
- We encourage you to sit with the group and to participate. Until you are ready to participate, simply say "I pass".
- We listen quietly and respectfully when others are reading and speaking.
- We do not use offensive language.
- We don't offer advice, criticize, judge, analyze or make negative comments.
- We keep comments and spotting tools brief in order to have time for all to participate.
- You will have an opportunity to ask questions or make comments.
- We don't discuss politics, sex, religion, or legal issues in our meetings.
- We are not mental health experts or trained professionals. We are people who practice the RI self-help techniques. We don't diagnose, comment or advise on diagnoses, treatment plans or your medications.
- Drinking non-alcoholic beverages is permitted during a meeting but eating is restricted to the Mutual Aid portion of the meeting.

How a Recovery International Example Should be Constructed

The major portion of each RI meeting is the presentation of very structured examples by the group members. These examples illustrate our use of the RI Method and tools to deal with temperamental reactions to trivialities in our daily lives.

The presentation of each example consists of the steps outlined below. Each example presentation should last **no more than five minutes**.

OUTLINE

Step 1. Report a single situation or event that occurred - an everyday event when you began to work yourself up. Focus on a ***brief description*** of what happened: specifically, what triggered temper and symptoms.

Step 2. Report the ***symptoms you experienced*** - both physical and mental. (*For instance, angry and fearful thoughts, confusion, palpitations, disturbing impulses, tightness in your chest, lowered feelings, sweaty palms, and so on.*)

Step 3. Report your spotting of fearful and angry temper, the ***Recovery International tools*** you used to help yourself, and your ***self-endorsement for your effort***.

Step 4. Begin with ***“Before I had my Recovery training,”*** and describe the temperamental reaction and symptoms you would have experienced in former days. What would have happened then versus what happened now? (*This will help you to note the progress you have made.*)

RI Method is simple and can be used immediately. With consistent practice, people learn to:

- Report a situation concisely only using facts
- Identify the symptoms that were triggered
- Retrain maladapted behaviors to adapted behaviors
- Reflect on progress and self-endorse for effort.

A Sampling of Tools

The purpose for using a Tool List is to enable newcomers to more easily and rapidly participate in a Recovery meeting. We encourage you to use this list when you initially attend our meetings, until you feel comfortable without it. Your Group Leader may have other guidelines for you regarding the use of this list in meetings. We are glad that you are here, and encourage you to participate and endorse for your participation!

These tools are quoted or adapted from Dr. Low's books: *Mental Health Through Will Training* (MH), *Selections from Dr. Low's Works* (SEL) and *Manage Your Fears, Manage Your Anger* (MYF). Citations to Dr. Low's books are listed for each tool. Many other tools can be found in these books.

Some Basic RI Tools

- Treat mental health as a business and not as a game..... MH ch.25
- Humor is our best friend, temper is our worst enemy.....MH p.108
- If you can't change a situation you can change your attitude towards it....MYF p.108, Sel. p.31-32
- Be self-led, not symptom-led.....MYF p.114-118, 280-283
- Nervous symptoms and sensations are distressing but not dangerous.....SEL p.53, MH p.115, 119
- Comfort is a want, not a need.MH chs.13, 22
- There is no right or wrong in the trivialities of everyday life.....SEL p.39, MH p.157, 195-196
- Calm begets calm, temper begets temper.....MYF p.245, SEL p.31
- Helplessness is not hopelessness.....MH ch.7, MYF p.184
- Temper maintains and intensifies symptoms.....MH p. 219
- Do things in part acts.....MH p.246-249
- Have the courage to make a mistake.....MH p.203, ch.30, MYF p.60, SEL p.108
- Feelings are not facts.....MH ch.9, MYF Lecture 14
- Do the things you fear and hate to do.....MH p. 329-330, MYF p.197
- Fear is a belief — beliefs can be changed.....MYF p.266-269
- Every act of self-control leads to a sense of self-respect.....MH p.166
- Decide, plan and act.MH p.42
- Any decision will steady you.....MYF p.5
- Anticipation is often worse than realization.....MH p.114-115, 146
- Replace an insecure thought with a secure thought.....MYF Lecture 1
- People do things that annoy us, not necessarily to annoy us.....MH ch.48

Hundreds of meetings are held weekly online and across the US and Puerto Rico, Canada and beyond. Meetings are open to anyone aged 18 and older.

Patients are encouraged to join a “Newcomer” meeting or order an introductory workbook to get started.



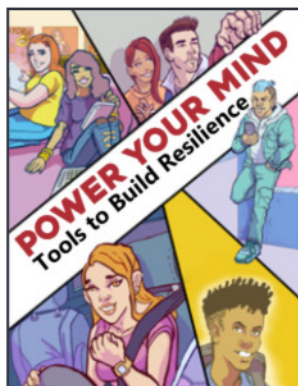
For teens and young adults,

Power Your Mind:

Tools to Build Resilience

is a graphic novel style workbook that introduces the RI concepts and 4-Step Method:

www.poweryourmind.org



For more information, email
professionals@recoveryinternational.org

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Visit the Professionals page on our website for testimonials, professional studies, and to find a meeting.



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www.recoveryinternational.org
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For your patients who struggle with:

Stress
Anxiety
Helplessness
Anger
Fear
Panic

Refer them to the best kept secret in symptom reduction.

We focus on the little things; you focus on the big things.

The RI Method

The RI Method is simple and can be used immediately. With consistent practice, people learn to:

Report a situation concisely, only using facts

Identify the symptoms that were triggered

Retrain maladapted behaviors to adapted behaviors

Reflect on progress and self-endorse for effort.



"I have learned many different clinical approaches to psychiatric treatment. After attending some RI meetings, reading some of the literature, and practicing spotting, I was amazed at the potential power and value of this method. For many people, it can be a deeply healing approach to highly prevalent human suffering. I recommend RI to many patients, friends, and family members."

Shelley Uram, MD
Harvard trained,
board-certified psychiatrist

"The RI Method offers a way to access more realistic thinking and lower anxiety enough to make choices that work better in daily life situations. As an RI member and leader for over 15 years I am eternally grateful for the difference it has made in my life as well as the lives of other RI participants and clients in my clinical social work practice."

Sandra Painter, MSW, LCSW



Peer-Led Meetings

RI meetings are led by trained volunteers and provide a structured process. It is objective and succinct, not confessional in nature. Leaders are trained in guiding participants in the 4-Step Example, and eliciting input from others using specific tools we call "spots." Meetings allow for:

a safe place to practice

reassurance of peers who have recovered or are recovering

encouragement to keep trying.

Proven Results

Founded in 1937, Recovery International was originally formed to help patients transition from hospitalization to life in the community. Neuropsychiatrist Dr.

Abraham Low, a pioneer in cognitive behavioral therapy, developed the 4-Step Method and trained others to use it as a way to augment professional therapy.

The peer leader model helps patients see that others in their situation have succeeded.



**Evidence Based:
Numerous studies
and published articles
have demonstrated the
effectiveness of the program.
Recovery International was
recognized by The American
Psychiatric Association with
a Significant Achievement
Award in 2000.**