



The Soul of Recovery: Uncovering the Spiritual Dimension in the Treatment of Addictions

Christopher D. Ringwald

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Millions of alcoholics and addicts recover through spirituality. In *The Soul of Recovery: Uncovering the Spiritual Dimension in the Treatment of Addictions*, author and journalist Christopher D. Ringwald tells how and why they seek and achieve these transformations.

Ranging as far back as the Washingtonian Total Abstinence Society in 1840, Ringwald illuminates the use of spirituality within a wide range of treatment options--from the famous Twelve Step-style programs to those tailored to the needs of addicted women, Native Americans, or homeless teens not ready to quit. Focusing on the results rather than the validity of beliefs espoused by these programs, he demonstrates how addicts recover through practices such as self-examination, meditation, prayer and reliance on a self-defined higher power. But the most compelling evidence of spirituality's importance comes from those directly involved in the process. Ringwald traveled across the country to visit dozens of programs and interview hundreds of addicts, alcoholics, counselors, family members, doctors and scientists. Many share moving stories of suffering, survival, and redemption. A homeless man, a surgeon, a college student, a working mother--each describes the descent into addiction and how spirituality offered a practical, personal means to recovery. Ringwald also examines the controversies surrounding faith-based treatment and the recovery movement, from the conflict between science and spirituality, to skepticism about the "new age" brand of spirituality these programs encourage, to constitutional issues over court-mandated participation in allegedly religious treatment programs.

Combining in-depth research with powerful personal accounts, this fascinating exploration of spirituality will provide a fuller understanding of the nature of addiction and how people overcome it.

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