12 STEPPERS

# Step 12 Worksheet

## Carrying the Message and Practicing the Principles

Notice what's changed in you, tell your story simply, find service that fits and bring the program into every part of your life. For AA, NA, Al-Anon, OA, CoDA and other 12 step programs.

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN

# The Three Parts of Step 12

***Step 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."***

Step 12 packs three ideas into one sentence. This worksheet gives each one its own pages.

| Part of the step | What it asks of me |
|---|---|
| **Having had a spiritual awakening** | Notice what's changed in me because of the steps (Part 2) |
| **We tried to carry this message** | Share my experience with anyone still struggling and do service (Parts 3 to 6) |
| **To practice these principles in all our affairs** | Live the program at work, at home and everywhere else (Parts 7 and 8) |

## Tips that keep it working

**Notice the word "tried."** Step 12 asks for the effort, not the results. Nobody's recovery is yours to control.

**Start small.** Making coffee and greeting newcomers count. You don't have to sponsor anyone to begin.

**Keep your own program first.** Meetings, a sponsor and Steps 10 and 11 keep you able to help.

**Go over it with your sponsor,** especially Parts 6 and 8.

PART 1

# Step 12 Questions

Answer honestly. These questions set up the practical pages that follow.

## My spiritual awakening

1. What has changed in me since I started working the steps? What do I see differently now?

2. Who in my life has noticed a change in me, and what did they say?

## Carrying the message

3. Have I reached out to someone who is still struggling? What happened, or what has held me back?

4. What did I need most when I was new, and how can I offer that to someone else?

5. When I share at meetings, am I trying to help the newcomer or impress the room?

PART 1

# Step 12 Questions (continued)

## Service and sponsorship

**6.** What service am I doing now, and what could I add next?

**7.** Do I feel ready to sponsor? What would I want to strengthen in my own program first?

## In all my affairs

**8.** How did I handle conflict before recovery, and how do I handle it now?

**9.** What does "practice these principles in all our affairs" mean in my daily life?

**10.** Which part of my life (work, home, money or relationships) is hardest to bring my program into?

**11.** How am I protecting my own recovery while I help others?

PART 2

# My Spiritual Awakening, Then and Now

Most spiritual awakenings are gradual. The Big Book calls them "the educational variety" and notes that "friends of the newcomer are aware of the difference long before he is himself" (Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 567). Write how you used to handle each area and how you handle it today.

| Area of my life | Then (before the steps) | Now |
|---|---|---|
| **Family** | | |
| **Work or school** | | |
| **Honesty** | | |
| **Fear and worry** | | |
| **Anger and resentment** | | |
| **Faith or Higher Power** | | |

**Someone who has noticed a change in me, and what they said:**

PART 3

# My Story, Told Simply

The Big Book's advice for carrying the message is plain: "Tell him exactly what happened to you" (p. 92). Keep each part short enough to say in under a minute. A fictional example:

| Part | Example |
|---|---|
| **What it was like** | I drank every night to wind down from a job I hated. By the end I was hiding bottles in the garage and missing my kids' games. |
| **What happened** | My wife asked me to leave. A coworker I barely knew told me she'd been sober eight years and took me to a meeting that night. I got a sponsor and worked the steps. |
| **What it's like now** | Three years sober. I still get irritable, and I still have to work at being honest about money. But I'm home for dinner, and my kids trust me again. |

### What it was like

A few honest sentences, no war stories meant to shock

### What happened

What finally brought me in, and what I did about it

### What it's like now

Include what's still hard. Honesty is what makes the rest believable

**Before I share: am I trying to help the person in front of me, or to look good?**

☐ To help ☐ To look good ☐ Some of both, and I'll keep it simple

PART 4

# Carrying the Message

"Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics" (Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 89).

**People I know who may still be struggling (first names or initials only):**

**Before a Twelfth Step call or conversation, I will:**

☐ Talk it over with my sponsor
☐ Bring another sober member along if I can
☐ Share my experience instead of giving advice or preaching
☐ Leave the decision to them and keep the door open
☐ Point to the program and the fellowship, not to me

**Twelfth Step call notes**

| Date | Who (initials) | What I shared | Follow-up |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

If you believe someone is in immediate danger, call 911. For a mental health crisis, call or text 988.

PART 5

# My Service Plan

The 12&12 praises "the unspectacular but important tasks" (Step Twelve, p. 110). Check what you're doing now (N) and what you'd like to try (T). Requirements for group roles vary, so ask at your home group.

| Service | N | T | Service | N | T |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Set up chairs** | ☐ | ☐ | Make coffee | ☐ | ☐ |
| **Greet at the door** | ☐ | ☐ | Clean up after | ☐ | ☐ |
| **Literature or treasurer** | ☐ | ☐ | Secretary or chair | ☐ | ☐ |
| **Speak or share my story** | ☐ | ☐ | Sponsor someone | ☐ | ☐ |
| **H&I or corrections** | ☐ | ☐ | Intergroup phones | ☐ | ☐ |
| **Public information** | ☐ | ☐ | GSR or service committee | ☐ | ☐ |

### The one commitment I'll start or keep for the next three months:

### Service tracker

| Month | Commitment | How often | What I learned |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |

PART 6

# Am I Ready to Sponsor?

AA's pamphlet Questions & Answers on Sponsorship says "There are no specific rules," but suggests "a good sponsor should probably be a year or more away from the last drink" (p. 8). Go over this page with your own sponsor.

☐ I have worked all twelve steps with a sponsor
☐ I still have a sponsor of my own and talk with them regularly
☐ I have a home group and go to meetings regularly
☐ I can share my experience without telling someone what to do
☐ I understand a sponsor doesn't offer professional, financial or legal help
☐ I can let someone make their own choices, including relapsing

**1.** How much time can I honestly give each week?

**2.** What will I do if someone I sponsor relapses or stops calling?

**3.** Where would I send someone for help that's beyond what a sponsor does?

**4.** What does my sponsor think about my readiness?

PART 7

# Principles in All My Affairs

"Can we actually carry the A.A. spirit into our daily work?" (Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p. 112). Each step is commonly paired with a spiritual principle. Mark where each one is hardest for you right now: Work, Home, Money, Relationships or Online.

| Step | Principle | Where it's hardest for me | One small action this week |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Honesty | | |
| **2** | Hope | | |
| **3** | Faith | | |
| **4** | Courage | | |
| **5** | Honesty and integrity | | |
| **6** | Patience and willingness | | |
| **7** | Humility | | |
| **8** | Love | | |
| **9** | Brotherly love and responsibility | | |
| **10** | Perseverance and discipline | | |
| **11** | Awareness | | |
| **12** | Service | | |

PART 8

# Keeping Balance and What's Next

"It is not the matter of giving that is in question, but when and how to give" (Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 97). Healthy service supports your recovery. It doesn't replace it.

**Balance check:**

☐ I'm still going to my own meetings
☐ I still call my sponsor
☐ I'm keeping up with Steps 10 and 11
☐ My service isn't crowding out family, work or sleep
☐ I'm not rescuing anyone (paying their way, taking over their choices)

Number of service commitments I have right now: _____

**Is there anything I need to hand off or say no to?**

**Steps I'd like to revisit, and why:**

**What I want my recovery to look like a year from now:**

NEXT STEPS

# Keep Going and Find Support

Step 12 doesn't end. Keep up your Step 10 inventory and Step 11 practice, come back to your service plan every few months and talk with your sponsor about working the steps again when the time feels right.

## Read the Step 12 Literature Free Online

- Alcoholics Anonymous World Services. "Chapter 7: Working With Others." *Alcoholics Anonymous (PDF).* Pages 89 to 103.
- Alcoholics Anonymous World Services. "Step Twelve." *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (PDF).* Pages 106 to 125.
- Alcoholics Anonymous World Services. "Questions & Answers on Sponsorship." *Alcoholics Anonymous.*
- Narcotics Anonymous World Services. "How It Works." *Narcotics Anonymous.*
- 12steppers.org. "Step 12 Worksheet With Questions." *12steppers.org.* Examples, service ideas and FAQs.
- 12steppers.org. "The 12 Spiritual Principles of AA." *12steppers.org.* What each principle means.
- 12steppers.org. "Step 11 Worksheet With Questions." *12steppers.org.* A daily prayer and meditation routine.

## Support

- 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. "988 Lifeline." *988lifeline.org.* Call or text 988 any time.
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. "SAMHSA's National Helpline." *SAMHSA.* Free and confidential, 24/7: 1-800-662-4357.

*Disclaimer: This worksheet is an educational recovery tool and does not replace professional medical or psychological advice. It is not affiliated with, produced by or endorsed by Alcoholics Anonymous World Services or any other fellowship. Page references are to the Fourth Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous and to Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. The step-by-step list of principles comes from member tradition, not official AA literature.*