



# 25 Principles Learned in Mental Health Care

*Insights from 25 years of experience*

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After a quarter-century dedicated to providing mental health care, I've accumulated a wealth of insights that have shaped my approach and understanding. These 25 principles are not just theories; they are hard-earned lessons from countless hours spent listening, guiding, and supporting individuals on their journeys toward healing and well-being. This is dedicated for both those seeking help, and those providing it.

1. Full recovery is always achievable regardless of the circumstances.
2. At any given moment, we are at least twice as capable as we presently believe.
3. Within us exists a level of strength, wisdom, and potential we fail to comprehend.
4. True healing has less to do with fixing our symptoms and/or circumstances and more to do with challenging our beliefs.
5. Every great human feat stems from consistent, calculated, and focused action.
6. We have yet to scratch the surface of our majesty and capabilities.
7. The ample and regular rendering of service often does more to regulate our emotional symptoms and happiness than therapy and medication combined.
8. The true healers of mind and body: service, sunshine, movement, hydration, connection, stress management, nourishing food, sleep, value-based living, cleanliness, and spiritual development.
9. One of the greatest joys, yet often the hardest of tasks, is discovering who we are and building upon this understanding with actions that promote curiosity and wonder.
10. Like any physical exercise, the mind is meant to be stressed, stretched, and challenged beyond the boundaries of what is safe and familiar—otherwise we exist in the dregs of mediocrity and unfulfilled dreams.
11. Our survival instincts do little to keep us safe but keep us hijacked and tethered to a monotonous and predictably dull state of existence.
12. Taking a scientific and curious approach to our problems calms survival-based thinking.
13. Selfless service and sacrifice are the highest forms of love.

14. Feelings are our body's way of communicating critical information that guides healthy decisions and responses.
15. The most powerful words that shape our destiny are: I AM.
16. Trauma and states of chronic anxiety and depression pull us away from our identity; value-based living brings us back.
17. Our weaknesses and problems never define us—nor do a majority of our thoughts, feelings, and actions. Identity exists at the crossroads of who we truly are, what we truly value, and the force that whispers confidence as we take value-based actions into the unknown.
18. We cannot move forward without moving backward—one of the greatest laws of the universe.
19. The farther we can stretch the space between a trigger and our response, the greater the level of happiness and healthy human connection.
20. The journey is far more enriching and enthralling than the destination—for we never truly arrive. If we allow the human spirit to assume control, it will wish to continue exploring yonder vistas.
21. The greatest of all lies is the fallacy of finding comfort in our comfort zones. If we disallow our mind, body, and spirit to escape the gravitational pull of mediocrity and stagnation, we cannot expect to experience the joys and achievements that await.
22. There is never failure, only lessons. Failure only pertains to the man or woman who chooses to stop trying.
23. The secret of obtaining success in any endeavor is practicing and then mastering the skill of accepting one's ignorance and having the courage, humility, patience, and drive to learn at the feet of those who have paid the price.
24. IQ is a poor predictor of happiness and does little to foster success. Such is found through AQ—Action-Based Intelligence—a state by which an individual can discern which actions should be taken that are aligned with correct principles.
25. Mental health is not an absence of symptoms. It's knowing what to do when symptoms arise.