Recovery is widely endorsed as a guiding principle of mental health policy. Recovery brings new rules for services, e.g. user involvement and person-centred care, as well as new tools for clinical collaborations, e.g. shared decision making and psychiatric advance directives. These developments are complemented by new proposals regarding more ethically consistent anti-discrimination and involuntary treatment legislation, as well as participatory approaches to evidence-based medicine and policy.

Recovery is more than a bottom up movement turned into top down mental health policy in English-speaking countries. Recovery integrates concepts that have evolved internationally over a long time. It brings together major stakeholders and different professional groups in mental health, who share the aspiration to overcome current conceptual reductionism and prognostic negativism in psychiatry.

Recovery is the consequence of the achievements of the user movement. Most conceptual considerations and decisions have evolved from collaborations between people with and without a lived experience of mental health problems and the psychiatric service system. Many of the most influential publications have been written by users and ex-users of services and work-groups that have brought together individuals with and without personal experiences as psychiatric patients.

This book was originally published in German. The translation has been fully revised, references have been amended to include the English-language literature and new material has been added to reflect recent developments. It features a Foreword by Helen Glover who relates how there is more to recovery than the absence or presence of symptoms and how health care professionals should embrace the growing evidence that people can reclaim their lives and often thrive beyond the experience of a mental illness.