

# **Recipe for Recovery From Substance Use Disorders**



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# **Recipe for Recovery**

## **(RFR)**

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### **The four ingredients in the Recipe for Recovery**

1. **Daily attention to a personal 12-step or equivalent mutual help program** including relationships within a network of recovering persons and practice of the recovery concepts offered in 12-step literature.

This ingredient may work within a non-12-step equivalent mutual help program for recovery if it includes the two elements of a) association with recovery persons and b) an effective program for preventing relapse and enhancing positive life changes and improvements

2. **Daily attention to a personal relationship with a higher or greater power of one’s understanding** and the development of a spirituality that provides purpose and openness to spiritual practices and the search for personal meaning

Such spirituality does well in the context of a traditional or non-traditional religious belief and practice, but also works without committed association with organized religion and dogma.

3. **Daily attention to the development and maintenance of supportive relationships**  
As treatment outcome studies has clearly demonstrated, those who do not abandon their “using peer group and lifestyle” seldom recover from substance dependence

This ingredient encourages the recruitment/selection of persons who unconditionally support abstinence and the behavior necessary for the recovery from substance dependence

4. **Daily attention to the development and maintenance of self-esteem**  
(Defined as being how warm, loving and accepting we unconditionally feel when we think about ourselves)

This ingredient takes self-esteem past the “performance and appearance-based” notion of self-esteem to the concept of the unique, specialness, one of a kind nature of our human reality actually is, hence

“I am the only one of my kind because the odds of me being who I am are estimated at 720,000,000:1 and that makes my life worthwhile whether I am doing well and looking good. The fact of my being alive at all is that my life is clearly an expression of whatever creates life intends or I would not even be here.”

# **Recipe for Recovery**

## **The Concept**

The 4 essential ingredients in the Recipe for Recovery must all be present if the individual is to achieve the recovery success referred in 12-step literature, namely, "Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path."

Treatment outcome research also suggests that a permanent abstinent recovery can be accomplished to this hopeful level when recovering persons use the Recipe for Recovery in their individual, creative ways provided the 4 ingredients are faithfully incorporated into personal recovery program.

Each of the 4 ingredients can be individualized as the recovering person learns to adapt to what works best for her/him by trial and error – experimentation and observation. Each person can select or develop a menu of activities for each of the four Recipe for Recovery ingredients.

Recovering persons can select spiritual practices that allow that individual to abandon the need to demand control over the uncontrollable. One may learn to rely on spiritual direction and the comfort that appears to be available to those who actively seek it. Countless recovering men and women continue to document their spiritual practices as being indispensable for their recoveries.

Recovering people continue to report their belief that their spiritual activities and programs provide a barrier to relapse. That is, when these recovering persons do practice a spiritual way of life they don't relapse into active addiction as often as those who do not.

Similarly, an individual can discover who in his/her life will support the need to abstain; to go to meetings and engage in other activities essential for recovery from substance dependence. The skills of communications, negotiations, problem solving, and decision-making are often under-developed in alcoholics and others with substance dependence. These skills will need to be learned, practiced and improved if the individual is going to maintain the support from others that has been shown to be crucial for most addicts in early recovery.

if the person who is responsible for her/his recovery rejects herself/himself, does not believe he/she is worthy and concludes he/she does not deserve a better life because she/he has not performed well in life so far, it is unlikely those persons will invest the energy in their recovery to prevent relapse.

Strong self-esteem in the Recipe for Recovery concept is based on the concept that the person's life energy and worth cannot be condemned because a person's very existence is evidence she/he has a right to be here and alive. This belief suggests a person still has worth even though he/she has behaved badly. Believing that he or she is, in fact, the only one of his/her kind is more likely to transform the person into a better steward of his/her life than low self-esteem permits. Low self-esteem is a predictable barrier to successful recovery from addiction.

These recovery concepts are based on the assumption that those entering recovery have begun the process of accepting the nature of their substance dependence disorder. They are assumed to have sufficient hope their recovery from substance dependence is not only possible but also likely if they practice their personal Recipe for Recovery daily and diligently.

According to treatment outcome research and the collective experience of 12-step program and equivalents, it those entering recovery from substance dependence do incorporate an effective Recipe for Recovery into their daily lives, their recovery is almost guaranteed.

The Recipe for Recovery includes:

- 1) The elements of motivational enhancement  
(Developing a will to recover; that recovery is possible)
- 2) Relapse prevention  
(Learning the pitfalls and potholes that lead back to drinking and using)
- 3) Orientation to the 12 Step programs or equivalent  
(As a proven resource for recovery)

The benefits of recovery are emphasized. The dangers of relapse are exposed; remedial steps are recommended.

The benefits of the 12 Step programs (or equivalent) are clearly identified. Many have discovered having a mutual help program like Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous or other 12-Step program or equivalent as the foundation for their recoveries can include all four ingredients in the person's Recipe for Recovery.

There are many "spices" and other interesting growth items that may be added to the Recipe for Recovery, but it is important that the recovering person never forgets to attend to all four of the essential ingredients in their new, abstinent, life-changing recoveries on a DAILY basis. Occasional attention to the ingredients of recovery does not lead to success. Lack of perseverance can be a character deficit that leads to complacency, forgetful memories and the return to the psychological defenses like denial and rationalization that has kept addicts sick for so long.

**The 24-hour program of recovery is the time frame. Daily practice of the principles and behaviors of recovery is the key. There really are no short cuts to lifelong recovery from substance dependence/addiction.**

The Recipe for Recovery originated out of ideas and information obtained from treatment outcomes research that has identified indicators of a successful recovery. Outcomes research like Norman Hoffman and his associates from CATOR/NEW STANDARDS, Hazelden and Parkside treatment follow-up studies suggest there are some specific behaviors and practices that are protective of recovery. These researched indicators of successful recovery from substance dependence are included in the ingredients of the Recipe for Recovery.

A recipe provides a path to a successful outcome, but all the ingredients must be present to produce that outcome. Therefore, it appears essential that recovering persons pay attention to each of the four recovery ingredients if they are to recover successfully. Leaving any ingredients out does not produce a “satisfying dish.” Just as a four-number combination lock will not open with only part of the combination. It is better to have some of the right numbers if not all four. It is better to find the missing number or numbers than to have no progress in opening the lock.

Similarly, a person is unlikely to experience successful recovery in AA or NA if she/he is still having low self-esteem and has no family or other support for recovery or no spirituality.

The good news is there are endless numbers of recovering persons ready to help those who are new to recovery learning the four ingredients of recovery. You can start or continue any time you are ready. The Recipe for Recovery is reliable, affordable and reliable. **Bon Appétit!!**

By David “Mac” Macmaster, CSAC, PTTS  
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# My Daily Recipe for Recovery

## Menu of Recipe for Recovery Activities

Your daily recipe for recovery includes activities from all 4 “ingredients” in the recipe. It is helpful to list as many activities that support your recovery as you can discover or create.

Add new ones to keep your recovery fresh and satisfying.

<b>How Will I Use My 12 Step (or equivalent) Program to Assure My Recovery Today?</b>	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
<b>How Will I attend to my spirituality today?</b>	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

## Menu of Recipe for Recovery Activities

<b>Which supportive relationships will I improve today?</b>	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
<b>How will I improve my self-esteem so I feel warm and, loving and accepting of myself?</b>	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

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# My Daily Recipe for Recovery

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>How Will I Use My 12 Step (or equivalent) Program to Assure My Recovery Today?</b>
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(Examples: I will go to a meeting; I will call my sponsor)

<b>How Will I attend to my spirituality today?</b>
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(Examples: I will meditate; I will go on a nature reflection walk)

<b>Which supportive relationships will I improve today?</b>
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(Examples: I will visit my parents for a social visit; I will tell my children I love them.)

<b>How will I improve my self-esteem so I feel warm and, loving and accepting of myself?</b>
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(Examples: Today I will not base my self-esteem on my appearance or performance but on the truth, I am the only one of my kind worthy of acceptance and respect; affirm I am capable, responsible and worthy no matter what happens.)

<b>What did I learn about my recovery and me today?</b>
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<b>Improving?</b>

<b>Needs Improvement?</b>



