In-Christ is a Christ-Centered Twelve Step Program of Recovery and Support for Addicts and Alcoholics

SPECIAL THANKS TO
Alcoholics Anonymous who In-Christ respectfully and gratefully acknowledges as the original author and pioneer of Twelve Step Recovery

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Anyone interested in starting a meeting of In-Christ, please see meeting format on page 64. For more information or to comment or leave a message, E-Mail Bill at: inchristscripture@gmail.com

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UNITED IN-CHRIST

In-Christ is a fellowship of recovering addicts and alcoholics united in spirit by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. We come together in the name of Jesus to encourage and support one another while reaching out to others seeking freedom from the bondage of drugs and alcohol in their lives. In-Christ is not affiliated with any denomination or organization, nor wish to debate over political or doctrinal issues. Our desire is to honor the Lord living clean and sober and carry a message of hope to the addict and alcoholic still suffering.

IN-CHRIST TRADITIONS

1. The presence of the Holy Spirit is expressed through the group conscience in all meetings. The name of Jesus Christ is honored without exception.
2. A desire to stop using or drinking is the only requirement to attend “Closed” meetings of In-Christ. “Open” meetings are open to anyone who may wish to attend.
3. Our desire is to honor the Lord living clean and sober and carry a message of hope to the addict and alcoholic still suffering.
4. In-Christ has no affiliation with any denomination or organization and does not wish to debate over political or doctrinal issues.
5. Anonymity is most important to the unity of In-Christ and confidentiality of those who attend, therefore what is said in meetings and who attends meetings – we ask will stay in meetings.
THE TWELVE STEPS OF IN-CHRIST

1. We admitted we were powerless over drugs and alcohol and that our lives had become unmanageable.

2. Came to believe that God through Jesus Christ could restore us to sanity.

3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God through Jesus Christ.

4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God through Jesus Christ, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts and alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.
THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol— that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood him, praying only for knowledge of his will for us and the power to carry them out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

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Step 1 – “We admitted we were powerless over drugs and alcohol and that our lives had become unmanageable.” – Honesty-

PSALM 88:1-4

1 O LORD, the God who saves me,  
   day and night I cry out before you

2 May my prayer come before you;  
   turn your ear to my cry.

3 For my soul is full of trouble  
   and my life draws near the grave.

4 I am counted among those who go down to the pit;  
   I am like a man without strength.

Every addict and alcoholic must hit their own personal bottom. Until they honestly admit their powerlessness over drugs or alcohol and the unmanageability caused by using or drinking, continuous and permanent sobriety cannot be achieved. Surrendering to powerlessness is the first step towards freedom from bondage. Some have lost everything in getting to this point, yet others have not. By no means does the addict or alcoholic have to lose everything in order to get and stay clean and sober. However, reservations based on self-will, self-knowledge, and self-control in an effort to control using or drinking must be abandoned and complete defeat acknowledged.
Step 1

**PROVERBS 14:12**

*There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.*

The mental obsession the addict and alcoholic has with drugs or alcohol can be so powerful and so convincing that using or drinking continues to remain an option or a solution regardless of the consequences. Once again, the first step to having this destructive obsession removed is complete surrender to powerlessness over drugs or alcohol. Entertaining thoughts of using or drinking is extremely dangerous for the addict and alcoholic. Thoughts of using or drinking in a beneficial rather than destructive way is a powerful and deceptive device used by Satan. Jesus describes Satan as a liar and the father of lies. Jesus also describes Satan as the thief who comes only to steal, kill, and destroy. If Satan can get the addict or alcoholic obsessed with thoughts of using or drinking, he may very well accomplish his mission to steal, kill, and destroy.

Once the addict or alcoholic has taken that first drug or drink, an allergic reaction in the body takes place that craves more drugs or alcohol. The so-called normal or social user or drinker does not suffer from this physical allergy and compulsion. Even the heavy or problem user or drinker is not subject to this physical reaction in the body and can by choice use or drink or leave it alone. Not so with addict or alcoholic who has lost the ability to choose whether they will use or drink. The mental obsession now combined with the physical compulsion drives the addict or alcoholic relentlessly to pursue one more drug or drink, many times at any cost. It is not the second, fifth, or tenth drug or drink that does the real damage. It is the first that activates the physical compulsion which craves more and is never satisfied.
LUKE 15:11-24 – THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SON

11 Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger one said to his father, Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

13 “Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. 14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to fill his stomach with pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.”

While using or drinking the addict and alcoholic are classic examples or self-will run riot. God does not stop loving the addict and alcoholic who continues to use or drink, but that rebellion can separate them from the protection, fellowship, and provision of God. Consequences of living in rebellion against God occur whether we are aware we are living in rebellion or not. Many addicts and alcoholics will honestly admit they continued to use or drink long after they knew they were out of control. There are others who are so blinded by denial, they are unaware they are caught up in a vicious cycle of destructive using or drinking. There are still others who recognize their powerlessness early and seek help.

The financial cost of the addict and alcoholics’ separation from God can vary, but the loss of family, freedom, health, and friends is a loss money cannot buy. The fear, guilt, shame, and remorse that accompany such losses bring many to a hopeless state of mind.

The addict and alcoholic are plagued even further by humiliation caused by using or drinking. Consequences of using or drinking can limit or even destroy opportunities in the home or work place. The results of destructive using or drinking drive the addict and alcoholic far below their own integrity, talent, and true potential. Many find themselves completely broken and desperately lonely in the end.
When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have food to spare, and here am I starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.’ So he got up and went to his father.

We do not take lightly the sin of rebellion against God. We come humbly to God, and confess this sin before him. Some addicts and alcoholics believe their behavior and even their attitude towards God while using or drinking has damaged their relationship, or possibility for a relationship with God beyond repair. Some may feel they are no longer worthy to be called his child.

But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around and kissed him. The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

God waits patiently, then reaches out to meet the addict and alcoholic who are reaching out to him. God is filled with love and compassion for them and is well aware of the pain and suffering they have endured while separated from him. Returning to God or coming to him for the first time is cause for celebration, not condemnation. God responds to the addict and alcoholic with love, forgiveness, and acceptance for who we are, not what we’ve done. As his children in Christ, we are completely forgiven, deeply loved, and fully pleasing to God. We rejoice that honesty and confession release the grace of God and not his wrath.

Romans 8:1
**JAMES 4:7**

*Submit yourselves, then to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

True freedom from the obsession to use or drink is found solely in the grace and power of God through our ²Lord Jesus Christ. Just for today, we pray for the strength to stay clean and sober. If thoughts of using or drinking come, we turn immediately to God. We think through the temptation and resist the opportunity for that mental obsession to gain a foothold. Some experience complete deliverance from the obsession immediately without it returning. With others, time periods may vary for complete freedom. Surrendering to powerlessness and a willingness to go to any length to stay clean and sober are two major keys.

²John 8:36
Step 2 – “Came to believe that God through Jesus Christ could restore us to sanity” - Hope –

Psalm 33:18-22

18 But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love,

19 to deliver them from death

and keep them alive in famine.

20 We wait in hope for the LORD

he is our help and our shield.

21 In him our hearts rejoice,

for we trust in his holy name.

22 May your unfailing love rest upon us, O LORD,

even as we put our trust in you.

Our focus in step two is on hope and hope lies in the Lord’s unfailing (or unconditional) love. We found in parable of the prodigal son; God’s love, forgiveness, and acceptance. God loves us just as much today as he ever did or ever will, regardless of what we do or don’t do. God’s grace is a free 3 gift and it is our choice to receive or reject the gift. We rely on Gods’ grace to keep us clean and sober on a daily basis as we are all too familiar with the results of self-reliance. We do not minimize the importance of sharing our experience, strength, and hope with each other, going to meetings, helping others, and applying these steps in our lives. Above all, we are clean and sober today by the grace of God.

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3 Ephesians 2:8-9
**PROVERBS 30:5**

“Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

“Came to believe” refers to a process that will take some time. Years of using and drinking left us with a belief system based more on lies than truth. It will take some time to change our attitude and thinking in the process of renewing our minds to God’s truth found in his word. It cannot be emphasized enough the importance of building our hope and faith in the truth and power of God’s holy word. We grow in our relationship with God through our Lord Jesus Christ as God reveals in his word who he is and who he has made us to be in Christ.

**JOHN 6:28-29**

28 Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?”
29 Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”

Our hope is in Jesus Christ, the son of the Living God. We believe there is no other way to come to God but through Jesus Christ. We also believe in him and in his name is the power to overcome the bondage of drugs and alcohol, and deliver us from the obsession to use or drink. “Sanity” is defined as sane or sound thinking. The thinking of an addict or alcoholic when using or drinking is anything but sane. Many of us have heard and one definition of “insanity”, which is to do the same thing over and over again expecting different results. We believe God through Jesus Christ not only can but will restore us to sanity. Our hope also lies in the testimony of the countless number of addicts and alcoholics who have been restored to sanity. If he did it for them, he will do it for anyone, for God does not play favorites.

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4 *Romans 10:17*

5 *John 14:6*
Step 2

**ROMANS 15:13**

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

As believers in Christ, we have dwelling within us the Spirit of the Lord in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. He is our comforter and counselor sent by Jesus after he had ascended into heaven to lead and guide us into all truth.

It is important to note that In-Christ encourages the use and relationship of a sponsor or spiritual advisor for members, particularly those new in recovery. A sponsor is someone we can confide in and trust. He or she is someone who has had experience in working the twelve steps of recovery in their lives, and can pass on their experience to us. We find it best if men sponsor men and woman sponsor woman.

\[6\text{ John 14:16-17}\]
Step 3 – “Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God through Jesus Christ.” - Faith –

**PSALM 17:6-7**

6 I call on you, O God, for you will answer me;

give ear to me and hear my prayer.

7 Show me the wonder of your great love,
you who save by your right hand those who take refuge in you from their foes.

Step three calls for a decision of faith. What we are really deciding is to make Jesus Lord of our lives. We call him Savior and Redeemer, but is he really Lord? We got honest in step one, found hope in step two, are we now willing to turn our will and lives over to Him? This is not a trick question, but this question does require some thought and prayer. A willingness to grow and to change are key to our decision. If we do not grow and change, it is more than likely we will use or drink again.

**PROVERBS 3:5-6**

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart

and lean not on your own understanding;

6 in all your ways acknowledge him,

and he will make your paths straight.

The need to control and be in control is a destructive characteristic of many if not all addicts and alcoholics. Driven by selfish and self-centered thinking and behavior, we were convinced we knew what was best for us and everyone else in our orbit, and sometimes
Step 3

still do. Step three is a decision we make by our own free will and free choice. We decide to surrender control or our lives over to the able care of God through Jesus Christ. A familiar saying around recovery rooms is “turn it over”. We grow in trust and faith in the Lord as we put this decision into practice on a daily basis.

MATTHEW 11:28-30

28”Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Jesus gives a welcome invitation to those of us who have lived the experience of “being sick and tired of being sick and tired”. To be yoked to Jesus is to be joined or united with him. Jesus was gentle and humble, but he was no wimp. He always was and always will be “Lord of Lords” and “King of Kings”. Yet he became a servant in submission to his Father’s will. Our decision in step three is to turn or submit our will over to the care of God through Jesus Christ. We learn about Jesus through the word of God and the counsel, conviction, and leadership of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We are never promised a life free of pain or problems. We are promised inner rest and a lighter load. To be yoked to Jesus Christ is not a problem to be feared, but the solution to any problem as well as great privilege.

7Philippians 2:6-7
Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

Faith in Jesus Christ = Peace with God + standing in grace + rejoicing in hope. A simple yet powerful equation based on the word of God. So, we surrender control of our will and lives and turn it over to the care of God through Jesus Christ. Does this mean we have no control over our own will and lives? Certainly not, God steers, we row. God doesn’t row, God steers. With God at the helm, it not only makes the journey more pleasurable, but safer too.
Step 4 – “Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.” -Courage-

**PSALM 139:1-5**

1. O LORD, you have searched me
   
and you know me,

2. You know when I sit and when rise;
   
   you perceive my thoughts from afar.

3. You discern my going out and my lying down;
   
   you are familiar with all my ways.

4. Before a word is on my tongue
   
   you know it completely O LORD.

5. You hem me in-behind and before;
   
   you have laid your hand upon me.

If using or drinking were our only problem, we really have no need to do anything more than just apply the first three steps in our lives. Many of us come into recovery with that very attitude and come to realize though using or drinking is biggest problem, it is also an outward expression of deeper problems. In step four, we take an honest look at all these problems. We take a look at how pride, fear, anger, selfishness, and self-centerness (to name a few), played such a vital role in the development of destructive patterns in our lives. Bitterness and resentment has had a damaging effect on our past and recent mental and emotional condition and we put this all down on paper. We review our sexual relations both past and present that have caused us problems. How has greed, lust, and jealousy
Step 4

been a problem in our lives? Have we lied or stolen and who or what was affected? How does guilt and remorse still trigger bouts of self-pity? We don’t go looking for things that are not there, but we do want to expose those that are. How do we change if we don’t know what to change? Our intension is to bring to the surface all our carefully hidden secrets, sins humiliating experiences, and defects of character. Some may ask, “for what purpose? So the world can see what a miserable wretch I really am?” Not hardly. It is so we can honestly take a look at ourselves on paper, admit it to another human being in the presence of God and bring this darkness into the light. As we do this we begin to heal from years or even a lifetime of isolated hurt and pain.

**PROVERBS – 16:2-3**

> 2 All a man’s ways seem innocent to him,  
> but motives are weighed by the LORD.

> 3 Commit to the LORD whatever you do,  
> and your plans will succeed.

It is so important that we seek the Lord’s help and guidance in the writing of our inventory. If we ask him for the grace and strength to take an honest look at ourselves, he will surely grant it. Though it may be difficult to begin to write, once we have made a beginning, the writing seems to flow much easier. We try not to be judgmental or critical of ourselves, but just put the facts and truth on paper. It is very important while writing our inventory, we keep our focus on step four, and not project to step five. We need not rush through writing our inventory. But once we start, we don’t delay or drag it out as we will be remembering and reliving some painful experiences and memories. In moments of fear or disturbance, we pause and God’s help.
MATTHEW 15:17-20

17 “Don’t you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? 18 But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man unclean’. 19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. 20 These are what make a man unclean’; but eating with unwashed hands does not make him ‘unclean’.”

Recovery is an inside job. Many can attest to the fact that they can stop using or drinking and still be miserable. If we do not change the way we think, what we believe, how we act and react, we may begin feeling homesick for the gutter as one lady use to put it. One thing about recovery, no one will take away your right or your choice to be miserable. We made a decision by faith in step three, and faith without works is dead. Continuing in the steps and applying these steps and spiritual principles in our daily lives is one very practical way of putting our faith into action.

Here are three types of 4th step inventories:

The first is a “Resentment list.” The resentment list basically focuses on any anger, bitterness, resentment, or unforgiveness we are holding onto. This resentment list has four columns and we will describe what we put in these columns one at a time. In the first column, the heading reads “I am resentfull at” and we put “who or what” we are resentful towards. This could be God, yourself, a family member, former or current spouse, friend, acquaintance, old boyfriend or girlfriend, someone in our childhood, adolescence, or adulthood who angered, embarrassed, mistreated or abused us. It could also be a present or former employer or employee, a former teacher or classmate, and old landlord, or it could be someone who hurt or angered us and don’t know or ever remember their name, but we do remember what they did and how they hurt us. We also list groups or classes of people such as politicians, homosexuals, cults, or T.V. evangelists.

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8 James 2:17
Step 4

We also include agencies, or institutions, such as the IRS, HRS, hospitals, banks, or credit card companies, etc. The Lord knows exactly who or what needs to go on our list. And if we ask him, the Holy Spirit is more than able and most willing to reveal and point out to us who we are resentful towards. And we he does, we don’t hesitate or rationalize, we just put it on the list.

The second column, we put “The Cause” or “Why I Am Resentful,” which is a description of the incident or situation which caused the resentment. The description of the cause could be brief or lengthy, as long as it thoroughly describes what happened to cause the resentment.

The third column we title “Affects My.” This is a single word or phrase which describes the sin, character defect, emotion, insecurity, or feeling related to the resentment from the cause. What happened in “the cause” could have resulted in fear, pride, anger or bitterness. Or, it could have “affected” my self-confidence, trust, financial security, or sexual relations. These examples are just a partial list of what was affected.

The fourth and last column, the heading will read “My Part” or “My Responsibility.” This column explains our part or our role in the resentment. One of the values of writing an inventory and self-examination is honestly evaluating what has happened in a situation. This is not to say that what happened to us was totally our responsibility, but we do discover in many cases, we placed ourselves in a position to be hurt and become resentful, and in fact, contributed to our own resentment.

Effectiveness in making our resentment list primarily depends on how honest and how thorough we are. Once again, the Lord will guide us through this if only we ask him. Also of great importance is talking to our sponsor or spiritual advisor about the fourth step before we even begin to write our inventory. Listening and talking or others who have personal experience not only with the fourth step, but all the steps is invaluable.
The following is an example of a resentment list:

(The original chart on page 65 of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* consists of the first three columns only.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am resentful at</th>
<th>The Cause (Why I am resentful)</th>
<th>Affects my</th>
<th>My part-responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Myself</td>
<td>Feel like I have wasted my life</td>
<td>Self-esteem, self-worth, Fear, confidence, Pride, self-pity, Anger</td>
<td>Didn’t care, lack of acceptance, selfish, Self-centered, Unwilling to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. God</td>
<td>Allowed me to lose everyone and everything</td>
<td>Fear, anger, trust, financial security, self-respect, Self-worth, relations</td>
<td>Rebellious, defiant, self-centered, self-seeking, self-willed, dishonest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ex-wife</td>
<td>Divorced me</td>
<td>Anger, self-esteem, sex relations, pride, trust, relationship with my children</td>
<td>Drank too much, Selfish, irresponsible, Uncaring, insensitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Credit card co.</td>
<td>Raised interest rate on me</td>
<td>Fear, anger, worry, financial security</td>
<td>Over spent, spent recklessly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is an example of how a resentment list may look. There may be more than one cause to each resentment. We may also want to be more detailed with our resentments when taking the fifth step. There may be one resentment on our list or thirty. There is no limit how many resentments may appear on our list.
The second type of personal inventory is “**Autobiographical**” (or life story). We go back through our lives as far as we can and begin to write about situations, events, or circumstances we reacted to that changed our thinking or our behavior. When did we first become aware of self-centerness, pride, lust, greed, jealousy, defiance, or any other destructive sin or emotion that began to develop and eventually become a part of our thinking and behavior? When did using or drinking become an escape from pains of our own emotions or life itself?

Did being abandoned or abused aid in a lack of trust towards people? Did we feel apart from others, or were we lonely or insecure? These questions may not apply to everyone. They are just an aid to begin writing to uncover the beginning of destructive patterns in our lives. As we write about these events and situations in our lives, we try to recognize, if possible how we felt at the time and what was affected. The bottom line in writing any inventory is we do the best we can. We don’t worry about writing the perfect inventory because one doesn’t exist.

God is very gracious. He doesn’t reveal everything we need to know all at once. He gives us what we need to know on a need to know basis. As we may have heard before, **“more will be revealed.”** In the autobiographical inventory, we go back through the years and write down life changing events and behavior that altered our thinking for the worse. As we do this, chances are we will begin to see the development of destructive attitudes, behavior, and patterns in our lives. Many of us have experienced embarrassing or humiliating occurrences or encounters when using or drinking. These are secrets of our past that we have never shared with anyone. These experiences have aided to our isolation and loneliness. It is very important that we include these in our inventory. It is a big help if we make one column to the right as we write our inventory. This helps to identify what has been affected as we write our story.
For example:

I remember when I was about 19 yrs. old and I was

at a holiday dinner with all my family. I can remember

feeling very lonely and totally apart from my own family,

as if I didn’t even belong there.

The third type of inventory is called a “Topical” inventory. In this inventory we write on
a specific topic, sin, or character defect that is continuing to give us trouble. For example, if
fear is an ongoing problem, we could write a fear list. At the top of this list, we write the
heading “I Am Fearful At” and then list our fears with a brief description of “Why” we are
fearful. We could be struggling with lust, pride, prejudice, self-righteousness, jealousy, or
any number of topics, sin, or character defects. This inventory could consist of one topic or
many. This inventory is especially helpful for someone who has already done a fourth step,
but after a period of time still find themselves struggling in one or more certain areas.

Our fourth step inventory could consist of one type of inventory or a combination of
more than one. For instance, in writing our inventory, we could write a resentment list
along with an autobiographical story. Or, we could write a resentment list with a topical
inventory. It is so important that we seek the Lord as well as council from a sponsor or
spiritual advisor before beginning our fourth step.

**HEBREWS 4:12-13**

12 For the word of god is living and active. Sharper than any doubled-edged
sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it
judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. 13 Nothing in all creation is
hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes
of him to whom we must give account.

The Lord looks past what we are doing to the motive or why we are doing it. Self-
examination helps bring awareness to not only what we are doing but why we are doing it.
Step 5 – “Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact natures of our wrongs.” – *Integrity*

**PSALM 32:3-5**

3 When I kept silent,

My bones wasted away

Through my groaning all day long.

4 For day and night

Your hand was heavy upon me;

my strength was sapped

as in the heat of summer.

5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you

and did not cover up my iniquity.

I said, “I will confess

my transgressions to the LORD”-

and you forgave

the guilt of my sin.

Guilt is like a poison that eats away at the addict and alcoholic. Though we are not using or drinking, guilt from our behavior and actions when we were can still haunt us and attempt to steal any happiness or freedom we have found. In the fifth step we confront the past with its' painful memories and admit to God, ourselves, and another human being the exact or complete nature of our wrongs.
PROVERBS 28:13

He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

There is a miracle of healing that begins to take place as we release the pain that we have kept inside of us for so long. We may be disclosing parts of our life that have never been shared before and quite possibly may never be shared again. So it is important that the person we ask to share our fifth step with respect the confidence of trust we are placing in them. This person could also be our sponsor or spiritual advisor or a trusted friend. It could also be a clergyman or priest as well as a doctor or counselor who have taken vows of confidentiality. If we have trouble asking or choosing someone, we pray and ask the Lord’s help directing us to the right person. We do not want to delay taking our fifth step once the fourth step is completed. For this can be an extremely uncomfortable time waiting to release the weight of our fourth step and the memories attached to it.

LUKE 18:9-14 – THE PARABLE OF THE PHARISEE AND THE TAX COLLECTOR

9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: 10 “Two men went down to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: God, I thank you that I am not like other man – robbers, evildoers, adulterers – or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.

13 “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God have mercy on me a sinner.’

14 “I tell you this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”
The fifth step is without question a humbling experience. It takes a lot of courage to take an honest look at ourselves and admit what we find to someone else. God looks with favor on the person who is willing to open up their past and their heart to him and someone else in an attempt to change for the better. The fourth and fifth steps lay aside any preconceived notions that the only problem we have is we used or drank too much. It also exposes the lie that the only person we hurt when using or drinking was our self. There are many benefits from taking a fifth step. One thing we come to realize is we are not so unique. We discover our story is not much different than anyone else. We are not the best person that ever walked the face of the Earth, but we are certainly not the worst. We start to regain the integrity and self-respect the use and abuse of drugs or alcohol had mercilessly stripped from us. More than ever before we begin to feel apart of instead of apart from. Another benefit is the person we are sharing our fifth step with may share some parts of their lives that relate and identify with ours. He or she may also share some insight into our stories that we didn’t or couldn’t see. Many of us have also experienced the presence of God’s love and forgiveness towards us like never before as a result of the fifth step.

**JAMES 5:16**

_Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective._ The good news is the Lord knows everything there is to know about us and loves us anyway. The other news is He wants us to overcome our fear and our pride, humble ourselves and tell someone else.
Step 6 – “Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.” – Willingness –

**PSALM 139:23-24**

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart;

*test me and know my anxious thoughts.*

24 See if there is any offensive way in me,

*and lead me in the way everlasting.*

We may be relieved to have completed our fourth and fifth steps and there could be a tendency to relax and become complacent. Our spiritual growth is contingent on our willingness and effort to continue in the steps as these principles become a conscious and living reality in our daily lives. We got a pretty good indication from our fourth step inventory of our character defects and what needs to be changed in us. And as we noted once before, “more we be revealed”. A character defect can be defined as sin or any part of our character or personality that is out of balance with God’s will or intention for us. It is very important that we don’t become so obsessed with our own character defects that we miss the joy of the journey. As I would get so busy and so serious “working the steps”, my sponsor would say to me, “if you’re not having a good time, you’re doing something wrong”.
PROVERBS:16-20

Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers,

and blessed is he who trusts in the LORD.

Being entirely ready describes an attitude of complete willingness towards having our character defects removed. There will be some defects that we are more willing to have removed than others. For example, if fear or anger is a constant problem that we seem to be getting no release from, we may have an almost desperate willingness for these defects to be removed. And the more willing we are, it seems the more we are willing to surrender and cooperate with God for the removal of these defects. This doesn’t mean that we are never going to be fearful or get angry again. It does mean that fear or anger are not dominating or controlling and ruling our lives anymore. We need always remember that it is the Grace of God that releases and delivers us from the control of any sin or character defect.

MATTHEW 7:24-27 – THE WISE AND FOOLISH BUILDERS

24 Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, and the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against the house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundations on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.
Step 6

The rock of our foundation is Jesus Christ. In recovery, the first three steps are often called the foundation steps built on the spiritual principles of honesty, hope and faith. We need always be aware of the foundation we are building on. Prayer, times of personal fellowship with the Lord, devotion to his word, helping others, and fellowship with other believers create a firm foundation.

**EPHESIANS 4:22-24**

22 You were taught with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

In step six, we review what we have done so far especially with regard to our fourth and fifth steps. We have taken an honest look at our past, put it on paper before us, and admitted this to God, our self, and another human being. We are now preparing to go to God and humbly ask him to remove these defects of our character so that we can continue to change and grow spiritually. A sincere willingness to become the person God wants us to be is one way of becoming entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
Step 7 – “Humbly asked him to remove our shortcomings.” - *Humility*

**PSALM 25:4-7**

4*Show me your ways O LORD’
   teach me your paths;

5*guide me in your truth and teach me,
   for you are God my Savior,
   and my hope is in you all day long.

6*Remember, O LORD, your great mercy and love,
   for they are from old.

7*Remember not the sins of my youth
   and my rebellious ways;
   according to your love remember me,
   for you are good O LORD.

Step seven is our humble petition or prayer to God to remove our shortcomings. Humility is not to be confused with humiliation. Many, if not all of us have experienced the pain and despair of being humiliated at one time or another. The principle of humility is a virtue of strength, not weakness. When we clearly recognize that only God can supply the grace to remove our shortcomings, we stop fighting and rest in him. We come humbly to the Throne of Grace with complete assurance the God has and will continue to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. We do not let our past weaken us in our prayer of faith today, because as far God is concerned, he has not only 9 forgiven our sins, but forgotten them as well.

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9 Hebrews 8:12
Step 7

**PROVERBS 29:23**

*A man’s pride bring him low,*

*but a man of lowly spirit gains honor.*

There are many warnings in the bible concerning pride and its consequences. The person who is full of himself, who places unreasonable expectations on himself and others, and who sees the need for change in others but not himself will sooner or later be humbled by God and humiliated by his own pride. A man of lowly spirit is a man who walks in humility. His dependence is in the Lord concerning every aspect of his life. He is aware of his own shortcomings but not judgmental of himself or others. He relies on the Grace of God to change him from the inside out. None of us can claim perfect humility. Our hope and desire is to grow and mature spiritually knowing full well that apart from Christ, we can do nothing.

**MATTHEW 7:7-8 – ASK, SEEK, KNOCK**

7*“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.* 8*For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.*

Jesus drives home the point of praying persistently and faithfully in this passage from The Sermon On The Mount. We do not arrogantly make demands on God, but we humbly ask in faith, seek in faith, and knock in faith. To reinforce the importance of what he has just said in verse seven, Jesus repeats himself in verse eight extending his invitation of answered prayer to everyone.

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10 *John 15:5*
Step 7

**1 JOHN 5:13-15**

13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. 14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God; that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have what we asked if him.

The emphasis on humbly coming to God for the removal of our shortcomings keeps our focus on God’s power and Grace, not on our own strength and ability. Are we repentant or have we changed our mind and attitude toward the sin, character defect, or shortcoming we are asking God to remove? Some sin or character defect may take longer to have removed then others. God has no shortage of Grace or power but we may lack the degree of readiness or willingness to let go. We may find our pain increase and our tolerance decrease over any sin or character defect as we seek the Lord’s will in our life more and more. We find the sixth and seventh steps are ongoing in our walk with the Lord, not condoning any sin or shortcoming, but not condemning ourselves either. We find peace and freedom as we submit to God and let go of defects that once controlled us.
Step 8 – “Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.” – *Forgiveness and Brotherly Love* –

*PSALM 19:12-13*

12 *Who can discern his errors?*

   *Forgive my hidden faults.*

13 *Keep your servant also from willful sins;*

   *may they not rule over me.*

Then I will be blameless,

*innocent of great transgressions.*

Steps eight and nine deal specifically with making amends for past harms done to others. Once again, we so not want to get ahead of ourselves and focus on making direct amends until we have first, made our list, and second become willing to make amends to them all. We must not let fear tell us we can’t do this, nor pride persuade us we don’t have to do this. If we are to clean up the past and live at peace with our self and others, we pray for God’s help and strength to do this.

*PROVERBS 14:9*

Fools mock at making amends for sin.

But goodwill is found among the upright.

The question we ask ourselves is who have I harmed, and what way, and who do I need to make an amends to? An amends can be described as righting or repairing a
wrong. An amends is not necessarily an apology, but at times to apologize and ask for someone’s forgiveness may be all we can do. Amends can be made in person, over the phone, or even by mail. We have a pretty good indication who we need to make amends to from our fourth step inventory. The Lord is our best resource for constructing our amends list. If we pray for the Lord’s guidance before we write our list, it is amazing to see how fast and how complete our list becomes in a very short period of time. We place all the people we have harmed on our list. This does not necessarily mean we can or will make amends to everyone on our list. We realize that making amends to some people may do more harm than good. We want to do what is right, but not at the pain and expense of others. Still, we do not become selective when making our list, but include all persons we have harmed. It is of great importance and strongly suggested that we talk to and consult with our sponsor or spiritual advisor before and after making our amends list.

MATTHEW 22:34-40 THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

34 Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. 35 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: 36 “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?”

37 Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it; Love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 All of the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

We pray for a spirit of love and forgiveness as we construct our amends list. We not only ask our self who we have harmed but how have we harmed them? We are not proud of the harms we caused while using or drinking and steps eight and nine are our attempt to right past wrongs. Did we verbally or emotionally harm others with our words, behavior and actions? Did we selfishly neglect our responsibilities as a family member,
friend, or employee? Were we physically abusive to anyone? Did we steal or borrow money recklessly without ever repaying? These are difficult questions, but they need to be asked. This is a good time to pause and realize our program of recovery is not designed to live in the past. It is designed to clean up the past so we can live in the now. As the Lord brings names to mind, as in step four, we don’t rationalize or justify, we just put it on the list.

**COLOSSIANS 3:12-14**

12 Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

The first part of step eight is that we make our list of all people we have harmed. After making our list, some have found it helpful to break their list down into three columns. The first column contains amends we can make right away. The second contains amends we cannot make right away, and the third contains amends we can never make. The second part of step eight is becoming willing to amends to them all. If we are not willing, we pray that the Lord grant us the willingness to make our amends. Remembering how much God has loved and forgiven us, we prepare to reach out to others in an attempt to repair relationships and make amends for harm done.
Step 9 – “Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.” – Justice –

**PSALM 121**

1 I lift my eyes to the hills—

where does my help come from?

2 My help comes from the LORD,

the maker of heaven and Earth

3 He will not let your foot slip—

he who watches over you will not slumber;

4 indeed, he who watches over Israel

will neither slumber or sleep.

5 The LORD watches over you—

the LORD is your shade at your right hand;

6 the sun will not harm you by day

nor the moon at night.

7 The LORD will keep you from all harm—

he will watch over your life;

8 the Lord will watch over your coming and going

both now and forevermore.
Step 9

The best and most accurate indication that the timing is right to make any amends is the conviction of the Holy Spirit. If we have made our list, prayed, and become willing to make an amends, we rely on the comfort, encouragement, and leading of the Holy Spirit to face this difficult encounter. We pray for the Holy Spirit to be present with us and even go before us as we prepare to approach someone to make an amends. The Holy Spirit will also lead us in the words to say if we ask him. Justice is the principle behind step nine and we come to realize the making of amends is as important and beneficial to us if not more so than to the person we are making the amends to. The freedom we experience from the making of amends is at times indescribable.

Proverbs 21:3

To do what is right and just

is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.

Nothing aids more in the letting go of our past than facing it head on and being prepared to accept the consequences of harm done. God is very big in the character building business and step nine is a very important step in building our character.

Matthew 5:6-9

6Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,

for they will be filled.

7Blessed are the merciful,

for they will be shown mercy.
Step 9

8 Blessed are the pure in heart,

for they will see God.

9 Blessed are the peacemakers,

for they will be called sons of God.

No one can tell us who we must make amends to. That is between us and the Lord. When in doubt or fearful, we seek the Lord in prayer. If we have trouble trusting our own judgment, we pray and seek advice from our sponsor or spiritual advisor. We also seek advice from others who have experience with making amends. One blessing of being in recovery is that it is a “We” program. There is a wealth of experience and information from those who have walked this path before us. If we owe money and many of us do as a result of using or drinking, we can pay or promise to pay what we owe by setting up a payment plan. One trap we try not to fall into is trying to figure out or project what someone is going to say or do. We just don’t know until it happens and most often we are pleasantly surprised with the results. For those who are on our amends list but to make amends would bring more harm, we pray for them.


**PHILIPPIANS 1:9-11**

9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, 10 so that you may be able to discern what is best and be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, 11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ – to the glory and praise of God.

As we make our amends, we realize we are letting go and no longer focused on the fear and pain of the past. We begin to experience the freedom and peace of living in today. Timing and discretion in making our amends are left to the leading and conviction of the Holy Spirit. It is not uncommon to have on our list someone who is deceased. We obviously cannot make direct amends, but we can write a letter to the deceased expressing our feelings and regrets for past harm. Those who have experienced this type of amends testify to a new sense of peace in their lives.

We come to realize that each amends we make is an amends we are making to ourselves, for consciously or unconsciously we have suffered from the harm we have caused others.
Step 10 – “Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.” – Perseverance and Discipline –

**PSALM 106:1-3**

1Praise the LORD.

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;

*his love endures forever.*

2Who can proclaim the mighty acts of the LORD

*or fully proclaim his praise?*

3Blessed are they who maintain justice,

*who constantly do what is right.*

Step ten is our daily examination of ourselves to keep us from falling back into old patterns and old habits. The first nine steps basically help us to get honest, build a firm spiritual foundation and clean up the past. Steps ten, eleven, and twelve have been called the daily maintenance steps. Step ten helps us to continue to stay honest with ourselves. When we find ourselves becoming angry or disturbed, fearful or being controlled by any defect or negative emotion, we can step back and take a look at what is causing it. If we find ourselves saying or doing something we regret, we can promptly admit it and make amends if necessary. We have found a new peace and freedom through working the first nine steps and we don’t want to lose it. Continuing to take personal inventory on a daily basis allows us to live in today and not carry a lot of excess baggage into tomorrow.
Step 10

**PROVERBS 16:32-33**

*He who ignores discipline despises himself,*

*but whoever heeds correction gains understanding.*

*The fear of the LORD teaches a man wisdom*

*and humility comes before honor.*

Discipline and perseverance are the principles behind step ten. It may sound like a lot of work to continually be taking our own inventory, but the honesty, peace, and freedom that result from this practice is well worth the time and energy spent. And though we never arrive, the tenth step becomes a part of our daily life. Many of us like to review our day before we go to sleep at night. We discover it takes less energy to stay honest and work through problems as they arise rather than stuff or ignore them. Besides, it is too dangerous for us to stay disturbed, angry, or resentful and risk using or drinking again. It is just not worth it. We find pain and problems do pass if we are willing to work toward the solution and not chew on the problem.

**LUKE 6:41-42**

*41* “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? *42* How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when you yourself fail to see the plank in your eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.*

It is much easier to take the inventory of someone else rather than our own, but that is exactly what we are trying to change and the tenth step keeps the focus on us.
Step 10

We used to live a life of rationalization and self-justification pointing fingers and blaming others for our own irrational behavior. If we are not vigilant, we can fall right back into the old way of thinking. Are we always at fault? Of course not and we are certainly not anyone’s doormat. As one brother use to put it, it is not so much what happens to us, but what we do with what happens to us. We find we have a lot more choices in our reactions to life and people today as opposed to when we were being controlled by drugs and alcohol. in most situations, we are victims only by choice today. Many of us have had a difficult time being assertive and letting people know how we feel if we are hurt or offended. For those of us who reacted to uncomfortable or adverse situations with anger, rage, or complete silence, we are going to need some practice and time relating to people in a mature and reasonable way. Are we going to fall short at times? You can count on it, but we keep moving forward. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we find we can and do change. We also find that after making a few tenth step amends, we become extremely willing to practice self-restraint in many situations rather continually making tenth step amends.

HEBREWS 12:11

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained in it.

There seems to be no question that we stunted or even stopped growing emotionally and spiritually when we were actively addicted to drugs or alcohol. Change takes time and change can be painful. We add to that pain by our resistance to change the Holy Spirit is promoting within us. Some of us are learning to live on life’s terms and not our own for the first time. The more we keep our focus on Jesus and rely on the Holy Spirit to empower us with the ability to change, the more enjoyable is the journey.
Step 11 – “Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God through Jesus Christ, praying only for knowledge of his will for us and the power to carry that out.” –Awareness-

**PSALM 34:4-10**

4I sought the LORD, and he answered me;
   he delivered me from all my fears.

5Those who look to him are radiant;
   their faces are never covered with shame.

6The poor man called, and the LORD heard him;
   he saved him out of all his troubles.

7The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him,
   and he delivers them.

8Taste and see that the LORD is good;
   blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.

9Fear the LORD, you his saints,
   for those who fear him lack nothing.

10The lions may grow weak and hungry’
   but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.
We grow in our relationship with the Lord as we take time to be with him. Our conscious contact with him is our awareness of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, who is continually leading, guiding, and teaching us about Jesus and God The Father. The fear of the Lord describes a reverence and respect for the Lord. Many of us grew up with view of God as a punishing God. We are not to be afraid of God but God will discipline us as a loving father if we are outside of his will. To help us keep our will aligned with God, we spend time in prayer, in the word, and in meditation. It takes a decision on our part to be vigilant and not become distracted by worldly desires and neglect our time with the Lord. As we discipline ourselves to pray and meditate, we become more sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in our lives and more likely to stay in line with God’s will.

PROVERBS 28:14

Blessed is the man who always fears the LORD,

but he who hardens his heart falls into trouble.

The fear of the Lord is a holy reverence and also an awareness of God’s power and protection in our life. Unlike other fears, the fear of Lord has no torment in it, rather a healthy respect of how much we need him and how dangerous it is to fall back into a defiant and self-sufficient attitude. Prayer and meditation helps us maintain that all important reverence for the Lord as well as granting us the peace needed in this troubled world.

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11 Hebrews 12:7-11
JOHN 15:5-8 The Vine and the Branches

5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given to you. 8 This is my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

It has often been said that when we pray we are talking to God and when we meditate we are listening, or God is talking to us. Those who have daily times of prayer and meditation with the Lord seem to be more in tune with God and more at peace with themselves. We improve our conscious contact with the Lord as we make prayer and meditation a top priority in our lives. God honors the time we spend with him with a clearer knowledge of his will along with the power to carry it out. This does not mean that we always know exactly what God’s will is. We need others we trust to get feedback on what we believe we have received from the Lord. This is especially important in matters and decisions not only concerning our-selves but others. Any intimate relationship that grows closer and stronger requires time, effort, and patience, and our relationship with the Lord is no exception.
PHILIPPIANS 4:4-8

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.

How we pray is a personal choice. Some like to pray written prayers while others choose to pray in their own words. It is not so important as how we pray, but that we do pray. Reading scripture and thinking upon what we have read while allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to us is one very powerful way to meditate. Paul tells us in verse eight to think upon or meditate on anything that is excellent or praiseworthy. The most important aspect of our prayer and meditation is that our focus be on the Lord. His grace and power to answer prayer results in fellowship and council through meditation.
Step 12 – “Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts and alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.” – Love and Service –

**PSALM 40:1-3**

1 I waited patiently for the LORD;
   he turned to me and heard my cry.

2 He lifted me up out of the slimy pit,
   and out of the mud and mire;
   he set my feet on a rock
   and gave me a firm place to stand.

3 He put a song in my mouth,
   a hymn of praise to our God.

Many will see and fear
   and put their trust in the LORD.

The greatest witness to someone who is sick and suffering is someone who has had their life transformed by the power of God. We carry a message of hope that God’s love, grace, and mercy is available to anyone willing to receive it. “Spiritual Awakening” refers to the change that has taken place in us as a result of applying these steps in our lives. We have become aware of the presence and power of God in our lives and a definite and positive change has taken place in our personality and outlook. We have found victory through surrender and have a new purpose in life, which is to carry this message of hope to those still being held in bondage. This message of hope is also carried to anyone who is experiencing difficulties or painful situations.
PROVERBS 3:3-4

3 Let love and faithfulness never leave you;
bind them around your neck,
write them on the tablet of your heart.

4 Then you will win favor and a good name
in the sight of God and man.

Step twelve is our attempt to give back what has freely been given to us. We try not to give advice, but only share our experience before and now and how the Lord has granted us this gift of sobriety and new way of life. We pray for guidance to keep it simple and meet people where they are at. Most will agree that addicts and alcoholics identify and relate best to other addicts and alcoholics. We in recovery have a special gift and responsibility to pass on this blessing of freedom which has been passed on to us. We need always remember, we are responsible for the effort, not the results.

MATTHEW 5:14-16

14 “You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.
15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

With each step, there is a corresponding principle associated with that step. In step twelve we are called to “practice these principles in all our affairs”. A review of these principles are honesty, hope, faith, courage, integrity, willingness, humility, forgiveness and brotherly love, perseverance and discipline, awareness, love and service.
Step 12

We receive a certain measure or degree of each principle as we work the steps and apply them in our daily lives. To fully realize these principles is the work of the Lord in our lives. We grow and mature as we continually depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us. To practice these principles at home, on the job, in church, or in public, will take time, patience, and most of all, the power of God.

ROMANS 12:9-21 – LOVE -

9Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. 11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. 12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. 13 Share with God’s people who are need. Practice hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. 18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 19 Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord 20 On the contrary:

“If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.” 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.
Page 9 – 1- Romans 8:1 – Therefore, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,

Page 10 – 2 – John 8:36 – So if the son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Page 11 – 3 – Ephesians 2:8-9 – For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

Page 12 – 4 – Romans 10:17 – Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.


Page 13 – 6- John 14:16-17 – And I will ask the Father, and he will give another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him or knows him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

Page 15 – 7 – Philippians 2:6-7 – Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

Page 19 – 8 – James 2:17 – In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

Page 30 -9 – Hebrews 8:12 – For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember theirs sins no more.
John 15:5 – “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Hebrews 12:7-11 – 7 Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? 8 If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. 9 Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live. 10 Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. 11 No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.
This is a topical section with Bible verses related to everyday topics or subjects which can be helpful for quick reference or discussion. The topics are listed in alphabetical order.

**Accept (Acceptance)**

**Job 2:10** – He replied, “You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?” In all this Job did not sin in what he said.

**Proverbs 19:20** – listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise.

**Romans 15:7** – Accept one another, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

**Anger**

**Proverbs 29:11** – A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.

**Ephesians 4:26-27** – In your anger do not sin”; Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.

**Anxious (Anxiety)**

**Proverbs 12:25** – An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up.

**Philippians 4:6-7** – Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God. And the peace of God which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

**1 Peter 5:7** – Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.
Despair (Depression)

Psalm 42 – 5-6a – 5 Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my savior and my God.

Psalm 107 13-14 – 13 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress. 14 He brought them out of the darkness and the deepest gloom and broke away their chains.

Hebrews 4:16 – Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Discipline (See also Step Ten – Pages 35-37)

Job 5:17 – Blessed is the man whom God corrects; so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty.

Proverbs 12:1 – Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he hates correction is stupid.

Revelation 3:19 – Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline, so be earnest, and repent.

Doubt

Psalm 56:3-4 – 3 When I am afraid, I will trust in you. 4 In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me?

Mark 11:22-23 – 22 “Have faith in God,” Jesus answered. 23 I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him.

James 1:5-6 – 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. 6 But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.
Envy

**Proverbs 3:30** – A heart a peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.

**1 Corinthians 13:4** – Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

**James 3:16** – For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there is find disorder and every evil practice.

Faith *(See also Step Three – Pages 9-11)*

**John 14:12** – I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to my Father.

**2 Corinthians 5:7** – We live by faith, not by sight.

**Hebrews 11:1** – Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we so not see.

Fear

**Proverbs 3:25-26** –25 Have no fear of sudden disaster or the ruin that overtakes the wicked, 26 for the LORD will be your confidence and keep your foot from being snared.

**Isaiah 41:13** – For I am the LORD, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.

**2 Timothy 1:7** – For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.
Forgive (Forgiveness) (See also Step Eight – Pages 29-31)

Matthew 18:21-22 – Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

Mark 11:25 – And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive your sins.”

1 John 1:8-9 – If we claim to he be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth in not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

God

Genesis 1:1 – In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

John 4:24 – God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.

1 John 4:16 – And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

Gratitude (Thankfulness)

Psalm 106:1 – Praise the LORD. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.

Colossians 3:16 – Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 – Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.
Guilt (Condemnation)

Psalm 32:5 – Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD” – and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Psalm 103:12 – as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Romans 8:1 – Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus.

Hate (Hatred) (Resentment)

Proverbs 10:12 – Hatred stirs up dissention, but love covers over all wrongs.

Matthew 5:43-44 – 43You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy,’ 44But I tell you; Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

Romans 12:9 – Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.

Holy Spirit (Spirit of truth)

John 16:13^A – But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.

Romans 5:5 – And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

Ephesians 1:13 – And you were also included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit
Honesty (See also Step One – Pages 1-5)

Proverbs 6:16-19 – There are six things the LORD hates, seven are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissention among brothers.

Proverbs 12:17 – A truthful witness gives honest testimony, but a false witness tells lies.

Colossians 3:9-10 – not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its creator.

Hope (See also Step 2 – Pages 6-8)

Psalm 25:5 – guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.

Proverbs 23:18 – There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.

Hebrews 10:23 – Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

Humility (Humble) (See also Step Seven – Pages 25-27)

Proverbs 18:12 – Before his downfall a man’s heart is proud, but humility comes before honor.

Philippians 2:3 – Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.

1 Peter 5:6 – Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.
Jealousy (Covet)

Romans 13:9 – The commandments, “Do not commit adultery,” “Do not steal,” “Do not covet,” and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in one rule: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

1 Corinthians 3:3 – You are worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?

James 4:2-3 – You want something but don’t get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. 3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

Jesus Christ (Messiah) (The Son of God)

Luke 1:34-35 – 34 “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, since I am a virgin?” 35 The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

John 4:25-26 – 25 The woman said “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.” 26 Then Jesus declared, “I who speak to you am he.”

Acts 2:36 – “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Joy

Proverbs 12:20 – There is deceit in the hearts of those who plot evil, but joy for those who promote peace.
Joy continued:

**John 15:10-11** – If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and I remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

**Romans 14:17** – For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

**Loneliness**

**Deuteronomy 31:8** – The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.

**John 14:16-17** – And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to with you forever – the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be with you.

**Hebrews 13:5** – Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you.

**Love (See also Step Twelve Pages 43-44)**

**Matthew 22:37-40** – Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

**John 13:34** – “A new command I give you; Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

**1 Corinthians 13:4-5** – Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.
**Lust**

1 Corinthians 6:18 – Flee from sexual immorality. All other subs a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.

Galatians 5:16 – So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of sinful nature.

Colossians 3:5 – Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, and greed, which is idolatry.

**Obedience (Obey) (Obedient)**

2 Corinthians 10:5 – We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

1 Peter 1:14-16 – As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

1 John 3:23-24 – And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

**Peace**

Psalm 85:8 – I will listen to what God the LORD will say; he promises peace to his people, his saints—but let them not return to folly.

John 14:27 – Peace I leave you, my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.
Peace continued:

2 Corinthians 13:11 – Finally brothers, good-by. Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

John 14:27 – Peace I leave you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

2 Corinthians 13:11 – Finally brothers, good-by. Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

Pray

Matthew 6:6 – But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Luke 11:2-4 – He said to them, “When you pray: ‘Father, hallowed be thy name, your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.

Colossians 4:2 – Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

Pride

Proverbs 11:2 – When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.

Proverbs 16:18 – Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.

Romans 12:16 – Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.
Salvation (Saved) (Born Again)

John 3:16 – “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Romans 10:9-10 – ⁹That if you confess with your mouth “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

Ephesians 2:8-9 – For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves; it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

Sin

Psalm 119:133 – Direct my footsteps according to your word; let no sin rule over me.

John 8:34-36 – ³⁴Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. ³⁵So if the son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Romans 8:10 – But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.

Unity

John 17:22-23 – ²²I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one. ²³I in them and you in me.

Romans 15:5-6 – May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4:2-3 – Be completely humble and gentle, be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace.
IN-CHRIST TRADITIONS EXPANDED

1. The Presence of the Holy Spirit is expressed through the group conscience in all meetings. The name of Jesus Christ is honored without exception.
   a. We give glory to the Lord Jesus Christ and remain sensitive to the Lord always honoring the Lord.
   b. We do not use foul language in the context of all meetings and encourage others to do so.
   c. We do not criticize any faith, fellowship, or program.
   d. We do not give advice and share out of our own experience only.
   e. We use In-Christ literature and the New International version (NIV) bible translation in meetings only.

2. A desire to stop using or drinking is the only requirement to attend “Closed” meetings of In-Christ. “Open” meetings are open to anyone who may wish to attend.

3. Our desire is to honor the Lord living clean and sober and to carry a message of hope to the addict and alcoholic still suffering.

4. In-Christ has no affiliation with any denomination or organization and does not wish to debate over political or doctrinal issues.
   a. In-Christ is affiliated with no-one
   b. In-Christ takes no political stand
   c. In-Christ promotes no groups, fellowships, programs, or political parties.

5. Anonymity is most important to the unity of In-Christ and confidentiality of those who attend, therefore what is said in meetings and who attends meetings – we ask will stay in meetings.
   a. We are always aware and respectful of the anonymity of those who attend In-Christ.
   b. On T.V., radio, or in front of the press, all members of In-Christ should be ever mindful of In-Christ as a whole and remain anonymous.
IN-CHRIST SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR ONE HOUR CLOSED MEETING

1. Welcome everyone and introduce yourself.
2. This is a closed step meeting of In-Christ. A desire to stop using or drinking is the only requirement to attend this meeting. We try not to give advice, but share out of our own experience.
3. We will open this meeting with a moment of silence followed by the words of Jesus who said, “WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED IN MY NAME, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM.”
4. PLEASE JOIN ME IN A MOMENT OF SILENCE.
5. Jesus said: “WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED IN MY NAME, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM.”
6. Read: UNITED IN SPIRIT – In-Christ is a fellowship of recovering addicts and alcoholics united in spirit by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. We come together in the name of Jesus to encourage and support one another while reaching out to others seeking freedom from the bondage of drugs and alcohol in their lives. We are self-supporting through our own voluntary contributions. In-Christ is not affiliated with any denomination or organization, nor wish to debate over political or doctrinal issues. Our desire is to honor the Lord living clean and sober and carry a message of hope to the addict and alcoholic still suffering.
7. Have someone read THE TWELVE STEPS OF IN-CHRIST.
8. Have someone read IN-CHRIST TRADITIONS.
9. Ask if anyone is just coming back or attending their first meeting of In-Christ?
10. Ask if there are any announcements related to In-Christ?
11. Ask if there is anyone who would like to join this group, see one of the group members after the meeting.
12. Optional prayer: Chair person may say a prayer for those in attendance at the meeting.
13. Ask if there is anything bothering anyone. If there is and they do not want to share it then, feel free to share it anytime during the meeting.
14. Proceed with step reading and discussion.
15. Before closing the meeting, have someone read ROMANS 12:9-21 – LOVE – Page 44.
16. Close with THE LORD’S PRAYER.

PLEASE NOTE – IN AN OPEN MEETING, STEPS 2 &14 WOULD READ AS FOLLOWS:

2. This is an open meeting of In-Christ. Anyone is welcome to attend this meeting. We try not to give advice, but share out of our own experience.

14. Proceed with discussion.