

An Integral Guide to Recovery: Twelve Steps and Beyond

Guy du Plessis



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In the information age of the 21st century, the world has become exceedingly complex. Never before in history have we had access to the sum total of all human knowledge, technology, and wisdom. Consequently, finding the right path and methods to recovery can often be perplexing to the newcomer, as well as the "old timer." This book presents to you the recovering addict a progressive recovery map and toolkit suitable for the complexities of today's world. This ultra-modern approach to recovery is known as Integrated Recovery, a truly holistic lifestyle approach that provides all the essential structure and knowledge to guide you in working a wholly comprehensive, inclusive, and sustainable recovery program, achieved through an integration of the best contemporary knowledge and personal development tools. Although Integrated Recovery is a novel approach, it has not set out to reinvent the wheel as such, but is a synergistic framework that includes many time-honored recovery practices. Integrated Recovery is a 12-step, abstinence-based approach that is informed by Integral Theory, mindfulness, positive psychology, and existentialism.

What makes the Integrated Recovery approach unique, relative to other holistic and integrative approaches to recovery, is that it implements the revolutionary ideas of the Integral model, developed by the American philosopher Ken Wilber. The word "integral" means comprehensive, inclusive, and non-marginalizing. The Integral model, or Integral Theory, attempts exactly that: to include as many perspectives and methodologies as possible within a coherent view of any topic. The Integral model is capable of helping to design a "recovery worldview" that allows a truly holistic approach to recovery and its practices.

This book is dedicated to showing you how to design, plan, and execute your own personalized Integrated Recovery Program - which can be defined as mindfully practicing your physical, psychological, intellectual, existential, social, and environmental dimensions as part of an Integrated Recovery Lifestyle, that is geared towards continued personal growth in relation to self, others, and our being-in-the-world. We are all unique; therefore our recovery paths will also be unique. One size recovery does not fit all. This book will help you find a recovery program that is best suited to your unique needs.

Chapters one and two explore the core influences and philosophies that inspire the Integrated Recovery approach, providing brief overviews of Integral Theory, mindfulness, positive psychology, existentialism, and 12-step philosophy. In the remaining chapters, which cover the practical application of the Integrated Recovery approach, I introduce the various practices, in each of the six recovery dimensions (physical, psychological, intellectual, existential, social, and environmental), that form part of an Integrated Recovery Lifestyle, and explain how all of these practices work together synergistically. The chapters on the recovery dimensions end with suggestions and written exercises that will assist you in designing your recovery practices for that recovery dimension. Chapter nine will assist you in putting together your own personalized Integrated Recovery Program.

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