



# About Inner Compass Exchange

## Who We Are

Inner Compass Exchange (ICE) is a community of people who once turned to the mental health industry for answers and are now building vibrant, purposeful lives beyond psychiatric diagnoses, drugs, and drug withdrawal.

Our membership is comprised of people around the world who currently are or previously have been psychiatrically diagnosed and/or medicated, along with their supportive family members. Any medical or mental health practitioner among us is here solely because of personal experiences with taking or coming off psychiatric drugs.

ICE is a space for us to connect, share, and support one another as we navigate life in the wake of our experiences with the mental health industry.

We are a community led by the team at Inner Compass Initiative (ICI), a 501(c)(3) tax-deductible non-profit organization that helps people make more informed choices about taking and safely withdrawing from psychiatric drugs. (You can learn more about us at [our website](#) and access our free information and resources there at our online psychiatric drug withdrawal hub, [The Withdrawal Project](#).)

## What We Mean By "Inner Compass"

Inner Compass Initiative believes that within each person lies an innate wisdom — an “inner compass”— that helps us navigate the difficulties of being human. For many who have lived out the medical model of “mental illness” and its various pharmaceutical, institutional, legal,

and professionalized apparatuses, connection to this inner wisdom has been forgotten, lost, or taken away. Our mission is to help people find their way back to this inner compass, so they can take fresh steps into a new future based on that wisdom.

## Why We Built ICE

ICE is not a community for people who are still holding onto some faith in, or otherwise find benefit from, the medicalized, professionalized ideology of the mental health industry. Our community exists specifically for people who have had unhelpful or harmful experiences with psychiatric drugs, diagnoses, and other treatments, deciding instead that they no longer want or need them.

Our hope is that ICE encourages all of us to continue to educate ourselves, share with one another, and refine our critical-thinking capacities as we build new, non-medicalized frameworks of understanding ourselves and what it means to be human.

**Together, we are shifting our focus away from the pursuit of quick fixes to mental, emotional, and physical pain, and strengthening our capacity to stay present with ourselves, no matter what comes up.**

Within ICE, we can discard the many identity boxes we have been put in (or put ourselves in)—mentally ill or sick person, patient, consumer, client, ex-patient, survivor, victim—and move ahead together into the painful, confusing, scary, exciting, meaningful stuff of ordinary life.

## Group Pledge

Maintaining the integrity of our community is of the utmost importance to the Inner Compass team. By participating in Inner Compass Exchange, you agree to abide by the following terms of use, and understand that any violations of these terms may be edited or deleted by the Inner Compass team with or without explanation, and that if you violate these terms repeatedly, you may be temporarily or permanently removed with or without warning:

1. I agree to use at least my first name and last initial, as I understand that while the Inner Compass team fully respects my right to protect my anonymity given the risks associated with "outing" myself as having a psychiatric history, using initials only or a username is not allowed for security reasons and to protect the integrity of the community.
2. I understand that nothing shared in this community should be taken as medical advice, and that the Inner Compass team and fellow members are not medical professionals and are not liable for the consequences of any decisions I make.
3. I understand that it is up to me to always ask questions, do my own research, be my own advocate, and consult with trusted people in my life before making pharmaceutical-, taper-, or other health-related decisions for myself.
4. I will not ask other members for advice or help regarding my personal circumstances, and instead will ask others to share what their own experiences with related issues have been.
5. When sharing, I will speak only from personal experience (e.g. "I did this and this is what happened" or, "This is what I might do if I was in a similar situation") and will refrain from giving direct/prescriptive advice or suggestions or guaranteeing specific outcomes (e.g., "You should do this" or "If you do X, Y will happen").
6. When discussing my own health-related choices, I agree not to use the names of or recommend any specific practitioners, organizations, products, programs, courses, or services I've utilized.
7. I will not ask others to share recommendations of specific doctors, therapists, coaches, practitioners, facilities, supplements, herbs, or any products or services of any kind.
8. I will not recommend psychoactive substances (including but not limited to commercial herbal products, supplements, over-the-counter, prescribed, or "illicit" drugs), and if I discuss positive experiences I've had with them, I will preface them with a warning that taking or coming off psychiatric drugs can sensitize the body and make the use of additional psychoactive substances inherently dangerous.
9. I respect the principles of confidentiality and agree not to share anything posted inside Inner Compass Exchange outside of this community.

10. I understand that different people arrive at critical perspectives on the mental health industry on different timelines, in different ways, from different backgrounds, and accompanied by different experiences, resources, opportunities, and belief systems, and will treat all community members with respect, patience, and compassion - just as I hope and expect for the same from them in return.
11. I will hold space for a wide variety of political and sociocultural viewpoints and perspectives with vigorous intention, and respect the right of others to have perspectives with which I disagree.
12. I will not use ICE to promote free or paid outside events, groups, websites, or organizations; my or any other professional, consulting, commercial, political, or religious services or organizations; or any products, services, treatments, practitioners, facilities, or programs of any kind.
13. I agree to comment on-topic with the original poster's intent.
14. I will not create spammy content (i.e. posting outside links without any reflection or commentary, posting the same question or comment in multiple places or repeatedly, or posting low-effort content that doesn't seek to meaningfully or mutually engage with others).
15. I understand that Inner Compass Initiative is a small organization with limited resources, and as such, the Inner Compass team is not able to inform me any time my posts or comments are edited or deleted due to a violation of these terms.
16. I understand that anything I post that the Inner Compass team deems to be factually inaccurate, risky, or otherwise harmful to the integrity of our community may be edited or deleted.
17. I understand that the Inner Compass team reserves the right to remove me or anything that I might post in ICE with or without cause or explanation.
18. I understand that these terms may be amended at any time.