



happy fall y'all

## Closing 2023 and Endorsing Ourselves for a Job Well Done

Here we are just on the brink of this year's end. Instead of launching into setting goals and thinking about what we want to achieve next year let's sit for a moment, as Dr. Low suggests in motionless sitting, and think back over this past year and all the moments we can endorse for. Perhaps we've had more challenges than usual in 2023 with an illness or the loss of someone dear to us. These are not trivial matters, but we can certainly focus on how we had a positive impact on others regardless of our troubles. We can make this end of year a time to celebrate our many successes such as: we continued to attend meetings, we took member phone calls, or we spread the word of Recovery at a gathering or simply over a cup of tea. We learned through the practice of Recovery that we can carry on in our daily activities because we have learned to trust our basic functions through continually endorsing ourselves. Dr. Low said that, "Self-endorsement is so important because the sense of security which it produces makes for sure and determined action." He went on to say, "What Recovery teaches you, through its philosophy of averageness, is to endorse your successes and to refrain from condemning your failures." Enjoy your fall and holiday season and keep endorsing!

Wishing you all the very best, Your editors, Helen and Dave

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# News from Headquarters

## Announcing Regional Conferences: *Confirming Our Fellowship and Commitments: Together Again*

When I arrived at Recovery International, one of the first questions I was asked was: when are conferences starting again? Community is important to RI, and everyone missed getting together during the pandemic. Our solution is to offer one-day regional conferences. We are coming closer to you! As RI continues to recover from the pandemic financially, we are not in a position right now to host an expensive, multi-day conference. And we know that many of you are not able to afford significant travel expenses either. By having regional conferences throughout the country, closer to you, the conferences will be more accessible – physically and financially.



The first regional conference will be in San Diego on Friday, February 16, 2024. In 2025, the one-day conference will be in New York State. Our 2026 conference will be in the Midwest. You are welcome, of course, to attend any, all, or none – whatever fits your calendar and budget. While we are not able to offer a hybrid conference at this time, we will be recording some of the sessions. So even if you are not able to attend in-person, you will be able to enjoy some of the sessions at home later.

The February 16, 2024 conference will be held at the Marina Village Conference Center in San Diego, which offers free parking. Registration and detailed information is now available on our website's homepage or under the Conference tab. A ticket for the day costs \$125 for current RI members, which includes meals. Registration is limited to 300 people. Registration is open until January 15th or when filled. Visit the RI website for more information or to register.

The theme of the 2024 conference is *Confirming Our Fellowship and Commitments: Together Again*. On February 16th, the conference will run from 9 a.m. – 9 p.m. For those who choose to come early, Area 25 is hosting a reception on Thursday, Feb. 15th from 4 – 7 p.m. The San Diego office will also be open from 1 – 3 p.m. the afternoon of the 15th for those who want to see where Lisa Garcia and Eric Gonzalez work their magic.

Since so many people have been gathering through Zoom and phone the past few years, one of the challenges of the conference is: how do we make it special? How do we make the best use of our time together in-person to build community? The Planning Committee has been working hard to develop a schedule of programs that will meet everyone's needs. There will be a keynote by Dr. Luke Bergmann, The San Diego County Director of Behavioral Health. We will have breakout sessions, in-person RI meetings, share meals together, and enjoy an evening with a variety of entertainment options.

We hope that you can fit an RI conference into your plans in the coming years. We would love to see you!

With great appreciation,

Karen G. Hall, CEO

## Board and Staff Updates

We are pleased to announce some new additions to our Board of Directors...



Celinda Jungheim  
President  
Los Angeles, CA



Fran Goldstein  
Board of Directors  
New Orleans, LA



Randy B. Silverstein, M.D.  
Board of Directors  
San Diego, CA



Eva Suchow  
Board of Directors  
Irvington, NY

...and Staff!



Eric Gonzales  
Outreach Coordinator  
San Diego, CA office



Hina Sowinski  
Leadership and  
Training Manager  
Oak Brook, IL office

Welcome to all and endorse for all you do for Recovery!

# Roaming the Globe

## UNITED STATES

Fall is a busy time for mental health events and conferences. Thanks to everyone who took the extra time to host a table.



Kim, Eric, and Judi at the Black Tech Stem Fest in San Diego, CA.



Lynn at a community college health fair in Los Angeles, CA.



Karen, Patty, and Angela at a social work conference in Naperville, IL.

## CANADA (British Columbia - Area 201)

All meetings survived the Pandemic, which is a testament to Membership and our Technical Director in being fully engaged with Zoom. We have three Zoom meetings currently running.

Recovery Canada is now "Client Approved" with the United Way and the Mental Health BC 211 Support Line. Both of those agencies support the public with mental health concerns.

We in Recovery Canada are so grateful for our membership with RI headquarters which has provided so much support, Daily spots, Reporter and Wisdom programs and ongoing upgrades and training.



Recovery Canada leaders Rita and Brenda spent the day at a health expo where they passed out 500 RI brochures. Rita is a 40-year Leader!

Recovery Canada is led by a volunteer Board of Directors. We want to encourage our volunteers to endorse for the effort they put forth in leading our organization, and for bearing the discomfort that inevitably comes with leading any country-wide volunteer-based organization. Recovery Canada would like to thank the following long-serving volunteer members of the Board of Directors for their dedication and hard work in helping to keep Recovery available so that other folks can regain and maintain their mental wellness:

Paul Caldwell   Donna McFarlane   Cindy Hutchins  
Betty Sim   Rosanne Agostino   Brenda Lefebvre  
Rita Murphy   Kathy Feller



## Book Study

January 21, 2024 at 5pm Eastern time

### Topic: Endorsing and Security

Dr. Low said that “Self endorsement leads to an attitude of self trust.” Let’s explore more on this topic in the new year!

If you haven’t received emails for previous book studies, please sign up by emailing [davesdecafe@gmail.com](mailto:davesdecafe@gmail.com)

## Holiday Sing-A-Long

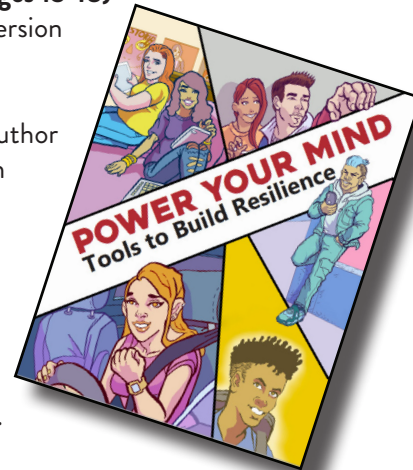
December 10, 2023 at  
6pm Eastern time

Look for details in Weekly Wisdom. Email songs or poetry you’d like to present to [kellyeokeefe@gmail.com](mailto:kellyeokeefe@gmail.com)



## New and Improved “Power Your Mind: Tools to Build Resilience for Young Adults” (Ages 13-18)

We endorse for this improved version of Power Your Mind. Thanks to suggestions by RI members and significant contributions from author and RI Leader, Em Lyons Bouch who facilitated the program with Freshman and Sophomore students at her high school. We added activities, reduced pages without losing key content, and made the book more affordable - now only \$12.95 (was \$19.95).



## Matching Employer Donations

Many employers generously match donations that their employees make to non-profit organizations or will kindly pay for their employees’ time to volunteer at non-profits. We are happy to help arrange an employer match or give you work to do at home or in your local area (for instance, distributing marketing materials). Contact [info@recoveryinternational.org](mailto:info@recoveryinternational.org)



## Special Focus Meetings

RI’s suite of special focus meetings are geared toward specific communities and lead by a facilitator who has lived-experience with the topic. Examples given in these meetings may extend beyond the usual ones, but are still trivialities. Topics include: Veteran-led, LGBTQ+, Chronic Physical Conditions, College-age Students, and the most recent for Caregivers. Additionally, we offer meetings in Spanish and Japanese. Visit [RecoveryInternational.org/special-focus-meeting](https://RecoveryInternational.org/special-focus-meeting)

## Self-Endorsement

I came to my first meeting, where all said to endorse.  
I patted my left shoulder and felt silly, of course.  
I did it now and then, with no reward inside.  
Not yet a real connect, although I duly tried.  
Encouraged at the meetings, I patted ever more.  
It started to have meaning, the more I endorsed!  
Somehow, some way, it opened, and managed that I grew  
a deep sense of self-value that before I never knew.  
Now valuing myself and what I know from Dr. Low,  
I feel my self-endorsement all the way down to my toes!

Fran G., New Orleans



# H O P E



### 50 Years of RI

My RI experience began when I was in my late 20's on the suggestion of my father. Of course, as a young nervous person I was resentful of his suggestion replacing his worn-out sympathy for my mood swings, crying habit and inability to keep a job or friends. My first meetings had me sold! Instead of the old adages of before such as, "I just can't stop thinking about it!" and "When you are doing the right thing you will feel good about it," or "Just try harder!" I had a new approach. Yes, with practice, I CAN learn to replace my insecure thoughts. I could control my thoughts. It replaced the "I just can't stop thinking about it." I learned that when I was controlling my impulses and "doing the right thing" it would increase bodily discomfort for the time being. (I would not feel all that good for the time being.)

At first as a beginner, I would write my spots down on paper. Then they became part of my thought process! And as I began identifying and dropping all the angry temper judgments, I had all the time, the fearful temper of a weak nervous system and low self-esteem was revealed to me and my true self-esteem gently began to rise and become stronger.

Now at age 73 I have had a successful career as a Registered Nurse and have family and close friends. AND I am still my silly, goofy loud unique ME with stronger mental health!

Thank you, RECOVERY INTERNATIONAL!!

Jean J., Los Angeles

### Endorsing for My Progress

I came to RI four years ago. I had been a fearful person ever since I was a child and had "fainting spells" and stomach distress. Although competent in my adult professional field, I never felt capable of handling "life." I always felt afraid. I had frequent panics which sometimes manifested as angry outbursts. I had sleeplessness and phobias (fear of choking while I was eating, fear of contamination by germs, fear of crowds, loud noises).

I learned about RI from a friend. By attending meetings and reading Dr. Low's writings, I began to find the feeling of calmness I had been looking for - inside myself - by using spots such as "trust your basic functions" and "when feeling overwhelmed, do things in part acts."

A year after I came to RI, my mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. I am now one of her primary caregivers. RI has helped me to see that in an average way, I can handle anything that comes my way, not only the trivialities of daily life, but also the special needs of caring for my mom. I do this in a calm and balanced way. My mom's illness is progressing, and sometimes I feel inadequate and doubt my ability to cope, but I know that feelings are not facts, and they will rise and fall naturally if I don't prolong them with temper. I remind myself of how far I have come in RI, and I endorse myself over and over for having the will to effort rather than the will to comfort.

I endorse for being group minded with my family, bearing discomfort, and allowing myself the range of human emotion, including what Dr. Low calls "true feelings" of loss, grief, and sadness. I laugh often, I play with my dog, I see trivialities for what they are, I feel joy, and peace. I'm so grateful for RI.

Sherri C.

# Recovery Examples

## Controlling Speech Muscles

Recently I called Home Depot to see if an item on their website was in stock. The automated voice recognition system didn't understand what I repeatedly tried to say. I hung up. As with many other interactive voice response systems, my enunciation often isn't understood. I had a rise in feeling at this system. I felt lowered feelings I wasn't understood. I controlled my speech muscles, turning chilly to the symptoms, as I've learned when this happens.

I spotted it wasn't worth my mental health to get more worked up than my brief (for a change) initial out loud reaction. I remembered I had choices: work it up or down. It was a triviality. Distressing but not dangerous. I left it in the past. Humor is our best friend; temper our worst enemy. I've made a joke about voice recognition systems. There used to be an 800 number to call to get a business's phone number. Let's say I asked for "Amalgamated Axle Company," the robotic voice would ask, "The number you are looking for is 'camel laxative - is this correct?'" In former days with a voice recognition system, I would have let loose with a tirade.

**Bruce B., San Diego**

## Overcoming my Fear

After using Uber exclusively for a number of years, I made the decision to start using public transit and that's when I began to work myself up.

I have a lot of fear and sadness. My sensations are tightness in my chest, a rise and lowering of feelings, and head pressure. My thoughts are "What if something bad happens?" "Maybe I should just use Uber." "Why did I decide this?" Impulse to abandon the idea of using public transit. Impulse to not leave the house at all.

I had angry temper at the decision, and we know that any decision will steady us. I had fearful temper in the form of worry about what may or may not happen. My spots for fearful temper were: The future is outer environment, to know is not to know what will happen. I can replace an insecure thought with a secure thought. Fear is a belief and beliefs can be changed. Possibilities vs. Probabilities. I can endorse for making the decision to take public transit and save money on Uber.

Before RI, I avoided public transit like the plague. I didn't want to add that extra time to my commute that I felt was unnecessary. And the fear of something happening also kept me from using it. But now I have a 4-step method and spots to help me overcome my fear.

**Nick S., San Diego**

## Doing Things in Part Acts

I woke up in the morning, and I was getting overwhelmed with all the tasks that I would need to complete at work that day, and all the future tasks that I would need to plan for and make decisions regarding. That's when I began to work myself up.

My physical symptoms were: tightness in my chest muscles; a choking sensation in my throat and the urge to swallow and clear my throat; fatigue and exhaustion; nausea. My mental symptoms were: reviewing and previewing all the tasks I needed to do and the challenges that each one presented; imagination on fire about what my ability to complete all the tasks and the challenges associated with each one; negative anticipation; low tones.

I spotted: Symptoms are distressing and not dangerous; Feelings and sensations will rise and fall, come and go if we let them go; Replace an insecure thought ("I can't do all of this") with a secure thought ("I can take each task one step at a time"); Do things in part acts; Be self-led, not symptom led; Stop the reviewing and previewing habit; Bear the discomfort and still function; Calm one part of the body and the rest will follow; Make my mental health a business and not a game; Humor is our best friend, and temper is our enemy. Work is the outer environment; we cannot control the outer environment, only how we react to it.

In former days, I would have worked myself up into more of a panic state, which may have induced coughing and vomiting. I would have struggled to begin my work, ending up working long, late hours to catch up. I would have felt worse physically and mentally, throughout the day. Being caught in temper would have made my work more difficult because temper blocks reasoning and insight. By controlling my temper, I could regain my reasoning and insight, to effectively focus on my work.

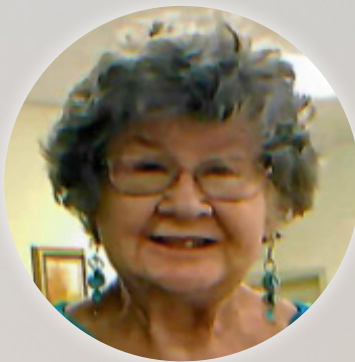
**Alm C., Canada**

## In Memoriam



### **Jack Sandhaus, Brooklyn, NY**

Jack resided in Boro Park for over 40 years. He made leaders and area leaders. During the last 18 months after Covid, calls would come to the house 24/7 from all over the world as they had for the last 50 years. He would roll over, ask, "Who's this" and say, "5 minute call, go." As it will say on his tombstone, "The meeting goes on..."



### **Ann Dunbar, White Plains, NY**

Ann grew up in the South Bronx and was known in the family for her academic and artistic achievements. Ann had a specific interest in languages and other cultures. Ann's chosen profession was as a public-school teacher, and she spent many productive years teaching students in the Bronx. Ann was a member of RI for over 40 years and served as an Assistant Leader for the Telephone Groups for over 12 years. Ann will be missed.



### **Dermot Grennan, Ireland**

Dermot was a stalwart of Recovery Ireland for many decades. He came to Recovery meetings by chance in order to provide moral support for his wife. Dermot immediately recognised the benefits of the four-step programme in his own life and became a lifelong advocate of Recovery. He went on to lead the Drumcondra Recovery group in Dublin for many decades. He was Area Treasurer and appointed to the role of Area Leader and later appointed as Regional Director of Recovery Ireland, England, Wales and Israel. He will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved him in Ireland and beyond.







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## Wisdom of Dr. Low

### People Never Endorse as Much as They Should

From Selections page 132

Don't mind, Treasure, if I proceed to rib you some more. "After five years of experience in conducting Recovery meetings," you say, "there are still occasions when I feel that the meeting was not up to par." This is quite tragic, I admit. But the tragedy is not peculiar to you, Treasure, but to the human race. It is a tragic experience of my own. For instance, I have conducted at least two group meetings every week since 1933, that is, twenty years. That adds up to a total of about 2,000 meetings. Don't you think my performance ought to be tops by now? It ought to, but it isn't. At any rate, it isn't such in my own eyes. I still indulge in vicious self-criticism, still think I don't do well enough, and the thought still torments me "on some occasions" that "the meeting was not up to par." You see, Treasure, both you and I are human, and humans have never been known to endorse themselves as they should. Their first impulse is to release self-critical responses. You know that responses of any kind stem from a person's temperament, and it is the inner responses of temperament which continually generate impulses of exceptionality, self-distrust and self-belittling. It is a tragedy but can be turned into a comedy if humor steps in and converts a self-critical inner response into a self-endorsing outer reaction. Somewhere I have said: All men are alike in their inner responses; they differ in their outer reactions. Moreover, the inner responses are your nature. Are you going to change your nature? The Latins used to say: You cannot expel nature, not even if you use a pitchfork. Well, the Latins were right, and nature cannot be changed, and natural responses will always be what they are. But in Recovery both you and I have learned that though natural responses are immune to changing, yet, they are amenable to spotting. And let me assure you, Treasure, that in the field of spotting, you have achieved a degree of expertness that stands you in good stead. You demonstrated your spotting efficiency when you stated: "I always know that I am trying for exceptionality." If you know that and know it "always," you certainly qualify for Recovery leadership.