



SMART Recovery Participant Handbook (4th Edition)

What's New Guide

How to Use This Guide

- **For Participants:** If you're familiar with the previous edition, use this guide to locate familiar tools under their new names and explore new tools that can support your recovery journey.
- **For Facilitators:** This guide will help you introduce the **updated tools and approaches** in meetings, ensuring participants understand the latest refinements in SMART Recovery. Visit VolunteerHQ to download facilitator guides for each tool.

What's New?

This new edition of the SMART Recovery Participant Handbook brings thoughtful improvements to better support participants and facilitators. Here's what's new and improved:

- **Simplified Language** – More accessible, easy-to-understand explanations. Less acronyms, more direct language.
- **Updated Tools**– Several tools have been **renamed or improved**, and new tools have been added to help with boundaries, communication, and emotional well-being.
- **Recognizes Different Recovery Goals** While abstinence remains a core option, the new handbook fully acknowledges harm reduction as a valid recovery path.
- **Focused Emphasis on Self-Empowerment** – Participants are encouraged to explore recovery that works for them, with expanded goal-setting strategies.
- **More Science-Informed Practices** – SMART Recovery evolves with the latest research in addiction recovery and behavior change.
- **A Fresh, Modern Layout** – The new edition is better structured for quick reference and learning.



Tool Name Changes

Several tools in the new handbook have been **renamed or refined**. Below is a list of tools with their **old and new names**, as well as their corresponding handbook pages.

New Tool Name	Old Tool Name	Old Handbook Page	New Handbook Page
Five Questions	Three Questions	15	28
Identify Triggers	Identify Triggers (previously an exercise)	26	36
Rank Trigger Risks	Trigger Risk (previously an exercise)	27	37
Plan Your Week	Weekly Planner	33	43
DENTS	DEADS (Defeat Urges with DEADS)	37	45
Personify and Disarm	DISARM (Destructive Imagery and Self-talk Awareness and Refusal Method)	38	46
Log Your Urges	Urge Log	41	38
Dispute Unhelpful Beliefs	DIBS (Disputing Irrational Beliefs)	46	54
Lifestyle Balance Wheel	Lifestyle Balance Pie	60	70
Explore New Passions and Pursuits	VACI (Vital Absorbing Creative Interests)	62	72
Setting an Effective Goal	Goal Setting	63	77



New Tools in the Handbook

In addition to renaming existing tools, several **brand-new tools** have been introduced:

New Tool	Page
Practice self-compassion	22
Practice problem solving	62
Planning Positive Conversations (PIVA)	64
Setting Healthy Boundaries	66
Meditation Practice	78
Progressive Muscle Relaxation	80
Visualize a Relaxing Space	81

These new tools help **build emotional resilience**, encourage **healthy communication**, and support **self-regulation techniques** for long-term recovery.

More to Discover...

- 1. Strengthening Boundaries & Communication Skills**
 - New tools emphasize **healthy boundaries** and **positive communication strategies** (pages 63-66).
- 2. More Nuanced View on Motivation & Goal-Setting**
 - The new handbook offers **expanded strategies** for setting effective, personal recovery goals (**pages 73-78**).
- 3. Enhanced Coping Strategies Stress Management**
 - More emphasis on **mindfulness practices**.
 - Introducing **self-compassion** as a practice. (**Page 22**)
 - Encourages participants to replace the word **“but”** with **“and”** in their thinking and speech. (**Page 84**)



We hope you find these updates meaningful and aligned with the evolving needs of our recovery community. Our goal is that the new SMART Participant Handbook continues to be a trusted, empowering resource as you navigate your unique recovery journey.