



Recovery International

“An Introduction to Recovery International Basic Concepts”

Accessibility Video Transcript

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The following is a transcript of the audio from the Recovery International 24-Hour Dial-a-SPOT Helpline. This transcript is provided to improve accessibility for visitors who are deaf, hard of hearing, or prefer reading the content.

Hi, thanks for joining me. This is an introduction to Recovery International's basic concepts. Please note that the recovery method is not a substitute for physical or mental health care from a licensed health care practitioner. Its purpose is to provide peer support and a self-help education.

Our first concept is that Recovery International's program focuses on how to manage the daily stressful events of life. We refer to these as trivialities because they don't require us to call police, fire, an attorney, or a doctor or anything like that. These are daily events and that's really most of our lives when we think about it. Probably 95% of our lives are just those daily stressors. It could be an obstacle that gets in your way of getting something done or going somewhere. It could be something that delays you uh for work or an appointment. It could be that you've encountered inconsiderate people or there are frequent annoyances such as technology or social media posts that don't get the responses, likes or shares that you were hoping for or even what people say on social media.

These trivialities are the focus of our program. We leave the big things in life, the big traumas to the licensed professionals, but we can help with the daily stressors. So, look at this list. Common stressful events that might occur. Waiting longer than expected for my doctor appointment. Oversleeping and being late for work. Stuck in traffic. A house burning down is not a triviality, but someone in the coffee shop messing up my order is a triviality. Having a close friend or relative diagnosed with a serious illness is not a triviality. But that email that I just drafted and lost, that is a triviality. Receiving the wrong takeout food order is a triviality. Identity stolen and credit cards charged is not a triviality.

So, here are some tools you can try for those situations. And the recovery program has hundreds of tools and they come from the books that our founder Dr. Abraham Low wrote over the years. So, you could use well, if we can't change a situation, we can change our attitude



toward it. Or expectations can lead to disappointments or calm produces calm. Temper produces temper. Our symptoms are distressing but not dangerous. Endorse for the effort, not only the outcome. And my favorite, people do things that annoy us, not necessarily to annoy us. Memorizing just one or two of these can help you in a situation when you're worked up and something is out of your control and of course a triviality.

So the next main concept that we learn in recovery is thinking about when we are worked up, what do we blame for that? Because we're always blaming someone for something wrong. So sometimes we place the blame on others. And we call that angry temper. That anger is directed at someone else. We're judging that they made us mad. They're the reason we are mad. We may not have all the facts, but we feel they are wrong. We might feel irritated, resentful, impatient, maybe some hatred toward them. There's all sorts of feelings that could happen when we're angry at someone else. And again, here's some more tools we can try.

When we're angry at someone else, we can learn to express our feelings, but without temper. So, in our program, we're not saying you can't ever say anything to anyone ever. It's just that you can say it in a way that's not screaming and yelling. We can excuse, not accuse that person. We can drop the judgment against them. And sometimes temper keeps us from seeing the other side of the story. Think about that. When we're so worked up about something, we don't know what their side of the story is. Again, my favorite. People do things that annoy us, not necessarily to annoy us. Sometimes it helps to look for the humor. Humor is our best friend. Temper is our worst enemy. It can be hard to find the humor, but sometimes it's there. You just got to look for it. And every act of self-control leads to a greater sense of self-respect. So, think about that. But if you don't yell or scream at someone, you have more self-respect for yourself and then there's nothing to regret later.

So on the flip side of that placing blame, sometimes there's no one to blame for something but ourselves and that's called fearful temper. It's directed inward. We put the blame on ourselves for being wrong. We might be worried in that situation. We might feel inadequate, hopeless. Maybe it's something work related. So you might have some fear of damage to your reputation. We might feel a sense of shame. Again, lots of feelings when you judge yourself for being wrong. And judgment is the one thing that both types of temper have in common. It's human nature to judge. That's what we do. But in this program, we learn to drop the judgment against ourselves and others for the sake of our mental health using the tools in this program. So, here's a few more tools I'm going to introduce you to. And you know, when you're mad at yourself, you could think fear is a belief and beliefs can be changed or we can excuse not accuse ourselves. We learn not to take ourselves too seriously. We can be self-led, not symptom-led. And if you feel helpless, know that helplessness is not hopelessness. There's always hope. When feeling overwhelmed, do things in part acts or one step at a time.



Our next concept in recovery is that there are things that we can't control and we call those part of our outer or external environment. We cannot control people, events, the past, or the future. So, thinking about some things that we can't control. We can't control the weather. We can't control traffic. We can't control friends or family, what they say, what they do, what they think. And maybe we have some really wonderful, well-trained pets. We still can't control that they might bark in the middle of a meeting that you're having on Zoom. So we can't control them. We also can't control those past events and decisions we have made in the past.

Where we need to focus is on ourselves in our inner or internal environment. And this gets a little tricky, but let's just think of what we can control for right now. I know I can control my thoughts and my actions. I can control how I talk to people and the words I use. I also can control a lot of other things like the decision I make of what to eat today and how I'm going to dress and how I present myself. So, there's lots of other things that we can control. I'm just going to take this a little bit deeper though.

Sometimes there is an event that works us up. We have an initial feeling about it. An initial emotional response could be anger, hatred, shame, embarrassment. We can't actually control that initial feeling. That's hard to do. It's going to happen.

There are physical sensations that might happen because of that feeling, physical responses. So, if you're embarrassed, then your face might get red or be blushing. Your heart rate might increase. Muscles might get tense in your neck or your shoulders or your hands. So, we can't control those initial sensations that happen. But where this program lives is in this section in this orange here. These are things that we can learn to change and control next. So the thought that we have next about that person, ourselves, the situation, instead of "he is annoying" or "I can't believe she did that to me" or "I'm useless," we can use some of those tools that I just presented before to change that thought.

Then we might have some impulse to do something. punch someone, run away, yell at someone, complain or whatever it might be because we're changing our thought in that situation, it will actually help us control that impulse. So again, this is the part that this program lives, this orange section. Learn to change our thoughts, learn to control our impulses.



Our final concept in recovery is this idea of self-endorsement. Not waiting for that praise and acknowledgement to come from someone else on the outside. Just do it for yourself. Praise yourself. Acknowledge yourself. Endorse yourself for any effort that you make toward improving your mental health. Here are some tools on this screen that you can memorize if you'd like. Think about this. When we're endorsing ourselves, we can't be blaming ourselves. Can't do two things at once. We endorse ourselves when we control our thoughts or our impulses. And we endorse ourselves for any effort we make, not only the outcome. So it could be that you had a vision for something turning out in one way, but you can endorse for the effort even if it didn't really all turn out that way, right? You made the effort toward it. So this is a mental pat on the back that you want to give yourself.

This is a hard concept in recovery. We grow up and we wait for that praise to come from parents and teachers and a boss or whoever it might be externally. It's hard to stop and say, you know what, I did a good job and I'm just going to pat myself on the back for that. So, think about this. Self-endorse when you drop the judgment against yourself or someone else. When you move your muscles to do something that maybe you just don't want to do, you control what you say or how you speak to another person. You control your impulse to sulk or complain about a situation. You try to do something even if the outcome is not what you expected and self-endorse when you change your negative thoughts.

Those are all things that you can start doing right away. When you're endorsing yourself, you can't be blaming yourself.

Thank you for joining me for learning the basic concepts. And please remember, if you're ever in a situation where you need a licensed professional or additional help for an emergency, there are resources you can call. Please take a photo of this page if you need to have these with you or call 988. Thank you very much and we hope to see you at a meeting.

Accessibility Note

This transcript is intended to accompany the audio recording so that all visitors have access to the same information in a text format.