

# Integral Lifework Series – The Basics of Active Memory Reorganization

Here is a brief overview of the concept of Active Memory Reorganization (AMR) discussed in the book [Memory : Self](#).

Those familiar with other forms of cognitive-behavioral therapy will recognize the fundamentals of AMR's approach. However, in AMR the patterns being addressed include not only thoughts and emotions, but also habits in other dimensions of being – somatic memory, karmic and spiritual patterns, sense of self that arises within cultural contexts, and many more.

## ***Five by Five: Core Practices and Five-Step Process of AMR***

The five “core practices” of AMR are:

1. ***Cultivating Neutral Awareness*** – Experiencing a calm, non-reactive stillness of mind, body and spirit.
2. ***Gratitude and Compassionate Affection*** – Encouraging our emotional center to dwell in a place of thankfulness and love.
3. ***Therapeutic Breathing*** – Helping our body release its deep-seated memories and conclusions.
4. ***Cognitive Restructuring*** – Examining and challenging patterns of thought and internal dialogue.
5. ***Reinforcement and Accountability*** – Relying on the “four helpers” of our AMR practice, abbreviated “GAEL:”
  - a. **Goals:** The goals we routinely set for ourselves.
  - b. **Activities:** Our routine activities each day.
  - c. **Environments:** The environments – including everything from air quality to types of relationships to aesthetics – in which we spend most of our time.
  - d. **Language:** The words, phrases and concepts we use in our routine interactions.

**The five-step AMR process works like this:**

1. Understanding and initiating the *five core practices* above, independent of their application in AMR, so that their independent benefits can be validated by personal experience.
2. Creating an inventory of “semantic containers” and themes that populate our memory’s personal narrative, and how they are reinforced in our daily lives. In other words, identifying how certain events from our past have shaped our self-concept, and how we allow them to reinforce that concept in the present.
3. Examining the accuracy of our current organization of memory – that is, how the episodes from our past reinforce the semantic containers and themes we’ve identified, and how appropriate and accurate those associations are – within a framework of compassionate affection for our being.
4. Envisioning alternative arrangements of memory (placing the episodes in different semantic containers) that is more positive, constructive and reinforcing of the qualities and priorities of both our *ideal* and *real* self-concepts.
5. Reinforcing our chosen memory organization with self-nurturing practices in Integral Lifework’s thirteen dimensions of nourishment – including but not limited to the five core AMR practices – and overcoming barriers to that self-nurturing.

This is just a sketch of the AMR process, and the details of each step and core practice will need to be tailored to each person’s individual strengths and struggles. In this sense, the real potential of AMR depends on addressing the barriers to self-nurturing that are identified within Integral Lifework itself.