



Selected Papers of William L. White

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Collected papers, interviews, video presentations, photos, and archival documents on the history of addiction treatment and recovery in America.

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Foreword

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Recovering people and their families and allies are crafting numerous roles to support what is rapidly becoming a worldwide addiction recovery advocacy movement. The literature of this movement has until recently been restricted to confessional narratives, recovery guides, and brief histories of recovery community organizations. Distinctly missing has been a body of literature in which recovery is addressed as a subject of serious intellectual study. There have been only sparse references to recovery within the larger history of ideas and little writing on the political, economic, cultural and institutional contexts in which recovery flourishes or suffocates. That missing tradition is being filled by a rising vanguard of gifted thinkers and writers. Stephen Bamber is among the most eloquent of this vanguard.

Implicit in Bamber's growing body of written work is the premise that ideas about recovery and the language through which these ideas are expressed matter, and matter at personal and systems levels. His essays mark the blossoming of an intellectual tradition within the new recovery advocacy movement. This first collection of

Bamber essays is an unspoken manifesto that recovering people have far more to offer the alcohol and other drug problems arena than their personal stories of self-destruction and rebirth. Members of a new generation of recovering people today possess or are obtaining advanced degrees and using their intellectual skills to examine recovery beyond their own personal experience.

Bamber is at his best when celebrating the growing varieties of recovery experience; extolling the role of community in long-term recovery; casting warnings about the commodification and commercialization of recovery; illuminating the transformations in personal identity so commonly experienced in addiction recovery; and challenging us to escape the stagnant and polarized drug policy debates that have long prevailed in the UK and the US. This collection of essays will find many appreciative readers. I highly commend it.