

Out of the Wreck I Rise: A Literary Companion to Recovery

Neil Steinberg

Sara Bader

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The advice is not sugar-coated—rehab is tough, and life after rehab can be tougher—but beyond the battle, promises the work, is a reclaimed world.

Out of The Wreck I Rise: A Literary Companion to Recovery uses the power of some very choice words to help guide the way toward lasting sobriety. Compiled by *Chicago Sun Times* columnist Neil Steinberg and editor and Quotenik founder Sara Bader, the book features selected writings and quotes from philosophers, authors, artists, musicians, and poets, broadened with advice about hitting bottom, naming your pain, and making the choice to live a better life.

For Steinberg, crawling from the wreckage is personal. His recovery from alcoholism began over a decade ago. Such experience with and true knowledge of the lure of spirits lend depth to each chapter. Excuses, denials, relapses, and fear of an emotional and chemical dependency that can't be overcome—these are classic patterns of addiction, just as seeking help and finding inner strength are patterns of recovery.

Through its collective guidance, *Out of The Wreck I Rise* moves past platitudes to eloquence, hope, and an occasional dose of healthy cynicism. "Seeing your thoughts and experiences reflected on the page can offer epiphany and validation," Steinberg and Bader suggest. Quotes are taken from fiction, autobiographies, journals, and letters, and are rich in their variety. Sage thoughts from Seneca to Walt Whitman alternate with offerings from more modern thinkers, from Anais Nin to Russell Brand. Writers from Jack London to Stephen King also confess their issues with maintaining creative temperance. Some have struggled with addiction, alcohol or otherwise, and some have not.

Rather than remaining bogged down in unhappy camaraderie, however, the tone of the quotes that follow is one of encouragement and renewal. The advice is not sugar-coated—rehab is tough, and life after rehab can be tougher—but beyond the battle, promises the work, is a reclaimed world.

As inspiration, author Raymond Carver's triumph over his near-fatal alcoholism is detailed, with the reminder that he considered his extra time on earth to be "gravy." Word by word and page by page, *Out of the Wreck I Rise* proves itself to be an invaluable resource for all who need help (or for those who love an addict) and are hoping for some "gravy" of their own.

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