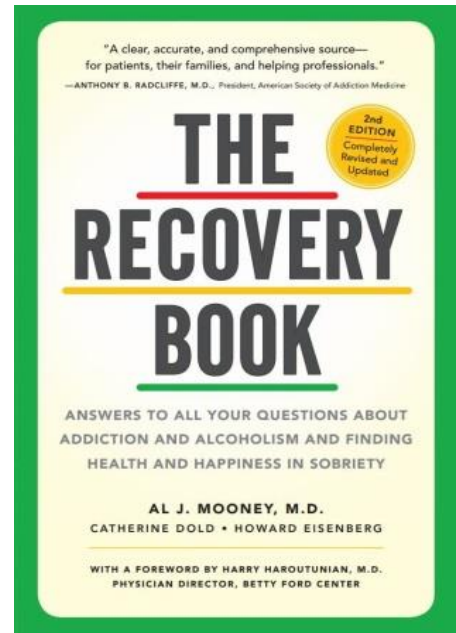


# The Recovery Book

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Workman Publishing, 2014



## The Recovery Zone System

The Recovery Zone System™ is a road map for a life in recovery. It gives clear guidelines on when and how a person in recovery can address various areas of life—treatment, fellowship activities, relationships, education, career, finances, recreation, and health — now that he is striving to put his life back on track. It helps him to know when he is ready to move forward in each of those areas. And it helps him to see when he might need to move *back* for a bit, to avoid a relapse.

The Recovery Zone System™ greatly strengthens the concept of “living in recovery.” It divides life in recovery into three distinct zones:

- **The Red Zone: Stop. Activate your recovery.** For the first eighteen months or more of recovery, you need to focus first and foremost on saving your life. Nothing else is as important. Nothing.
- **The Yellow Zone: Proceed with caution. Build your life.** Once you have a solid eighteen months or more of sobriety, you’ll move into the Yellow Zone, where you can put your energy into building the life you deserve and making your existence more fulfilling.
- **The Green Zone: Go. Celebrate your life.** After you have a few solid years of sobriety and have rebuilt your life, you’ll move into the Green Zone. Then it’s time to celebrate your life, do what you can do to live a long and healthy life, and help others find recovery.

As you build your new life in recovery, you will naturally move from one zone to the next, from Red to Yellow to Green, with lots of guidance from *The Recovery Book*. In early recovery, the Red Zone, you’ll focus almost exclusively on the activities that will save your life: detox, treatment, getting involved in a fellowship. It is not the time, for example, to try to go back to college.

When you move into the Yellow Zone, you can start rebuilding: find a new job, start a new relationship, try out a new exercise routine, or go back to school, among other things.

By the time you reach the Green Zone, life is pretty darn good. That’s where you’ll find that complete and wonderful life of serenity, honesty, and peace you were promised.

# Heal Your Brain: TAMERS

Alcohol and drugs change the brain. But you *can* refocus your brain on recovery. As you follow the Recovery Zone System, just practice TAMERS every day:

**T**hink about recovery & **T**alk about recovery

**A**ct on recovery, connect with others

**M**editate & **M**inimize stress

**E**xercise & **E**at well

**R**elax

**S**leep

## Recovery Zone ReCheck

The Recovery Zone ReCheck is a simple relapse prevention plan. In every Recovery Zone, at all times, you will be at some risk of relapse, often when you least expect it. The Recovery Zone ReCheck helps you avoid relapses by regularly taking stock of your life.

Once a month or so, use the three Recovery Zone ReCheck questions to assess your life. They will help you see when changes are coming up—relationships, work, health, medication and so on—that could trigger a relapse. These changes can be almost anything: dental procedure, divorce, getting a raise, having a baby, moving to a new town. When you spot such road blocks, you move *back* a Zone or two, brush up on the guidelines of that Zone, re-commit to sobriety, and re-focus on recovery.

## Recovery Zone System Wristbands

A Recovery Zone System wristband helps you to always remember where you are in recovery. It reminds you to stay sober and follow your program in cooperation with your sponsor, doctor, or other advisor.

**Red Zone Wristband:** In early recovery, your brain is not yet healed, you may not be thinking clearly. The red wristband reminds you to *stay sober* and *avoid anything that could lead to relapse*. While wearing it, *do not make any decisions on your own; consult your sponsor/advisor about everything*.

**Yellow Zone Wristband:** Life is much better now, but you need to *always* remember that you are in recovery. Let the Yellow Zone wristband be your reminder.

**Green Zone Wristband:** Life is great now, but you can't ever forget you are in recovery. Wear the Green Zone wristband as a small reminder to stay sober.

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