

Welcome to Recovery International,

We are pleased you are taking your first steps to better mental health.

Recovery International (RI) is a self-help mental health program that offers you a low-cost method to regain and maintain your emotional health by using cognitive behavioral tools and “will training.”

To gain inner peace, you learn how to change the way you react to people and everyday (common/average) situations you have no control over. Additionally, you learn how to identify and manage negative or insecure thoughts and impulses that can lead to emotional distress and symptoms. The simple expressions and tools, called “spots,” (page 7) are part of the Method.

We offer meetings via phone, chat, Zoom and in-person. We encourage you to review this Newcomer packet. **We even have special meetings just for newcomers to learn the concepts and 4-Step Method.** Find out more at [RecoveryInternational.org/newcomers](https://RecoveryInternational.org/newcomers)

Welcome, and ENDORSE yourself for putting your mental health first today!

*"The Recovery program gave me the courage and confidence I needed to make some very needed changes in my life. It helped me feel that I was in control of my illness instead of feeling that the illness was controlling me. With the tools I learned and with the community to support me, my journey to better mental health is so much easier!"*

Lynette B., Winter Springs, FL

*"I've had depression for seven years. I used to have panic attacks. I've been attending Recovery International meetings for two years. Now, all these things are very much in control."*

Deepak D., Pune, India



Recovery International is a U.S. tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) organization.  
Donations help support our programs, but we never turn anyone away if they cannot afford to give.

## **What You Can Expect at a Recovery International Meeting (Meeting Guidelines)**

- Meetings will start and end on time.
- Please turn off your cell phone.
- 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.

**Thanks for coming and we encourage you to return.**  
**If you have questions, comments or concerns, contact your meeting leader.**

## “Temper” Has Two Faces

**Temper:** The judgement of right or wrong in everyday events.  
This does not apply to legal, ethical or moral issues.

### ANGRY TEMPER

The judgment that ***the other person or situation is wrong*** or has wronged me.

Feelings related to Angry Temper:

- Irritation
- Resentment
- Impatience
- Hatred
- Disgust
- Rebellion

Can you think  
of more?

### FEARFUL TEMPER:

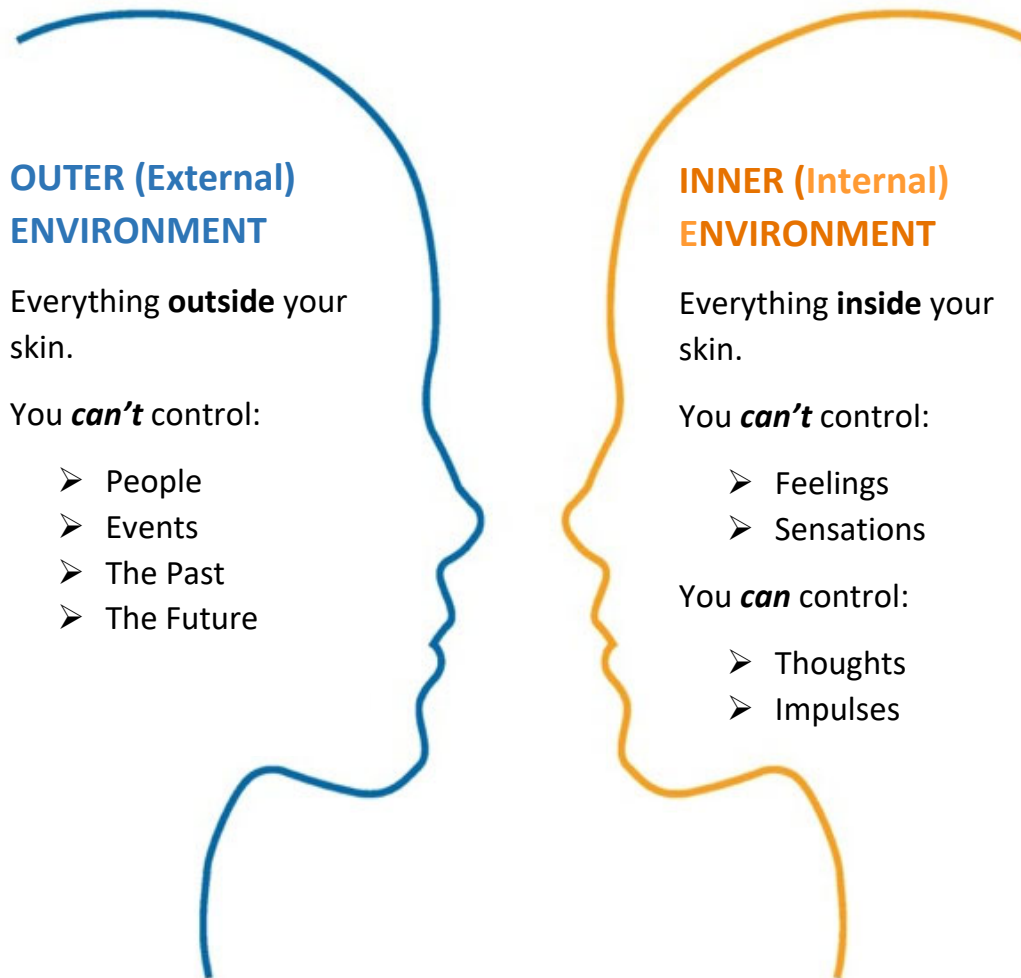
The judgment that ***I am wrong***.

Feelings related to Fearful Temper:

- Worry
- Feelings of inadequacy
- Hopelessness
- Fear of damage to yourself or your reputation
- Sense of shame

Can you think  
of more?

## Environment Has Two Faces



<p><b>Feelings</b></p> <p>Emotions such as anger, impatience, hatred, fear, worry, embarrassment, shame and many more. You cannot control your feelings.</p>	<p><b>Sensations</b></p> <p>Physical responses such as blushing, racing heartbeats, tense muscles, teary eyes, and many more. You cannot control these sensations.</p>
<p><b>Thoughts</b></p> <p>Ideas produced by thinking, such as "This is fun," "He is annoying," and so on. You can learn to change your thoughts.</p>	<p><b>Impulses</b></p> <p>What you first want to do, such as punch, run, hug, laugh, yell and so on. You can learn to control your impulses.</p>

## Self-Endorsement

- Endorsement is a mental pat on the back, self-praise for effort or control.
- If you're endorsing, you can't be indicting yourself.
- We need to learn to praise ourselves, rather than depending on the praise of others.
- Self-endorsement reinforces each use of the tools and increases the awareness of change.
- Endorse for the effort, not just for the good outcomes.

One self-endorsement is worth thousands  
of endorsements from the outer environment.

**Endorse, endorse, endorse.**



## 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.*)

The example format also helps RI group members to:

- Report rather than complain.
- Note our symptoms.
- Check on our responses.
- Control our behavior.
- Use the tools to change our thoughts.
- See our progress.
- Praise ourselves for the effort.
- Learn simplicity instead of complexity.

## A SAMPLING OF TOOLS or "SPOTS"

*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
- Temper is, among other things, blindness to the other side of the story.....MH p.159
- Comfort is a want, not a need. ....MH chs.13, 22
- There is no right or wrong in the trivialities of every day life.....SEL p.39, MH p.157, 195-196
- Calm begets calm, temper begets temper.....MYF p.245, SEL p.31
- Don't take our own dear selves too seriously.....MH p.109
- Feelings should be expressed and temper suppressed.....MH p.178
- Helplessness is not hopelessness.....MH ch.7, MYF p.184
- Some people have a passion for self-distrust.....MH ch.29 & MYF Lecture 2
- Temper maintains and intensifies symptoms.....MH p. 219
- Do things in part acts.....MH p.246-249
- Endorse yourself for the effort, not only for the performance.....MYF p.13, SEL p.46, 132
- 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
- Bear the discomfort in order to gain comfort.....MH p.149
- Hurt feelings are just beliefs not shared.....SEL p.21
- Self-appointed expectations lead to self-induced frustrations.....SEL p.35
- People do things *that* annoy us, not necessarily *to* annoy us.....MH ch.48
- Knowledge teaches you what to do, practice tells you how to do it.....SEL p.118
- Muscles can be commanded to do what one fears to do.....SEL p.123
- Tempers are frequently uncontrolled, but not uncontrollable.....MH p.392

## CONCEPT REVIEW

This is a review of the most important elements that are found in each example. We spot on each element to reduce/eliminate our symptoms.

***After the group members spot on each example\*,*** we work through the review.

- **Angry Temper** - Negative judgments directed against another person or situation. (*Related feelings: resentment, impatience, indignation, disgust, hatred.*)
- **Fearful Temper** - Negative judgments directed against oneself. (*Related feelings: (discouragement, preoccupation, embarrassment, worry, hopelessness, despair, sense of shame, feelings of inadequacy.)*)
- **Muscle Control** - Controlling the muscles not to act on the impulse to do something that would be bad for our mental health (*Example: controlling our speech muscles*).
- **Muscle Movement** - Commanding the muscles to do something that we are resistant to do (*Example: attending an R.I. meeting when we'd rather stay home*).
- **Sabotage** - When we ignore or choose not to practice what we have learned in R.I. When we do not do what is best for our mental health. (*Example: not endorsing*).
- **Endorsement** - Finding other opportunities for self-endorsement. (*What we put into practice and have learned using our Recovery training.*)

\*Note: ***Only the person facilitating the example and the panel do the concepts review*** - the example giver does not offer comments, but listens.

"Recovery International has given me my life and it has given me a philosophy to help me cope with everyday living. Today, I continue to attend RI meetings and even train new peer leaders."

Celinda J., Los Angeles, CA



## TERMS

**Angry Temper** — Negative judgments directed against another person or situation.  
(resentment, impatience, indignation, disgust, hatred)

**Averageness** — Most of the things we experience, including nervous symptoms are average, most people have experienced them. Only our tendency to work them up make them seem exceptional to us.

**Endorsement** — A mental pat on the back, self-praise for effort or control. This allows us to learn to praise ourselves, rather than depending on the praise of others.

**Fearful Temper** — Negative judgments directed at myself. (discouragement, preoccupation, embarrassment, worry, hopelessness, despair, sense of shame, feelings of inadequacy)

**Inner Environment** — Everything inside yourself: feelings, sensations, thoughts, impulses and muscles.

**Muscle Control** — Controlling the muscles not to act on the impulse to do something that would be bad for our mental health. (Example: controlling your speech muscles.)

**Muscle Movement** — Commanding the muscles to do something that we are resistant to do. (Example: Keep walking when we would prefer to rest.)

**Outer Environment** — Everything outside yourself: places, people, events, and the past.  
**Sabotage** — when we ignore or choose not to practice what we have learned in RI. When we do not do what is best for our mental health.

**Spotting** - Identifying a disturbing feeling, sensation, thought or impulse, previously unseen then applying the right Recovery tools.

**Trivialities** — The everyday events and irritations of daily life. Compared to our mental health, most events are trivial.

*"This program was so helpful to me as a caregiver for my mom with Alzheimer's. I would get worked up during our time together and at some of her behaviors. I used the RI tools to better manage my anger and impatience. It saved our relationship."*

Angela S., Oak Brook, IL

## Constructing an Example Worksheet

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?

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.)*

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

4. **Begin with “Before I had my Recovery training”** and describe the temperamental reaction and symptoms you would have experienced before you began practicing the RI Method. What would have happened then versus what happened now? (This will help you to note the progress you have made.)

More worksheets can be downloaded and printed at [RecoveryInternational.org/Newcomers](https://RecoveryInternational.org/Newcomers)