

Step 12



*“Here we begin to practice all of the Twelve Steps of the program in our daily lives so that we and those about us can find **emotional sobriety.**”*

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, 1952 - 1981.



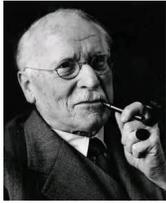
Earnie Larsen

*“Recovery is and demands change. Recovery means things have to be different than they were. It means that I have to be different than I was (p.46 - 1985) **Stage II Recovery.**”*

Jung is reported to have told his patient Rowland Hazard the following:

*"Here and there, once in a while, alcoholics have had what are called **vital spiritual experiences**..... They appear to be in the nature of **huge emotional displacements and rearrangements**. Ideas, emotions and attitudes which were once the guiding forces for the lives of these men are suddenly **cast to one side**, and a completely **new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them**.*

Pg. 22. *Alcoholics Anonymous*"



Carl Jung, M.D.



Rowland Hazard

*"Your program cannot take you further than your **definition** of recovery."*



Earnie Larsen

Stages of Recovery

Earnie described Stage One Recovery as breaking the hold of our primary addiction.



Earnie Larsen

“Abstinence may get you out of a bad place, but getting out of a bad place just gets you out; it is not the same as getting to a good place (p. 10).”

*“Victims of dry drunks have made a First Step relative to their addiction, but have not made a First Step relative to the **living problems that underlies all addictions and ultimately limits their ability to function in loving relationships.**”*



Earnie Larsen

*Emotional sobriety is the cure for **sober suffering.***



Fred Holmquist - The Lodge at Hazelden

Emotional Sobriety involves becoming aware of and challenging our habitual attitudes and beliefs about:

Our Problem

Our Self

Our Relationships with Others

Stage II

Earnie described Stage Two Recovery as "...rebuilding of the life that was saved in Stage One."



Earnie Larsen

*"...Stage II Recovery gets at the **underlying patterns and habits that caused us trouble in the first place**. And if nothing changes, then nothing changes...the same results will pop up through our whole life (p. 83)."*

Many people in recovery ...
*“have made a First Step relative to their addiction, but have not made a First Step relative to the **living problems that underlies all addictions and ultimately limits their ability to function in loving relationships.**”*



Earnie Larsen

*Fred Holmquist describes this experience as **“sober suffering.”***



Fred Holmquist -
Author of Drop the Rock: The Ripple Effect.

*“I believe that **learning to love and make relationships work** is at the **core** of full recovery (p. 15).”*



Earnie Larsen



Stage II Recovery is
**contingent on emotional
sobriety.**

Emotional Sobriety and Our Emotional Center of Gravity

The Shift in the Location of the Emotional Center of Gravity in Emotional Sobriety



If I'm OK even if ? ? ?

Emotional sobriety creates
true
independence of
spirit.

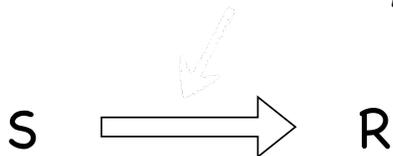
Emotional Sobriety
and
Living in the Space
Between the Stimulus and
Response

The Essence of Emotional Sobriety



Viktor Frankl, M.D.

*"There's a **space** between the Stimulus and our Response. In that space **is our power to choose our response**. In our response lies our growth and our freedom - try to live there."*



S

Space Between the Stimulus and the Response

Emotional Sobriety Lives Here

R

- Autonomy
- Individuality
- Holding on to Yourself
- Soothing and Supporting Yourself
- Keeping a Physical, Emotional and Spiritual Balance
- Maintaining Your Emotional Center of Gravity
- Validating Yourself
- Having Flexibility in your Response-Ability
- Letting the Best of You Run the Show

Emotional Sobriety and Emotional Maturity

“...**maturing** is the **transcendence** from environmental support to **self-support**. (p.28). ”



Fritz Perls, M.D. - Founder of Gestalt Therapy

Fritz Perls (1969). Gestalt Therapy Verbatim.

*"If our **freedom depends exclusively on another person allowing it**, we **lose** our own sense of the **part we must exercise in protecting and defining our own psychological space...**"*



Drs. Miriam and Erving Polster

Erving and Miriam Polster, Ph.D.
Gestalt Therapy Integrated: Contours
of Theory and Practice (1973).

Emotional Sobriety and Responsibility

*"Self-responsibility begins with the **recognition that I am ultimately responsible for my own existence**; that no one else is here on earth to serve me, to take care of me, or fill my needs."*



Dr. Nathaniel Brandon

Nathaniel Brandon (1996) Taking
Responsibility.

“So long as an individual cannot accept the fact of what he is, cannot permit himself to be fully aware of it, cannot fully admit the truth into his consciousness, **he cannot move beyond that point**: if he denies the reality of his condition, he **cannot proceed to alter it, cannot achieve healthy changes in his personality**



Dr. Nathaniel Branden

(p. 110 - *The Disowned Self*.)”

I am responsible for ...

- ◁ the level of consciousness or awareness I bring to my recovery, my relationship with myself and others.
- ◁ my choices, decisions, and actions.
- ◁ the fulfillment of my desires and needs.
- ◁ how I deal with people.
- ◁ what I do about my feelings and emotions.
- ◁ my life and well being.
- ◁ having the best of me talk to the best of you.
- ◁ my level of humility.
- ◁ my emotional sobriety.

Emotional Sobriety and Unenforceable Rules

*“Where a person experiences a loss or trauma in childhood that undermines his sense of security and self-acceptance, he would **project** into his image of the future the **requirement** that it **reverse** the experiences of the past.”*



Alexander Lowen, M.D.

Lowen, A. (1975). *Bionergetics*. Penguin Book.

*“**Desperation** creates **Illusions** - **illusions** create **desperation**.”*



Alexander Lowen, M.D.

“The critical point during the development, both collectively and individually, is the ability to differentiate between self-actualization and the actualization of a concept.”



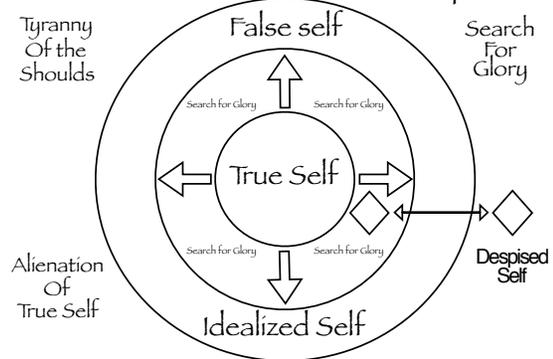
Fritz Perls, *Gestalt Therapy and Human Potential*, 1975, p. 74.

“Many people **dedicate** their lives to **actualize a concept** of what they should be like, rather than to actualize themselves...This is again the **curse** of the ideal. **The curse that you should not be what you are.**”



Fritz Perls (1969). Gestalt Therapy Verbatim.

True Self Model of Personal Development





“The fostering of the **phony self** is always at the **expense of the real self**, the latter being treated with disdain, at best like a poor relative.”

Self Analysis - 1942, p. 23



Karen Horney, M.D.

*“At the core of this alienation from the actual-self... is the **loss of the feeling of being an active determining force in our own lives.**”*

Neurosis and Human Growth: The Struggle Toward Self-Realization



Karen Horney, M.D.

*“The self-actualizer expects the **possible**. The one who wants to actualize a concept attempts the **impossible**.”*

Fritz Perls, Gestalt Therapy and Human Potential. 1975, p. 74.



"The integrity of a person is impaired because of the alienation from the self, the unavoidable unconscious pretenses, the also unavoidable unconscious compromises due to unsolved conflicts, the self-contempt - all these forces lead to ... a diminished capacity for being sincere with oneself."



Karen Horney, M.D.

Neurosis and Human Growth: The Struggle Toward Self-Realization

"Growing in a healthy way means liberating those evolutionary constructive forces inherent in man which urge him to realize his given potentialities."



Karen Horney, M.D.

The Therapeutic Process: Essays and Lectures - 1999, p. 248.

A Definition of Emotional Sobriety

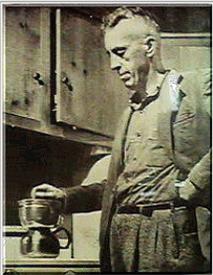
"Emotional Sobriety is when the best in you does the thinking and talking for all of you.

*This state of mind is achieved when **what you do becomes the determining force in your emotional well being** rather than allowing your emotional well being to be overly influenced by external events or by what others are or are not doing."*

Allen Berger, Ph.D. - 2018

Bill's Letter in 1956

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (January - 1958)



I think many oldsters who have put our 'booze cure' to severe but successful tests still find they often lack emotional sobriety. Perhaps they will be the spear head for the next major development in AA, the development of much more real maturity and balance (which is to say, humility) in our relations with ourselves, with our fellows, and with God.

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (1958)

Those adolescent urges that so many of us have for top approval, perfect security, and perfect romance, urges quite appropriate to age seventeen, prove to be an impossible way of life when we are at age forty-seven and fifty seven.

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (1958)

Since AA began, I've taken immense wallops in all these areas because of my failure to grow up emotionally and spiritually. My God, how painful it is to keep demanding the impossible, and how very painful to discover, finally, that all along we had the cart before the horse. Then comes the final agony of seeing how awfully wrong we have been, but still finding ourselves unable to get off the emotional merry-go-round.

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (1958)

How to translate a right mental conviction into a right emotional result, and so into easy, happy and good living. Well, that's not only the neurotics problem, it's the problem of life itself for all of us who have got to the point of real willingness to hew to right principles in all of our affairs.

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (1958)

Even then, as we hew away, peace and joy may still elude us. That's the place so many AA oldsters have come to. And it's a hell of a spot, literally. How shall our unconscious, from which so many of our fears, compulsions and phony aspirations still stream, be brought into line with what we actually believe, know and want! How to convince our dumb, raging and hidden Mr. Hyde becomes our main task.

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (1958)

I've recently come to believe that this can be achieved. I believe so because I begin to see many benighted ones, folks like you and me, commencing to get results.

Last autumn, depression, having no really rational cause at all, almost took me to the cleaners. I began to be scared that I was in for another long chronic spell. Considering the grief I've had with depressions, it wasn't a bright prospect.

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (1958)

I kept asking myself, 'Why can't the Twelve Steps work to release depression?' By the hour, I stared at the St. Francis Prayer ... 'it's better to comfort than to be comforted.' Here was the formula all right, but why didn't it work?

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (1958)

Suddenly, I realized what the matter was. My basic flaw had always been dependence, almost absolute dependence, on people or circumstances to supply me with prestige, security, and the like. Failing to get these things according to my perfectionist dreams and specifications, I had fought for them. And when defeat came, so did my depression.

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (1958)

There wasn't a chance of making the outgoing love of St. Francis a workable and joyous way of life until these fatal and almost absolute dependencies were cut away.

Because I had over the years undergone a little spiritual development, the absolute quality of these frightful dependencies had never before been so starkly revealed.

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (1958)

Reinforced by what grace I could secure in prayer, I found I had to exert every ounce of will and action to cut off these faulty emotional dependencies upon people, upon AA, indeed upon any act or circumstance whatsoever.

Then could I be free to love as Francis did. Emotional and instinctual satisfactions, I saw, were really the extra dividends of having love, offering love, and expressing love appropriate to each relation of life.

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (1958)

Plainly, I could not avail myself to God's love until I was able to offer it back to Him by loving others as He would have me. And I couldn't possibly do that so long as I was victimized by false dependencies.

For my dependencies meant demand, a demand for the possession and control of the people and the conditions surrounding me. While those words 'absolute dependence' may look like a gimmick, they were the ones that helped to trigger my release into my present degree of stability and quietness of mind, qualities which I am now trying to consolidate by offering love to others regardless of the return to me.

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (1958)

This seems to be the primary healing circuit: an outgoing love of God's creation and His people, by means of which we avail ourselves of His love for us. It is most clear that the real current can't flow until our paralyzing dependencies are broken, and broken at depth. Only then can we possibly have a glimmer of what adult love really is.

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (1958)

..... If we examine every disturbance we have, great or small, we will find at the root of it some unhealthy dependence and its consequent demand. Let us, with God's help, continually surrender these hobbling demands. Then we can be set free to live and love: we may then be able to gain emotional sobriety.

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier by Bill Wilson (1958)

Of course I haven't offered you a really new idea only a gimmick that has started to unhook several of my own "hexes" at depth. Nowadays, my brain no longer races compulsively in either elation, grandiosity, or depression. I have been given a quiet place in bright sunshine."



Viktor Frankl, M.D.

"We had to learn ourselves and, furthermore, we had to teach the despairing men, that it did not really matter what we expected from life, but rather what life expected from us.....we needed to think of ourselves as those who were being questioned by life... Life ultimately means taking the responsibility to find the right answer to its problems and to fulfill the tasks which it constantly sets for each individual."

Viktor E. Frankl (1959). Man's Search for Meaning.

Step 10

*Finally we begin to see that all people, including ourselves, are to some extent **emotional ill** as well as **frequently wrong** and then we approach **true tolerance** and see what real love for our fellows actually means. It will become more and more evident as we go forward that it is **pointless to become angry or to get hurt by people, who like us, are suffering from the pains of growing up.**"*

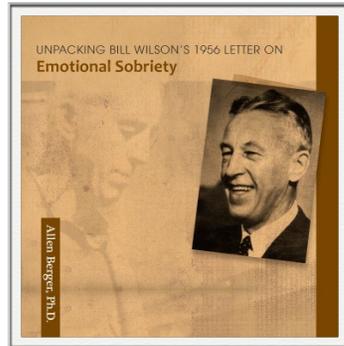
Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, 1952 - 1981.

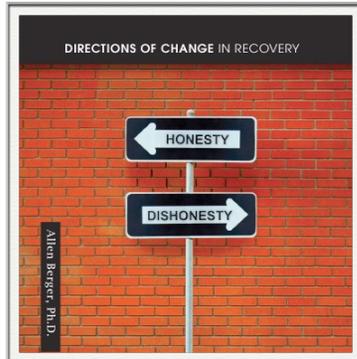


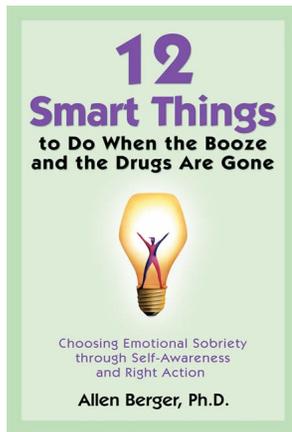
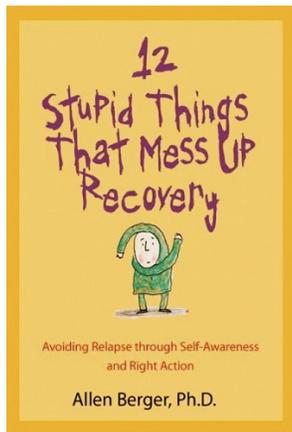
"....sobriety is only the bare beginning. It is only the first gift of the first awakening. If more gifts are to be received, our awakening has to go on. And if it does go on, we find that bit by bit we can discard the old life – the one that didn't work – for a new life that can and does work under any conditions whatever. Regardless of worldly success or failure, regardless of pain or joy, regardless of sickness or health or even of death itself, a new life of endless possibilities can be lived if we are willing to continue our awakening."

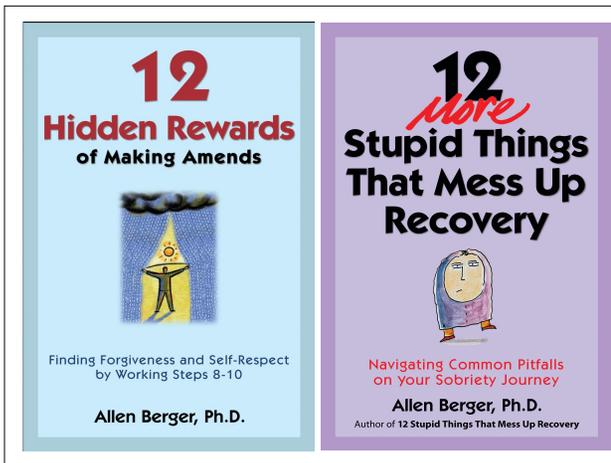
Bill Wilson (1957).











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