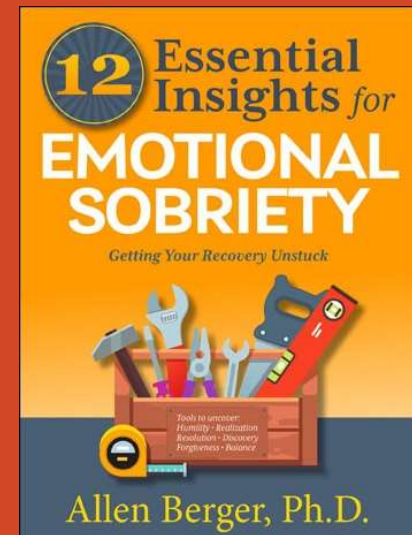


Emotional Sobriety Study Area

Book Study on 12 Essential Insights for Emotional Sobriety

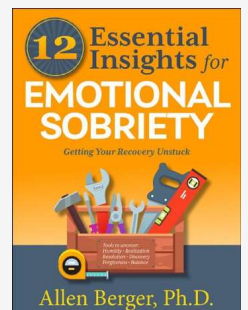
Led by Tom Potash

Every 1st Thursday, 6pm Pacific / 9pm Eastern



Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

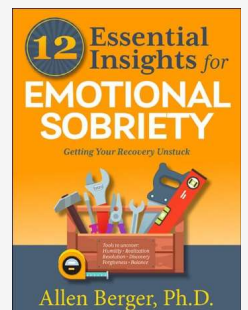
Remember, the problem is never the problem. The problem is our limited capacity to cope.



Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

People only come to deeper consciousness by **intentional struggles with contradictions, conflicts, inconsistencies, inner confusions**, and what the biblical tradition calls “sin” or moral failure. Starting with Adam and Eve, there seems to be a necessary “transgression” that sets the whole human story into motion.

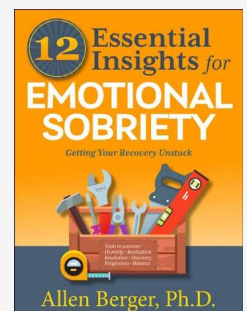
(Rohr, Richard. Breathing Under Water: Spirituality and the Twelve Steps, pp. 51-52. Franciscan Media. Kindle Edition.)



Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

In other words, the goal is actually not the perfect avoidance of all sin, which is not possible anyway (see 1 John 1:8–9; Romans 5:12), but **the struggle itself, and the encounter and wisdom that come from it.** Law and failure create the foil, which creates the conflict, which leads to a very different kind of victory than any of us expected. Not perfect moral victory, not moral superiority, but luminosity of awareness and compassion for the world, which becomes our real moral victory.

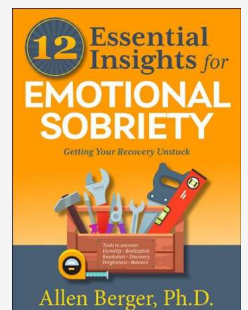
(Rohr, Richard. *Breathing Under Water: Spirituality and the Twelve Steps*, p. 52. Franciscan Media. Kindle Edition.)



Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

Surrender to Win

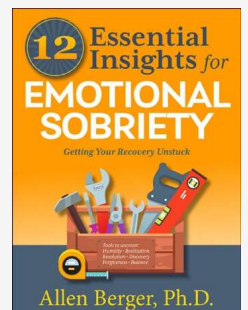
- AA's First Step: Who cares to admit complete defeat? Practically no one, of course. Every natural instinct cries out against the idea of personal powerlessness. (AA 12 & 12, pg 24)
- All of A.A.'s Twelve Steps ask us to go contrary to our natural desires . . .they all deflate our egos. (AA 12 & 12, pg 55)



Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

“For ten long years nobody could say whether the forces of destruction would prevail or whether the **educational value of trouble** would bring the right ideas. If you look at me as the power driver I once was and still largely am, you will see that **every single one of these Traditions was a contradiction of my natural inclinations**. But the group conscience was wiser than me: I could not say who the membership would be; I couldn't run this thing from New York; it would be autonomous - and so on down through the list of Traditions, all of them negations of that which I naturally wanted for me. So that was the point at which Alcoholics Anonymous began to educate me. Everybody had learned the hard way. There was immense travail, immense trouble, but this was the kind of trouble that caused growth. This didn't turn out to be destructive trouble - this was constructive.

(Bill Wilson, 1958 WSC)

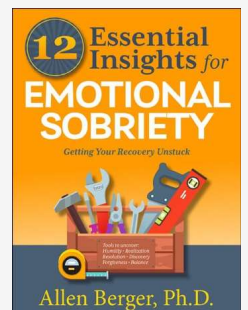


Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

Forgive Others to Gain Freedom

- Sandy B. taught about forgiveness in this talk, between the 13:25 – 20:00 mark

<https://mirror.xa-speakers.org/speakers2/aa/single-speakers/sandy-b/sandy-b-gsrdp201296.mp3>

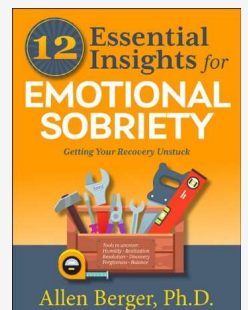


Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

Living in the space between the stimulus and our reaction allows the best of us to take charge of the rest of us.

Viktor Frankl pointed out that when we live in the space between the stimulus and the response, we have the power to choose, and in that choice lies our emotional freedom and our emotional maturity. I would go so far as to say that in that same space, between the stimulus and our reaction, lies our emotional sobriety.

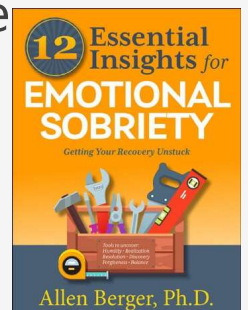
(12 Essential Insights, pg 193)



Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

Living in the space between the stimulus and our reaction allows the best of us to take charge of the rest of us.

Bill Wilson recognized the importance of learning how to pause before jumping into action. He said, "Our first objective will be the development of self-restraint. This carries a top priority rating **Nothing pays off like restraint of tongue and pen** . . . We should train ourselves to step back and think. For we can neither think nor act to good purpose until the habit of self-restraint has become automatic" (12 Essential Insights, pg 193-194)



Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

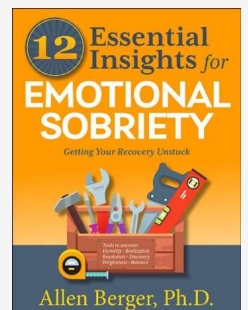
Integrated Thinking

Researchers have learned that the two sides of our brain—left hemisphere and right hemisphere—have different approaches to processing information. Each hemisphere has a very specific mode of operation or function. These different modes of thinking can uncover novel solutions to problems.

(12 Essential Insights, pg 194)

Our left hemisphere is quite linear and conceptual in its function... categorizes things into good and bad... concerned with the letter of the law.

The right hemisphere cares about the big picture and the meaning of an experience... It is holistic and nonlinear.

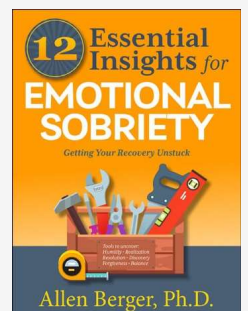


Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

Integrated Thinking: **Grabbing hold while hanging loose**

- Our left hemisphere grabs hold of an issue and tinkers with it. This can be important in solving a problem.
- Hang loose and not continually focus on the issue your left hemisphere has taken hold of.

(12 Essential Insights, pg 198)

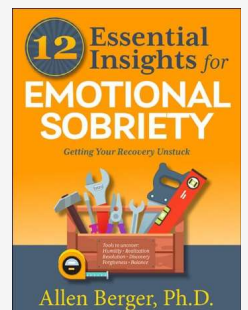


Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

Integrated Thinking: **Being active while living in passive, receptive wonderment**

- The left hemisphere is looking to get into action to solve the problem. It thinks sequentially and looks at what caused the problem and therefore what can be done to solve it.
- The right hemisphere is more passive and receptive. It takes in the experience and processes it by looking at the big picture. The right hemisphere has a sense of wonderment.

(12 Essential Insights, pg 198)

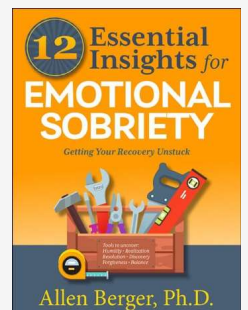


Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

Integrated Thinking: **Analyzing particulars while seeing the whole picture**

- We can find novel solutions when we break problems down, look at the parts
- Then allow our right brain to assemble a new whole

(12 Essential Insights, pg 198-199)

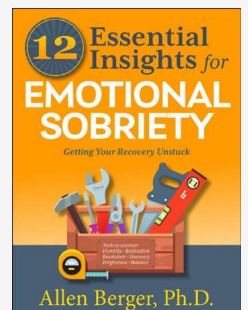


Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

Integrated Thinking: **Being in control while letting go of control**

- Serenity Prayer. We seek the serenity (a form of right-brain activity, releasing control) to accept the things we cannot change (a leftbrain recognition that life is what it is), the courage to change the things we can (a form of control, or left-brain action), and the wisdom to know the difference (an analytical or left-brain activity).
- This hemisphere switching requires us to be very flexible in our thinking, taking control when necessary and releasing control when it is clear that our attempts at control are blocking our search for serenity.

(12 Essential Insights, pg 199)

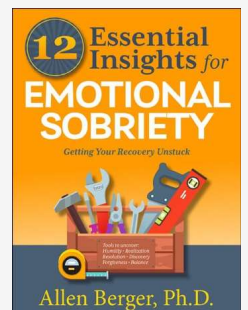


Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

Integrated Thinking: **Being certain while allowing for confusion or uncertainty**

- The left mode of thinking is about certainty. Remember, the left hemisphere deals in binaries and absolute truths—this or that is right, not both of them. There are times when this kind of certainty can be extremely valuable in solving a problem.
- Other times, it is more beneficial to remain in a place of confusion and uncertainty while we wait for more information.

(12 Essential Insights, pg 199-200)

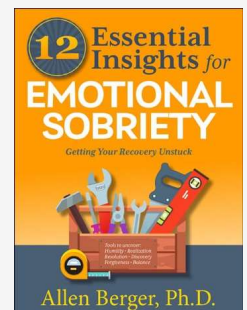


Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

Integrated Thinking: **Being serious while having a sense of humor**

- We need to make a commitment to improve our emotional autonomy. This is serious left-brain business, no question about it, because our emotional dependency is toxic.
- But we must also learn to laugh (right brain) at ourselves as we see how outrageous we are when we expect everything to go our way.

(12 Essential Insights, pg 200)

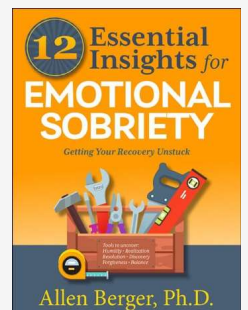


Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

Integrated Thinking: **Being curious while being with “what is”**

- Curiosity can be very helpful when facing a problem. If we can become curious about what is happening, instead of taking things personally, we can look with a clear head at what we need to change or accept.
- But we also need to be with what is. To sit with what is and let it really speak to us.

(12 Essential Insights, pg 200-201)

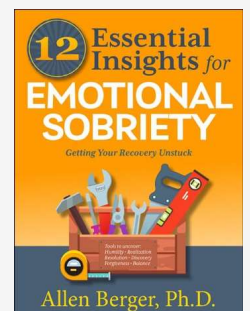


Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

Integrated Thinking: **Naming things while experiencing things**

- If I can identify and label my emotional dependency and the unenforceable rules it generates, then I can surrender my expectations. This can be a very logical (left-brain) way of achieving emotional sobriety.
- But we also learn about our emotional dependency through experiencing it, by sitting with the pain or frustration of the experience we are having (a right-brain way of thinking).

(12 Essential Insights, pg 201)

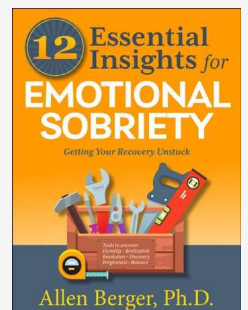


Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

Integrated Thinking: **Being intellectual while being intuitive**

- A lot of times we are going to see the right path for us to take before we are going to be able to take that path.
- Ninth Step Promise that “we will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us”

(12 Essential Insights, pg 201-202)



Chapter 10: Discovering Novel Solutions

We seem to follow an arc that begins with unconscious incompetence, progresses to conscious incompetence, continues to conscious competence, and if we stick at it long enough, our conscious competence becomes unconscious competence.

(12 Essential Insights, pg 201)

