



Recovery Capital Index - Full Assessment Tool

Owner	A Ashley Zeck
Tags	

Measures growth in social, human, and financial capital—holistic progress beyond sobriety

Purpose

The Recovery Capital Index tracks participants' accumulation of resources and assets that support sustained recovery and upward mobility. It moves beyond binary "sober/not sober" to measure the building blocks of a stable, thriving life.

Core hypothesis: Recovery isn't absence of substances—it's presence of resources, relationships, skills, and purpose.

Theoretical Foundation

Cloud & Granfield: Recovery Capital Theory

- **Social capital:** Relationships, networks, community belonging
- **Physical capital:** Housing, transportation, financial resources
- **Human capital:** Skills, education, employment, health
- **Cultural capital:** Values, beliefs, identity, sense of meaning

Bourdieu: Forms of Capital

- Capital is convertible: Social connections → job opportunities → financial stability
- Capital compounds: More capital makes it easier to get more capital
- Lack of capital = structural barrier to recovery and success

SAMHSA: Dimensions of Recovery

- Health, home, purpose, community
 - Holistic view of recovery beyond abstinence
-

Assessment Structure

Format: 40-item self-report scale + objective measures

Response scales: Vary by domain (see below)

Time to complete: 12-15 minutes

Administration: Intake, graduation, 3-month, 6-month, 12-month follow-up

Domain 1: Social Capital (10 items)

Measures strength and quality of relationships and networks

Items

Response scale: 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

1. I have people in my life I can count on when things get hard.
2. I am part of a community where I feel I belong.
3. I have mentors or advisors who support my growth.
4. I know people who can help me with business advice or connections.
5. I have friends who support my recovery and goals (not people who pull me back).
6. There are people in my life who believe in me.
7. I feel connected to others who understand my journey.

8. I have professional relationships that open doors for me.
9. I regularly spend time with people who inspire me.
10. I am building a network that will help me succeed long-term.

Scoring

- Range: 10-50
 - **Interpretation:**
 - 10-20: Isolated, few supportive connections
 - 21-35: Some support, building network
 - 36-50: Strong, diverse social capital
-

Domain 2: Human Capital (10 items)

Measures skills, knowledge, health, and employability

Items

Response scale: 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

1. I have skills that employers or customers value.
2. I am actively learning new things that will help me succeed.
3. I take care of my physical health (sleep, exercise, nutrition).
4. I have strategies to manage stress and mental health.
5. I am building my résumé or portfolio.
6. I have completed trainings or certifications that increase my value.
7. I know how to learn what I don't yet know.
8. I have work experience or references I can point to.
9. I am developing my entrepreneurship skills (if applicable).
10. I have a clear picture of what I'm good at and how to use those strengths.

Scoring

- Range: 10-50
 - **Interpretation:**
 - 10-20: Low skills/health, needs intensive support
 - 21-35: Building capacity
 - 36-50: Strong human capital
-

Domain 3: Financial Capital (10 items)

Measures financial stability and assets

Items

Mixed response scales

1. I have a bank account in my name. **(Yes/No = 5/1)**
2. I have a source of income (job, business, benefits). **(Yes/No = 5/1)**
3. I can cover my basic needs (food, housing, transportation) each month. **(1-5 scale)**
4. I have some savings, even if small. **(Yes/No = 5/1)**
5. I am reducing or managing debt. **(1-5 scale: getting worse → getting better)**
6. I have a plan for increasing my income. **(1-5 scale: no plan → clear plan)**
7. I understand how to manage money and budget. **(1-5 scale)**
8. I have access to transportation when I need it. **(Yes/No = 5/1)**
9. My housing situation is stable. **(1-5 scale: unstable → very stable)**
10. I am building assets (business, property, investments) for the future. **(1-5 scale: not at all → actively building)**

Scoring

- Range: 10-50
- **Interpretation:**
 - 10-20: Financial crisis, immediate needs unmet

- 21-35: Getting by, some stability
 - 36-50: Financial security, building assets
-

Domain 4: Cultural/Identity Capital (10 items)

Measures sense of purpose, meaning, and identity strength

Items

Response scale: 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

1. I have a clear sense of purpose in my life.
2. I see my future as full of possibility.
3. I am proud of who I am becoming.
4. I have values that guide my decisions.
5. I feel like I'm part of something bigger than myself.
6. I have a vision for the legacy I want to leave.
7. I believe my life has meaning beyond just surviving.
8. I have identity beyond my past struggles (I'm not just my history).
9. I am connected to causes or communities I care about.
10. I wake up with a sense of direction, not just going through the motions.

Scoring

- Range: 10-50
 - **Interpretation:**
 - 10-20: Low meaning/purpose, identity crisis
 - 21-35: Developing sense of purpose
 - 36-50: Strong purpose-driven identity
-

Total Recovery Capital Index

Composite Score

- Sum all four domains
- Range: 40-200
- **Interpretation:**
 - 40-80: Low recovery capital—high risk, needs intensive support
 - 81-120: Moderate recovery capital—building, vulnerable
 - 121-160: Good recovery capital—stable, growing
 - 161-200: High recovery capital—thriving, resilient

Expected Trajectory

- **Intake:** 70-100 (low to moderate capital)
 - **Graduation:** 100-130 (moderate to good capital)
 - **6-month:** 120-150 (good capital, sustaining gains)
 - **12-month:** 130-170+ (thriving, compounding returns)
-

Objective Measures (Supplement Self-Report)

Collect these alongside the self-report scale

Social Capital (Objective)

- Number of supportive contacts (people you could call for help)
- Mentor relationships (yes/no)
- Peer support group attendance (times per month)
- LinkedIn connections or professional network size

Human Capital (Objective)

- Certifications/credentials earned (count)
- Skills trainings completed (hours)
- Employment status (employed Y/N, hours/week)

- Health insurance status (Y/N)

Financial Capital (Objective)

- Monthly income (self-reported \$)
- Savings amount (even \$50 counts)
- Housing status (own, rent, unstable, homeless)
- Debt amount (self-reported \$)

Cultural Capital (Objective)

- Volunteer hours (hours/month)
 - Community engagement activities (count)
 - Goal-setting (has written goals Y/N)
-

Administration Protocol

Intake

- Frame: "This is a snapshot of where you're starting—we'll track growth together"
- Privacy: Emphasize confidentiality, especially for financial questions
- Non-judgment: "There are no wrong answers. This helps us support you."

Graduation (Week 8)

- Celebrate growth: Show before/after scores
- Identify: Which domain grew most? Which needs continued attention?
- Plan: What capital-building goals for next 6 months?

Follow-Up (3, 6, 12 months)

- Online survey + phone call option
- Incentive: \$30 gift card (higher than other assessments—longer survey)

- Retention strategy: "We want to celebrate your wins and support you if needed"
-

Using RCI for Program Decisions

Intake Triage

- **Low financial capital?** → Connect to emergency assistance, housing support
- **Low social capital?** → Prioritize buddy matching, community activities
- **Low human capital?** → More skill-building, health referrals
- **Low cultural capital?** → Focus on identity work, purpose exploration

Mid-Program Adjustments

- Track: Which domains are growing? Which are stuck?
- Personalize: Extra support in lagging domains

Alumni Support Targeting

- **RCI dropping post-program?** → Alumni is at risk, needs re-engagement
 - **RCI climbing steadily?** → Celebrate, ask them to mentor others
-

Validation Plan

Phase 1: Content Validity

- Expert review: Recovery capital researchers (Cloud, Granfield, Best), social workers
- Community review: Does language resonate with justice-impacted individuals?

Phase 2: Pilot Testing

- **Sample:** 20-30 participants, all time points
- **Metrics:**
 - Internal consistency per domain ($\alpha \geq 0.80$)

- Test-retest reliability (2-week interval)
- Floor/ceiling effects (are there items everyone scores high/low on?)

Phase 3: Construct Validity

- **Convergent:** Should correlate with Brief Assessment of Recovery Capital (BARC-10)
- **Discriminant:** Should NOT correlate with unrelated constructs
- **Criterion:** Compare high vs low RCI participants on objective outcomes

Phase 4: Predictive Validity

- Does higher RCI at graduation predict:
 - Lower relapse rates?
 - Higher income growth?
 - Business persistence?
 - Life satisfaction?
-

Reporting for Funders

Visual Dashboards

- Spider graph: 4 domains at intake vs. graduation
- Cohort averages over time
- % of participants reaching "good" or "high" RCI by 12 months

Narrative Examples

Before: Marcus entered with RCI of 75—no savings, few supportive relationships, unclear purpose.

After: At 12 months, Marcus's RCI was 155—stable income, strong peer network, running a lawn care business, mentoring new cohort members.

Licensing & Publication

Copyright: Legacy Rising owns this tool

Citation: "Legacy Rising Recovery Capital Index (Zeck, 2025)"

Publication goal: Validate and publish in *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment* or *Addiction Research & Theory*

Cross-reference: Cloud & Granfield's RCI work (cite, differentiate, improve)

Licensing revenue: Charge recovery centers \$750-\$1,500/year for use

Next Steps

- ☐ Literature review—compare to existing RCI tools (BARC-10, REC-CAP)
- ☐ Expert panel review (3-5 recovery capital researchers)
- ☐ Community feedback—test items with 5-10 people in recovery
- ☐ Create digital + paper versions
- ☐ Pilot with Cohort 1 at all time points
- ☐ Analyze reliability and validity after Cohort 2
- ☐ Refine items based on data
- ☐ Create funder-ready dashboard template in Google Data Studio or Tableau