

# LIFE IN RECOVERY

## PEOPLE RECOVERING FROM MENTAL ILLNESSES SAY IT FEELS LIKE:



## #mentalillnessfeelslike



Share what life in recovery from mental illness feels like for you in words, images or video by tagging your social media posts with [#mentalillnessfeelslike](https://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/feelslike).

Posts will be displayed at [mentalhealthamerica.net/feelslike](https://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/feelslike) where you can also submit anonymously if you choose.

- Speak up about your own experiences
- Help others who may be struggling to explain what they are going through to figure out if they are showing signs of a mental illness
- Break down the discrimination and stigma surrounding mental illnesses
- Show others that they are not alone in their feelings and their symptoms

## THE OTHER "R" WORDS ASSOCIATED WITH RECOVERY

### RESPONSE

is a term that service providers use to refer to improvement in your illness as a result of treatment

### RESILIENCE

is about adapting to stress and change in a way that helps you to become a stronger person over time

### RELAPSE

means that symptoms of a mental illness have returned and is part of the recovery process - there will be ups and downs

### ROLES

are about having a meaningful sense of your purpose and who you are outside of your mental illness

## RECOVERY IS:

- A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live self-directed lives, and strive to reach their full potential!
- Regaining losses and rebuilding relationships
- Trusting yourself
- Finding your place in the world
- Lifestyle changes
- Understanding what does and does not help you feel better
- Respect—feeling that you deserve it and are treated with it
- Something that takes time
- Incremental—with plenty of ups and downs
- Doing what you can to help others and helping yourself in the process
- Reclaiming your power
- Getting more of what is important to you

## RECOVERY IS NOT:

- Instant
- A 12-step program, but they can help
- A one-size-fits-all solution
- Found in a pill, although medication does play a role in recovery for many people
- A destination that you arrive and stay at; it's a continuous journey
- Easy—it requires hard work and dedication
- A cure

## TIPS FOR TACKLING RECOVERY



Embrace the idea of change. Making lifestyle changes is difficult for everybody, but you will need to mentally prepare yourself for the fact that change is necessary (and worth it) in order to achieve recovery.



There is tremendous power in peer support. Peer support services put someone in your corner who has “been there, done that” and can help you find your own way through the recovery process. Some places you can find peer support are at your local MHA affiliate, community mental health centers, drop-in centers, and peer-run support groups.



Forgive yourself for failure. Recovery doesn't happen overnight, and there are going to be days that are going to go really well, and other days that are going to be crappy. Having a crappy day, or showing signs of relapse or recurrence, doesn't mean that you haven't made any progress or that you should give up trying to get better. Be kind to yourself and keep fighting for the life you want.



Learn about all the resources available to you to support your recovery. Therapy and medication are the two most widely known treatment options, but recovery is about more than treatment. Other resources and services include: case management, supported employment, supported education, family supports, warmlines, peer support specialists and psychoeducation.



Think about who among your friends and family members you can turn to for support. The person or people you choose should care about you, believe in you and believe in your worth. Having someone you can call or meet up with if you are feeling lonely or starting to struggle can help you to feel better and stay accountable to yourself and your recovery goals.



Set yourself up for success by creating recovery plans that you are confident you can stick to. Try this exercise: Think about a change you want to make to help you reach a recovery goal. Now rate your confidence in your ability to make that change on a scale of 1 (not confident) to 10 (positive you can do it). If you aren't confident at a level of 7 or higher, revise your plan. Start with smaller changes that you are sure you can make, and build up to tougher changes to reach your goals over time.



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## RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE AT ALL STAGES OF MENTAL ILLNESS, BUT THE EARLIER YOU TAKE ACTION THE EASIER IT IS TO GET BETTER

To learn more visit:  
[mentalhealthamerica.net/recovery](http://mentalhealthamerica.net/recovery)

### SCREENING CAN HELP CATCH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS EARLY—B4STAGE4.

Understanding what is going on with your mental health is the first step towards recovery.

A screening is not a diagnosis, but it can be a helpful tool for starting a conversation with your doctor or a loved one about your mental health.



[www.mhascreening.org](http://www.mhascreening.org)  
Anonymous • Free • Confidential

If you or someone you know is in crisis, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255), go to your local Emergency Room or call 911.

