



12 Smart Things to Do When the Booze and Drugs Are Gone: Choosing Emotional Sobriety through Self-Awareness and Right Action

By Allen Berger Ph. D.

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The author of the classic 12 Stupid Things That Mess Up Recovery offers a fresh list of "smart" things to do to attain and sustain emotional sobriety.

The author of the recovery mainstay 12 Stupid Things That Mess Up Recovery offers a fresh list of "smart" things to do to attain and sustain emotional sobriety. Whether it's called "dry drunk" or "white knuckle sobriety," it's that stage in recovery when we realize that "putting the plug in the jug" isn't enough. The next step is taking responsibility for the emotional immaturity that fuels our addictive personality and has a tremendous impact on ourselves and others. Allen Berger, PhD, draws on the teachings of Bill W. and psychotherapy pioneers to offer twelve hallmarks of emotional sobriety that, when practiced, give people the confidence to be accountable for their behavior, ask for what they want and need, and grow and develop a deeper trust in the process of life. These smart things include: understanding who you are and what's important to you; learning not to take others' reactions personally; trusting your inner compass; taking responsibility for your reactions to problematic situations. It is in these practices that we find release from what Bill W. described as an "absolute dependency" on people or circumstances, and develop the tools to find prestige, security, and belonging within.

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Editorial Review

Review

Berger, Allen. 12 Smart Things To Do When the Booze and Drugs Are Gone: Choosing Emotional Sobriety Through Self-Awareness and Right Action. **Hazelden.** Sept. 2010. c.200p. bibliog. **ISBN 9781592858217.** pap. \$14.95.

McAlister, Brian. Full Recovery: Creating a Personal Action Plan for Life Beyond Sobriety. 2d ed. **MacSimum.** Sept. 2010. c.240p. **ISBN 9780982394816. \$22.95.** SELF-HELP

These two titles cover similar territory—how to free oneself from emotional bondage and to achieve abundant living after putting the plug in the jug. Psychologist Berger (*12 Stupid Things That Mess Up Recovery*) draws on the studies from psychological research and the lessons of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) founder Bill W. to offer 12 smart things to do to achieve self-mastery—the maintaining of a healthy relationship with oneself. Each chapter offers readings and instructions on such goals as pressuring oneself instead of others to change, appreciating what is, and not taking things personally. Essentially, Berger helps the reader to fill the hole once filled by addiction in a manner comfortable to those familiar with AA material. Motivational speaker and recovering alcoholic McAlister incorporates a strong reliance on God for assistance in achieving long-term success. He uses personal examples and case studies of both success and failure to help the reader explore old maladaptive habits/beliefs, find motivational activities, and develop a game plan that overcomes hurdles. He provides exercises and practical applications for career and relationship goals. All those in recovery or even actively drinking can get help from either book, but practicing Christians may prefer *Full Recovery*.

(Brian McAlister *Library Journal*)

About the Author

Allen Berger, PhD, a popular public speaker and nationally recognized expert on the science of recovery, is the author of *12 Stupid Things That Mess Up Recovery*, *12 Smart Things to Do When the Booze and Drugs Are Gone*, and *12 Hidden Rewards of Making Amends*. His pamphlet, *How to Get the Most Out of Group Therapy*, helps clients in treatment, continuing care, or Twelve Step groups, understand what happens in group meetings and how these meetings help members acquire recovery skills. Dr. Berger lives in Los Angeles, California.

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