

“Wilt thou be made whole?”

John 5:6

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**A Christ-centered 12 Step recovery workbook
for those suffering from
compulsive addictive behaviors, substance abuse,
and for a support to their families and friends**

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&
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A Tribute to Robert Horrocks

Co-author of “Wilt Thou Be Made Whole?” Robert Horrocks passed away in December of 2002.

Robert was a loving friend to many, especially to those who struggled with addiction. He continually encouraged them to keep trying and never give up no matter how difficult their burden seemed. His focus was on the healing power of the Savior, knowing that God’s grace is given to those that endure in their covenants to the end despite the mortal struggle with self mastery.

Where we may only experience a portion of Savior’s healing in mortality, Robert believed that our trust in the Savior would bring complete and permanent healing once we are returned to the Lord’s presence. Robert’s message, “The Atonement is for you, too”, reminds us that recovery and complete healing through the Atonement is a gift meant for every person.

We miss the dear friend who made a difference in our lives, and the lives of so many others. Knowing Robert’s commitment and diligence, we are certain that he still carries the message of hope and healing to those suffering on the other side of the veil.

We express a special thanks to

Barbara Owens

*for having encouraged us to believe in ourselves
and to find hope and understanding through one another.*

Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge those who have given us encouragement and direction as we have undertaken this important work. Thank you Sarah and Anne for the careful scrutiny of this text and for all your contributions that have made this project a reality. Special thanks to Jan and Randy for your unwavering belief in gospel principles and for your recognition and support of all that is good in the world. We are forever grateful to Michele for her patience and wisdom in teaching us writing techniques.

Regarding the beautiful artwork that adorns the front cover of this workbook. We extend our sincere appreciation to Utah artist Derek Hegsted who, through his paintbrush, expresses so eloquently the love the Savior has for all of God's children. Derek's painting is entitled "*Journey's End*" and has graciously allowed us to use it as the front cover of this workbook.

As we explained our project to Derek, we were humbled by his enthusiasm to selflessly contribute his art. We inquired as to the inspiration behind the picture, to which he shared the following poem he wrote regarding the piece:

"Journey's End"

*The storm you weathered,
Faithfully stood.
I was beside you
All the way
Whisp'ring you could!*

*Well done, my faithful servant,
For me, you defended
You stayed your course
Your journey has ended.*

Derek then shared his testimony: "I feel no better peace than when I am bearing witness of Christ through a paintbrush. The ability to speak my feelings is not one of my strong points. But a gracious Heavenly Father has blessed me with the ability to bear a witness of my Savior in a manner that is better than words. In reflecting on my testimony and the effects of the arts in my life, I hope to have shown all brothers and sisters of Christ that I know Jesus is the Christ and that He lives."

Thank you Derek, for your contribution to this project and for your beautiful testimony of Christ as rendered in this masterpiece. *To see all of Derek's art, go to derek@christian-art.com*

Finally, and most importantly, *we* acknowledge our Heavenly Father's love for us. He has provided true principles to be taught through so many different means. We are grateful to Him for having allowed us to be a part of one of those resources.

INTRODUCTION

An unavoidable and often substantial portion of our life experience here on earth is to face afflictions, infirmities, tribulations, and trials. Though designed to help guide us back to our Heavenly Father, often these experiences leave us feeling broken and lost.

In the early 1930's, a group of people found themselves plagued with a compulsive addictive behavior known as alcoholism. While humbly seeking a solution to their problem, they turned to the Lord. Studying the Bible, they examined the *Sermon on the Mount* from Matthew chapter 5, and the writings in the books of James and 1st Corinthians. While so doing, the Lord inspired them with basic principles of recovery. This discovery evolved into the "12 Steps." As their understanding of these principles deepened, they found themselves turning to the healing power of Jesus Christ.

Today, many people are plagued with various compulsive addictive behaviors. They include drugs (illegal and prescription), alcohol, pornography, eating disorders, gambling, co-dependency, and many more. Each brings along heartache and a sense of hopelessness. Mistakenly, many assume that they must first break their habits before they are worthy of Heavenly Father's help. Discouraged with personal failure, their hearts become hardened and they turn away from the only power that can redeem them.

One of the primary objectives of this life is to come to know our Heavenly Father – to understand His unconditional love for us, to turn to Him for help, and to trust Him in all things. Can we trust Him enough to place *all things*, including our addictions and behaviors, upon the altar of God, humbly back away, and allow Him to redeem us?

Consider the following New Testament lesson from John, Chapter 5: In ancient Jerusalem, there was a pool of water called Bethesda. It was a famous pool, because periodically an angel would come down and "*trouble the water.*" Many believed that after each angelic visit, the first person who "*stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.*" A great multitude of people with all kinds of ailments lay near the pool "*waiting for the moving of the water.*" In an effort to be the first, most people had a loving family member, or at least a "hired" man, poised and ready to run at a moment's notice to carry them to the pool.

One man, who had had an infirmity for 38 years, had apparently been trying to get into the water for some time. He was physically disabled, and could not easily move by himself. There was no one waiting with him, no family, nor hired help. One day, Christ walked by and perceived his plight. Stopping, He asked, "*Wilt thou be made whole?*" The man answered, "*Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.*" (In other words, he had been trying for some time to get into the pool, but each time had failed to be the first.) Christ in His compassion said, "*Rise, take up thy bed and walk.*" The man was healed by the "*Living Water,*" Jesus Christ

So God too, knowing our struggles, asks, “*Wilt thou be made whole?*” Patiently He awaits our willingness to yield, to humble ourselves, and to talk with Him regarding our own situations. He waits for us to acknowledge that we cannot be made whole without Him.

This Christ-centered 12 Step recovery workbook is a resource providing strength, hope and direction for those struggling with compulsive addictive behaviors. If used in conjunction with sincere prayer and personal scripture study, a sure path of hope and recovery will be opened. This workbook was prepared to provide a simple understanding of the 12 Steps of recovery. Sincere application of these 12 principles will initiate the process of hope, healing, repentance and recovery.

As you choose to study this text and ponder the scriptures referenced, you will come to know the peace and healing that is offered by our Savior, Jesus Christ. You will come to know that God is with you, that He loves you, and that He waits to hear your personal response to His question, “*Wilt thou be made whole?*”

PREFACE

***“All things wherewith you have been afflicted
shall work together for your good...”***

D&C 98.3

Our struggle with addiction was altering our lives. We could no longer control our compulsive behavior. We were paralyzed from the burden of our multitude of sins. Like Alma, we were *in the gall of bitterness, and encircled about by the everlasting chains of death.* (Alma 36:18) What had become very clear to us was that as long as we continued in our addictions, our lives would steadily become worse. Our desire to change our lives was always overshadowed by the darkness of our addictions. To put it simply: we were lost in the dark mist of addiction with no sense of direction to find our way out. Through our desire for change and our humble cries for help, the Savior found us and placed us on the road to recovery. Like many others before us, we were given the 12 Steps of Recovery to find our way out of the madness and were set on a course that brought healing and serenity to our lives.

Our association with others in recovery taught us that our problems were not unique, and we found hope as others shared their stories. We came to know there was a power greater than ourselves, always there to help us on our path of recovery. The desire to receive help from God and others is an essential element in beginning the recovery process.

Out of love for our fellowman, along with our obligation to carry the message of recovery, we have written this workbook to bring hope to those that still suffer from the effects of compulsive addictive behavior.

What we are endeavoring to do in this workbook is to examine the 12 steps of recovery – to better understand what they mean and how to apply the principles within the steps to those areas of our lives that afflict us. Our hope is that in doing so, the reader may come to know the peace and healing that are associated with these wonderful principles. Recognizing, acknowledging, and becoming truthful about what is going on beneath the surface of our lives is one of the most important things we can do in the recovery process.

As you consider the principles of recovery taught in this workbook, it would be unfair to lead you to believe that the struggles of addiction will be immediately over. There will be, in the coming days, times when you will be overwhelmed by the urge to revert to a former behavior. Relapse may even occur. However, if you are willing to give recovery your best efforts, and to allow others, including God, to be a part of it, the cravings will begin to fade.

The Lord has said that “*all things wherewith you have been afflicted shall work together for your good...*” (D&C 98:3). This counsel has provided us with a foundation of hope that recovery is indeed an obtainable reality. The outcome of a successful recovery experience can be described as:

“No pain that we suffer, no trial that we experience is wasted. It ministers to our education, the development of such qualities as patience, faith, fortitude and humility. All that we suffer and all that we endure, especially when we endure it patiently, builds up our character, purifies our hearts, expands our souls, and makes us more charitable, more worthy to be called the children of God...and it is through sorrow and suffering, toil and tribulation, that we gain the education that we came here to acquire and which will make us more like our Heavenly Father.” (Orson F. Whitney).

Throughout the *Bible* and the *Book of Mormon* are many references to the principles and the simple truths found in the 12 Steps of recovery. We recognize that the 12 Steps do not contain all the ordinances and principles necessary to return to our Father in Heaven. However, the 12 Steps can aid us in our preparation to receive those ordinances. We testify that careful study of *all* holy writ (with emphasis on standard works), along with daily prayer, and regular attendance at church and recovery meetings are fundamental to recovery. Commitment to this effort will bring one to the healing power of Jesus Christ.

THE TWELVE STEPS

1. We admitted that we were powerless over compulsive/addictive behaviors- that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand Him.
4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. We continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, 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 others still suffering from the effects of compulsive behaviors, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.*

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Step One

We admitted we were powerless over compulsive/addictive behaviors-- that our lives had become unmanageable.

***“Yea, I know that I am nothing;
as to my strength I am weak...”***

Alma 26:12

What is Step One?

For many, there comes a time when we find ourselves hopelessly wandering through life. Something seems to be missing, and we experience a sense of emptiness inside ourselves that yearns to be filled. This emptiness could be the resulting effect of loneliness, fear, abandonment, feeling unloved, past painful experience(s), or any number of other causes. Our natural response is to seek something, anything that will fill the emptiness, even if that “anything” is something outside our margin of values.

As time passes, the substances and behaviors we turn to in an effort to fill our emptiness become addictions. They take control of our lives, and we find our lives unmanageable as a result. Repeatedly we try, and fail, to stop our addictions. Our own will-power is not enough to resist the powerful temptation of our addictions. It is here that Step One is realized. We look honestly at ourselves and admit that we have an addictive dependence on a substance, on a behavior, or our minds are obsessed with out-of-control thoughts.

We have discovered that we are powerless to overcome our weaknesses alone. Through our admission we find ourselves free to acknowledge that we need help in order to bring control to our lives and peace to our souls. Admitting the truth about our lives today allows us to face things as they really are and to begin taking personal responsibility for our thoughts and behaviors.

Our lives have become unmanageable. We are ready for a change. We are willing to try another way.

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(The Bible Dictionary defines the below scripture as: “By transgression, man loses control over his own will and becomes the slave of sin.”)

Romans 7:14

“For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.”

In what way does your addiction relate to the above statement?

2 Nephi 1:13

“Oh that ye would awake; awake from a deep sleep, yea, even from the sleep of hell, and shake off the awful chains by which ye are bound, which are the chains which bind the children of men, that they are carried away captive down to the eternal gulf of misery and woe.”

Why do you want to awake from the deep sleep of your addiction?

How is your addiction like “chains by which ye are bound?” Do you feel trapped in a gulf of misery and woe? Describe your feelings:

1 Peter 4:12

“Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.”

Peter is telling us that in this life, we should not be surprised that we have been given trials to deal with. Trial and tribulation are a part of the mortal experience. Has there been a trial or experience in your life that caused you fear or pain that you are struggling with? Could your compulsive behavior be related to that problem? Has addiction been your way to deal with that trial? Explain:

Alma 36:18

“... O Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me, who am in the gall of bitterness, and am encircled about by the everlasting chains of death.”

How does this scripture reflect your life as you have struggled with addiction?

Describe how your addiction has changed your character over the years:

Mosiah 3:19

“For the natural man is an enemy of God, and has been from the fall of Adam...”

In the process of admitting our powerlessness, we encounter terms such as “carnal, mortal, and natural.” How do these terms relate to your addiction?

Why does God deem us as His enemy when we revert to our compulsive behaviors?

What good will come from admitting to being powerless over your addictive behaviors?

Step Two

**We came to believe that
a power greater than ourselves
could restore us to sanity.**

***“Look unto me, and be ye saved,
...for I am God, and there is none else.”***
Isaiah 45:22

What is Step Two?

Step One is our admission that we are powerless over our compulsive addictive behaviors and that we had come to understand that we need help in order to restore sanity to our lives. Step Two states that help is available through a higher power. Our goal in Step Two is to stop our course of self-destruction, and to turn to Heavenly Father, through our Savior Jesus Christ, as our “higher power” and source of recovery.

For many of us, there may have been an extended period of time pass since we have prayed to God and are unsure how to approach Him. Step Two will help us learn who God is and how He can assist us in recovery. We learn how our faith in Him allows us to use His strength to fight off the cravings of our compulsive behavior and receive His protection from evil. This same faith will eventually help us change our character, which will redirect our compulsiveness to wholesome desires.

There may also be concern over the extent of our grievous sins and whether or not we are worthy of any response from God. We may have even lost faith in God altogether and blame Him for the mess our lives have become. As we begin to consider working Step Two, it would be beneficial to set aside our worries and judgmental attitudes while we study God’s true nature. As we come to know God’s true nature we will eventually come to realize we need not fear Him. We will recognize His great love for us and learn that He wants only what is best for His children.

Note that Step Two states “came to believe.” This suggests that getting to know God and developing a personal relationship with Him is a process that takes time, effort, and energy. We have seen how the lives of other people have benefited from their belief in God, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, because they have lost the desire to do evil and their behavior is under control. Since our own best efforts to control our compulsive behavior failed, the Savior’s offer to rescue us becomes more and more appealing. Developing a personal relationship with God includes prayer, scripture study, attendance at meetings and applying the 12 Step principles to our lives.

As we read the scriptures, the testimonies of the Prophets will introduce us to God and show us how He interacts with His children. As we pray, we will open communication with Heavenly Father, feel His love for us, and begin to see His hand in our progress of recovery. As we regularly attend church and support group meetings, we will learn how the process of change is managed by how others have done it. As we practice the principles taught in the 12 Steps, we will witness positive changes within ourselves and begin to find the joy that God intended for all of His children to experience.

If we have no faith in God but desire to know Him, we can start where faith begins, with HOPE.

“Faith is not to have a perfect knowledge of things; therefore if ye have faith, ye hope for things which are not seen which are true.” Alma 32:21

God cannot answer prayers that have not been uttered.

“For if there be no faith among the children of men, God can do no miracle among them; wherefore He showed not Himself until after their faith.” (Ether 12:12)

Heavenly Father is a God of patience and will wait for us to reach out to Him first, so he does not interfere with our agency (freedom of choice / freedom to choose).

Heavenly Father is there to assist us in getting through our earthly struggles. Part of this earth life is to be tempted and tried in all things. If we desire to fight the onset of our compulsive behavior but feel we have no strength, we can pray to Heavenly Father to remove the cravings we are tempted with. The Lord promises that,

“There hath no temptation taken you such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

The escape in which the Lord speaks of is our ability to pray in the name of Jesus Christ to expel the cravings which any temptation may bring. In so many ways, the Savior offers help to His children. He does not want us to fail so He continually reaches out to us in answer to our prayers. As we learn more of Him, we trust more in His power over all things. As our faith grows, we depend more on His strength to endure the many difficulties and challenges we all face throughout our lives.

As we make the effort to reacquaint ourselves with our Heavenly Father, we will, without question, *come to believe* that He is God, and that He loves us beyond measure. He is actively interested in our journey of recovery as He is anxiously waiting for our return.

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Alma 32:27

“But behold, if ye will awake and arouse your faculties, even to an experiment upon my words, and exercise a particle of faith, yea, even if ye can no more than desire to believe, let this desire work in you, even until ye believe in a manner that ye can give place for a portion of my words.”

This is an opportunity to strengthen our belief and trust in the word of the Lord. He invites us to experiment and to measure the results. He simply asks us to believe and to see what will happen. He does not offer a major miracle to prove His existence. The response that you will receive will be the still small voice in your mind that will offer peace and hope to your mind, and feelings of love to your heart. All that He asks is that we humbly experiment upon His word.

What is it that you yearn to know? What are your personal questions for the Lord? What is the desire of your heart?

Alma 32:28

“Now, we will compare the word unto a seed. Now, if ye give place, that a seed may be planted in your heart, behold, if it be a true seed, or a good seed, if ye do not cast it out by your unbelief, that ye will resist the Spirit of the Lord, behold it will begin to swell within your breast;...”
[It will enlarge your soul, and enlighten your understanding.]

Alma points out that some risk is required for us to trust the experiment. It requires letting go of pride and unbelief, and surrendering to the Spirit of the Lord. What may prevent the Word of God to grow within you?

Luke 1:79

“To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet unto the way of peace.”

How would having faith in Christ personally benefit your life?

Matthew 11:28-30

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Knowing that all of us at some time in our lives will reach the breaking point from our afflictions, the Savior offers an invitation for us to come and find rest in Him. He asks us to trade burdens with Him. He will take upon Himself the burdens we can no longer bear, if we will to take upon us His yoke, which He describes as relatively easier and lighter than ours. The Savior uses the word “yoke” to help us better understand our responsibility in the agreement. A yoke is a frame designed to fit across the shoulders for carrying heavy loads. The Savior’s yoke is our commitment to take upon us His name and always remember Him and to keep His commandments, which He has given to all His children. As we approach God through prayer in an attitude of meekness and humility, the Savior will lighten our burdens so we can find rest.

What burden would you be willing to allow the Savior to carry for you?

3 Nephi 9:15

“Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are.”

Romans 13:1

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.”

Alma 26:35

“For [God] has all power, all wisdom, and all understanding; He comprehendeth all things...”

If God is all that is stated above, in what way can He help you?

John 8:31-32

“...If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

How will learning truth benefit you? How will knowing the truth the Lord teaches help you in your recovery?

Step Three

**We made a decision to turn our will
and our lives over to the care of
God as we understand Him.**

***“And we are willing to enter into a covenant with our God
to do his will, and to be obedient to his commandments in all things
that he shall command us, all the remainder of our days...”***

Mosiah 5:5

What is Step Three?

So far, we have faced the difficult steps of admitting powerlessness over our compulsive addictive behaviors and the need of a power greater than ourselves to restore us to the peaceful pathways of life. We have acquired a measure of hope, faith and understanding of God the Father, and Jesus Christ. Now, Step Three asks us to put our faith into action by yielding our will, our recovery, and our very lives to the care and direction of our Heavenly Father. Choosing to yield is an exercise of personal agency, or choice.

There is no question that Step Three is a major step. Step Three requires us to abandon the self-will that has characterized our behaviors up until now. Bear in mind that it was our self-will and uncontrollable self-centered obsessions that made our lives unmanageable.

We can choose to remain in conflict between our compulsive behaviors and our desire to become the person we were meant to be. We can persist in blaming others for our out-of-control behaviors, and continue to reap the destructive consequences that they create. Or, we can choose put into action our belief in the Savior by surrendering to the fact that we have lost the war of self-control over our compulsive addictive behavior. We have now made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, being willing to allow God to give us direction and help restore our lives. As we turn away from self-will and start allowing God’s will to direct us, we immediately begin to feel His empowerment over the destructive forces in our lives. When we surrender our will for God’s will, we enlist a power greater than ourselves to fight our own personal battles with compulsive addictive behavior.

Complete and unconditional surrender of our self-will will be easier said than done. It is for this reason that we first need to develop hope, faith and trust in a loving God who knows how to strengthen and restore us. Though past negative experiences may make it difficult to allow anyone to get too close to us, we need not fear as we begin trusting God.

“...For I do know that whosoever shall put their trust in God shall be supported in their trials, and their troubles, and their afflictions...” Alma 36:3

Heavenly Father will allow whatever time we need for the process of coming to trust in Him. He will patiently wait for us to allow Him to enter our lives.

In Step Three, we have made the decision to cease living ungodly and self-centered lives. Instead, we have committed to live God’s commandments as best we can. At times we may fall short in our commitment to do God’s will in all things and in all places. Nevertheless, as long as we are willing to keep trying, the Lord will continue to bless our lives. Remember that recovery requires hope, faith, and trust.

If we are unwilling to surrender our self-will to God, we will ultimately sabotage our recovery because we will be turning away from the only power that can heal us. If we expect to continue to move forward in our recovery we must be willing to give up everything in our lives that is contrary to Heavenly Father’s commandments. Our Heavenly Father’s direction will help us change our life’s course, thus moving us toward becoming the person we have always wanted to be; an honorable and faithful child of God.

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John 5:30

“...I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.”

Many times in the scriptures the Savior makes reference to doing the will of the Father. What message is the Savior teaching?

Moroni 10:32

“Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you...”

Why is it so important to deny ourselves of all our ungodly desires?

2 Nephi 2:27

“Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh (mortal earth life); and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, (Jesus Christ) or to choose captivity and death according to the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself.”

For what purpose do we have the freedom to choose our own destiny?

Freedom of choice (agency) means that we have choice and control over our decisions. Many believe that we also have control over the consequences of those choices. Why is this viewpoint incorrect?

It is one thing to choose to believe in the existence of God and an entirely different thing to turn our life and will over to Him. Why would you choose to allow Heavenly Father to be a part of the decisions you make in your life? Can you accept and apply the counsel Heavenly Father has for you, even when His counsel may be difficult to accept?

Alma 29:3-4

“...I ought to be content with the things which the Lord hath allotted unto me...for I know that he granteth unto men according to their desire, whether it be unto death or unto life....”

Sometimes what we desire most (even if those desires have negative consequences), may seem to us what is best, and God will allow us to make that our choice. Yet, these desires may not be what Heavenly Father would choose for us. It is often difficult to change our feelings and our desires. Why does the Lord grant men according to their desires? Why is it best to allow the Lord to direct us?

Mosiah 4:9

“Believe in God; believe that he is, and that he created all things, both in heaven and in earth; believe that he has all wisdom, and all power, both in heaven and in earth; believe that man doth not comprehend all things, which the Lord can comprehend.”

Do you believe all of these things about God, as stated above? What actions can you take to increase your hope, trust, and faith in the Lord?

There is great safety and peace in turning our will and lives over to the care of God. As we learn to trust Him our faith grows, and we realize that we do not understand all things, but that He does. In what ways can this concept change your life?

Mosiah 27:25-26

“And the Lord said unto me: Marvel not that all mankind, yea, men, and women, all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, must be born again; yea, born of God, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his sons and daughters; And thus they become new creatures; and unless they do this, they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God.”

How do you feel about yourself and your need to change when you consider that everyone needs to repent and change in order to return back to God?

When you view yourself as a “new creature” or the spiritual person you have always wanted to be; what do you see?

Summary of what you have learned or special notes for Steps One through Step Three:

Step Four

We made a searching, and fearless
moral inventory of ourselves.

*“If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves
and the truth is not in us.”*

1 John 1:8

What is Step Four?

Now that we have established a measure of faith in God and are seeking to do His will, we find ourselves concerned about the past as it relates to truth and honesty. Many of us have been living in a state of denial for some time and are now beginning to see ourselves through the light of truth. In the past we would justify our thinking and behavior, or place blame on others for the problems we had created. We are now willing to take ownership of our past actions by making a searching and fearless moral (truthful and honest) written inventory of ourselves.

Step Four suggests we take a detailed look at ourselves to identify our past thoughts and behaviors as they relate to right and wrong. By honestly looking at our past, we are able to define who we are today in relationship to our values, character traits, and the principles we currently live by. To be honest with ourselves regarding our past can be challenging. In the past we avoided looking too closely at ourselves, fearing the truth of what we had become. Picturing ourselves fearlessly inventorying our past is likely to generate intense feelings of fear. Remember that fearless does not mean “without fear.” Fearless means that we are *committed* to search through even the darkest areas of our lives, regardless of what we may find. Once we clearly see our past behaviors with truth and honesty, we will learn how they have affected who we have become.

As we consider the magnitude of Step Four, and the challenge it presents, we may feel overwhelmed. Remember the faith building experiences in the previous steps and the trust we now have in God as we have come to know Him, for;

“He is the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation...”
(2 Corinthians 1:3, 4)

By first turning to God, we will find the comfort, courage and guidance we need. He is the very source that will assist us to find peace and healing.

As we begin to progress in our recovery, we may discover that the addictions plaguing our lives are generally not the entire problem. Rather, the addiction is a symptom of deeper issues

needing to be resolved. Therefore, honesty is especially vital in working this step. Without total and complete honesty, we may not discover the issues that Christ could help us with the most. Discovering the true core values of right and wrong, can bring a startling clear insight into who we really are; a valued child of great worth, to a loving Heavenly Father.

By making a searching and fearless moral written inventory, we are able to sort out the specific details of a confused past. As we review the events of our past, we should keep in mind that they do not define our future. What we will learn of ourselves as we work this step will ultimately inspire a change of direction in our lives. We do not have to be what we have always been. As we examine our trials and weaknesses, we come to recognize these experiences as great learning opportunities. The weaknesses we uncover can be key elements the Lord eventually helps turn into strengths as we continue applying spiritual principles to our lives.

“And if men come unto me I will show them their weakness. I give unto men weakness that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them.” (Ether 12: 27)

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Elder F. Enzo Busche, Ensign Nov. 1993, p.24

“The issue is truth, and the only way to find truth is through uncompromising self-education toward self honesty. I must see the original “real me,” the child of God in its innocence and potential in contrast to the influence from the other part of me, [the flesh], with its selfish desires and foolishness.”

How would self honesty help you to see the vast difference between the “real you” and the person you have been?

Mosiah 4:2

“And they had viewed themselves in their own carnal state, even less than the dust of the earth...”

Why does the Lord want you to acknowledge your bad behaviors?

Alma 36:13

“I did remember all my sins and iniquities, for which I was tormented with the pains of hell; yea, I saw that I had rebelled against my God, and that I had not kept his holy commandments.”

How has your past negative behaviors kept you from coming closer to Heavenly Father?

In what way does the memory of former behaviors torment you?

D&C 1:3

“And the rebellious shall be pierced with much sorrow; for their iniquities shall be spoken upon the housetops, and their secret acts shall be revealed.”

2 Nephi 30:17

“There is nothing which is secret save it shall be revealed; there is no work of darkness save it shall be made manifest in the light; and there is nothing which is sealed upon the earth save it shall be loosed.”

Why is it NOW important to make a fearless, moral inventory of your past?

2 Nephi 28:28

“And in fine, wo unto all those who tremble, and are angry because of the truth of God! For behold, he that is built upon the rock receiveth it with gladness; and he that is built upon a sandy foundation trembleth lest he shall fall.”

How can the Spirit of the Lord help you to endure the truth found in your inventory?

As you begin to write your moral inventory, if you will ask Heavenly Father in humble prayer for guidance, He will whisper into your heart what you should write. What whisperings have you heard?

2 Corinthians 12:9

“And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”

How can your weaknesses help you to become strong?

How do your weaknesses make Christ's work on your behalf more perfect?

Step Five:

**We admitted to God, to ourselves,
and to another human being the
exact nature of our wrongs.**

***“By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—
behold, he will confess them and forsake them.”
(D&C 58:43)***

What is Step Five?

In Step Four we began to challenge our behaviors and addictions as we have reached down and identified the root cause of our compulsive addictive behaviors. Step Five now calls for an open disclosure of the wrongful behaviors we have uncovered. Realizing that we may encounter feelings of shame and guilt, we must commit to move forward boldly if any significant changes are to be made in the way we have been living.

Part of Step Five is to share our inventory with God. Through prayer, we confess to Heavenly Father our personal responsibility for our past behaviors. As we do this, we begin to feel the burden of weight lifted from our past wrongful actions. By admitting that we are responsible for our actions we become able to have a measure of control over them. We now feel free to do whatever may be necessary to change our behavior. Our humble prayer of admission and recognition of our sinful past will open a door to the Savior, enabling Him to enter in so He may heal our hearts and restore our lives. This simple act initiates the process of repentance.

No doubt, the most difficult part of this step is the sharing of our moral inventory, the exact nature of our wrongs, with another person. Though disclosing our inventories with a close friend or associate is entirely appropriate, eventually, *when the time is right*, we will need to confess the ungodly behaviors of our past to our Priesthood Leader. In The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, the Bishop is “the common judge in Israel.” The Bishop holds the keys of repentance and he will assist us in reconciling our sinful behaviors before God. He is responsible for judging Church members who have transgressed God’s laws. Remember, however, that it is only Jesus Christ, because of His Atonement, who holds the keys of forgiveness.

The blessing attached to working Step Five is relief from the burden of sin, shame, and guilt that we have been carrying. The healing process of repentance starts to take place and our desire for a change of heart allows the Savior to open the way before us.

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James 5:16

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

How can confessing your faults to another, and praying for another, help you to heal?

The scriptures teach us that we are to confess our sins (see D&C 19:20), our iniquity (see Psalms 32:5), and our faults (see James 5:16). Since God knows everything to begin with, why would He require us to confess to Him?

D&C 64:7

“...verily I say unto you, I, the Lord, forgive sins unto those who confess their sins before me, and ask forgiveness...”

What do we learn about the nature and character of God as we pray to confess our sins and weaknesses to the Lord?

What does confession do for you and your compulsive nature?

Hebrews 10:17

“And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.”

Forgiveness from the Lord is the result of great personal effort. It takes courage to face the reality of inappropriate behavior, to take responsibility for the wrongful actions of the past and to accept the consequences of that wrongful behavior. What efforts are you making at this time to take ownership of your inappropriate behavior?

Alma 24:17

“...they took their swords, and all the weapons...and they did bury them up deep in the earth.”

Taken from the story of the Anti-Nephi-Lehies, a powerful lesson is taught by a group of people who came to recognize the consequences of their personal behaviors. How does the honest acceptance of your personal confession help you to “bury the weapons” of your character?

Proverbs 27:13

“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth, and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”

On March 29, 1992 in an address given at BYU, Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles taught that the Lord has designated the Bishop to be the common judge in Israel. Elder Packer said,

“If your transgression is serious, and your conscience will tell you whether it is or not, seek out the Bishop. The Bishop represents the Lord in extending forgiveness for the Church.”

What are your feelings and concerns at the prospect of visiting with your Bishop?

Isaiah 41:10

“Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”

How does knowing that God will stay with you and strengthen you at all times, even during the difficult process of confession, bring you peace and comfort?

Step Six

We were entirely ready to have God
remove all these defects of character.

***“...have ye spiritually been born of God?
Have ye received his image in your countenances? Have ye
experienced this mighty change in your hearts?”
(Alma 5:14)***

What is Step Six?

An important requirement in obtaining forgiveness and moving forward in recovery is admitting to God, and to our Bishop, the exact nature of our wrongs (as we worked Step Five). However, confession must be followed by a change in character, which will cause us to lose the disposition to do evil. Remember that the destructive patterns of our lives, which we uncovered in Step Four, are still a part of us. Step Six is more than a simple and sincere cry to God that we are ready to have our defects of character removed. Through time and our willingness to learn, Step Six becomes the process that yields significant changes to our character. We are being asked to allow God to help us replace the weaknesses in our character, (character defects), with the loving attributes of a Christ-like character.

In the past, our character defects have controlled our thoughts and desires. Our decisions to act on those thoughts and desires have led us into sinful behaviors. Step Six requires us to exercise our strengthened faith in God. Our character will begin to change by simply allowing the Savior to enter our hearts and being willing to let Him direct us. Eventually, if we continue to allow God to direct and influence us, our entire character will be changed for the better. This is accomplished by yielding to what the Spirit is teaching us to do; thus *“receiving His image in our countenances”*.

Striving to learn and apply the teachings of the Spirit, in an effort to become a better person, is a lifetime pursuit. Our changed character will enable us to form bonding relationships that will endure throughout time. Our love for others will be at the forefront of our desires as we continually look for the good in everyone. We will be better fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, and friends.

We have lost the disposition to do evil as we have replaced it with love for (and desire to please) our Heavenly Father, love for our fellow man, and have come to respect and love ourselves. The return for our efforts will be enormous, as we are able to control our compulsive behavior by our changed character and our increased desire to do good continually.

“...yea, what shall I do that I may be born of God, having this wicked spirit rooted out of my breast, and receive his Spirit, that I may be filled with joy...” Alma 22:15

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Mosiah 3:19

“For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love...”

As he delivered this talk, King Benjamin pleaded with his people to become as little children. The charge was to become meek, humble, patient, loving, and submissive. How will these qualities cultivate a change in your character?

The *natural man* would be considered the out-of-control appetites and unbridled passions which the body craves. Our spirits are considered the literal offspring of Heavenly Father in the pre-earth life. The body and the spirit must co-exist peacefully together in the same house. Yet at times they are in conflict with one another. Why must the spirit bring the body into submission by yielding the enticing of the Holy Spirit?

Alma 37:37

“Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good...”

Why should we pray to Heavenly Father concerning our character defects and ask for His help and guidance in removing them?

The Beatitudes:

*Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.
Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.
Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

Matthew 5:3-12

The Beatitudes encourage the development of dispositions toward meekness, mercy, purity of heart, and many other godly attributes. How can these attributes become personal strengths in helping you develop a righteous character?

Ether 12:37

“...because thou hast seen thy weakness, thou shalt be made strong”

A critical step in the process of change is to admit and accept responsibility for our character defects. How can your weakness of character eventually become your strength?

Alma 5:14

“...have ye spiritually been born of God? Have ye received his image in your countenances? Have ye experienced this mighty change in your hearts?”

What indications or signs do you see in your desires and behaviors that suggest that this mighty change is occurring in your life?

How can you encourage continued change in your character?

How will others come to believe you have changed?

Matthew 22:37-40

“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the Prophets.”

Change of character can be determined by how we are living these two great commandments. Where do you stand today in relationship to this scripture?

Moroni 4:3

“...that they may always have his Spirit to be with them.”

The Spirit will cultivate a disposition to do good if we allow Him to. What is the advantage of *always* having His Spirit to be with you?

Helaman 3:35

“Nevertheless, they did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ, unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts, which sanctification cometh because of their yielding their hearts unto God.”

What are the basic steps required for us in becoming sanctified?

2 Nephi 2:27-29

“Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh...they are free to choose liberty and eternal life...or to choose captivity and death...”

We are often tempted to return to our prior thought patterns, desires, and behaviors. How can we overcome these temptations and avoid returning to a destructive lifestyle?

2 Nephi 4:31

“Wilt thou make me that I may shake at the appearance of sin?”

Like most men, the Prophet Nephi continually fought his own individual battles with temptation. In (2 Nephi 4:17-18), Nephi admits that at times he felt powerless over his weaknesses. Why did Nephi request that the Lord make him shake at the appearance of sin?

Summary of what you have learned or special notes for Steps Four through Step Six:

Step Seven

We humbly asked Him
to remove our shortcomings.

“O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, and our hearts may be purified; for we believe in Jesus Christ...”

Mosiah 4:2

What is Step Seven?

From the last three steps we have learned the value of honesty and accountability as we have identified what our lives have become. We have inventoried our actions, assumed responsibility for our past behaviors, and have shared our inventory with God and another person (or the Bishop). We have experienced a desire for change and have allowed the Lord to enter our hearts as we have been willing to yield to the promptings of the Spirit in replacing our character defects with a more Christ like character. Our ability to love has increased along with a willingness to forgive. We have come to love our Heavenly Father and desire to keep His commandments. Our capacity to love others has increased as well as our ability to love ourselves. Yet after all the positive changes we have witnessed in our recovery, the past still carries with it a dark burden of weight which has become increasingly difficult to bear.

We still suffer from the memory of our past sins. A sense of remorse has filled our hearts and we ache for healing relief from the pain of our guilt. We no longer desire to be *“harroved up by the memory of our sins”* (Alma 36:17). We seem to be unable to forgive ourselves and lack the ability to find inner peace. We find ourselves in a humbled state and yearn to have the burden of our sins lifted and our sorrow replaced with joy.

Our humility has drawn us nearer to Heavenly Father, becoming as children: submissive, meek, patient, and full of love. We have become ready to place all our sins upon the alter of God and humbly cry to Heavenly Father to apply the healing power of The Atonement of Jesus Christ in removing the sins of our past. Many of us have identified with Alma when he said;

“I cried within my heart: O Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me, who am in the gall of bitterness, and am encircled about by the everlasting chains of death.”

(Alma 36:18)

(See Alma 36:12-20 for the entire story)

As we align ourselves with God’s requirements for repentance, we gain the hope and assurance that He will hear and answer our pleas for forgiveness.

The process of asking Heavenly Father for forgiveness is simple. Kneeling down in private and in the spirit of humility, we begin by thanking Heavenly Father for loving us and for making all the good things in life possible. Next, we ask for forgiveness from all of our sins, and for His help in continuing to purify our hearts, our thoughts, and our actions. We close our prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, because it is through His atoning sacrifice that the remission of our sins is made possible.

With sincere effort in our prayers, we now put everything into God's hands. If we are patient and continue to try our best to do good, we will see the time come when we will be granted an unmistakable witness that we are forgiven. Like Alma, we too will testify:

"I could remember my pains no more; yea, I was harrowed up by the memory of my sins no more. And oh, what joy, and what marvelous light I did behold; yea, my soul was filled with joy as exceeding as was my pain." (Alma 36:19-20).

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2 Nephi 2:6-9

“Wherefore, redemption cometh in and through the Holy Messiah; for he is full of grace and truth. Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer to the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered. Wherefore, how great this importance to make these things known unto the inhabitants of the earth, that they may know that there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah, who layeth down his life according to the flesh, and taketh it again by the power of the Spirit, that he may bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, being the first that should rise. Wherefore, he is the first fruits unto God, inasmuch as he shall make intercession for all the children of men; and they that believe in him shall be saved.”

The Prophet Lehi described what The Atonement of Jesus Christ meant to him. Describe in your own words what The Atonement means to you.

Alma 36:19,20

“And now, behold when I thought this, I could remember my pains no more; yea, I was harrowed up by the memory of my sins no more. And oh, what joy, and what marvelous light I did behold; yea, my soul was filled with joy as exceeding as was my pain!”

Alma aligned himself with God’s requirements for repentance and then cried within his heart for forgiveness. The above scripture was the feeling he received as God responded to his plea. What difference would it make in your life if you were to be forgiven as Alma was? Describe your feelings:

Enos 1:6-8

“And I, Enos, knew that God could not lie; wherefore, my guilt was swept away. And I said: Lord, how is it done? And he said unto me: Because of thy faith in Christ whom thou hast never heard nor seen... wherefore, go to, thy faith hath made thee whole.”

How can your faith in Christ make you whole?

3 Nephi 9:13

“...will ye not now return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you?”

Part of the healing that takes place is being restored to innocence. How would becoming innocent change your life?

Enos 1:4-5

“...and I cried unto him in mighty prayer and supplication for mine own soul...And there came a voice unto me, saying, Enos, thy sins are forgiven thee...”

Does forgiveness release us from the responsibility to continue to strive to be accountable for our thoughts and actions? Explain:

Helaman 5:9

“...there is no other way nor means whereby man can be saved, only through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, who shall come; yea, remember that he cometh to redeem the world.”

To redeem is “to buy back” or to “restore ones self to favor”. Why cannot we redeem ourselves and return to the Father?

Isaiah 53:4-5

“Surely He hath borne our grief’s, and carried our sorrows... He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.”

Why would the Savior suffer these afflictions in our behalf?

D&C 19:16-18

“For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I; Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink.”

If you do not repent, what will be the price you will personally pay for your sins?

Why do you want God to remove your sins?

Psalm 51:1-3

“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me.”

This entire psalm from David is a mighty plea for forgiveness from God. How do you relate to David’s plea for forgiveness?

Alma 34:33-34

*“...I beseech of you that ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end; for after this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not **improve** our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed. Ye cannot say, when ye are brought to that awful crisis, that I will repent, that I will return to my God. Nay, ye cannot say this; for that same spirit which doth possess your bodies at the time that ye go out of this life, that same spirit will have **power** to possess your body in that eternal world.”*

At the time the Prophet Alma wrote these verses he had already gone through the repentance process for the time when he had lived an ungodly lifestyle (See Alma 36:12-14). Much insight is given in the above scripture. How do the words of Alma relate to you? Explain.

Alma 36:13, 14

“Yea, I did remember all my sins and iniquities, for which I was tormented with the pains of hell; yea, I saw that I had rebelled against my God, and that I had not kept His holy commandments.

Yea, and I had murdered many of His children, or rather led them away to destruction; yea, and in fine so great had been my iniquities, that the very thought of coming into the presence of God did rack my soul with inexpressible horror.”

Alma was revealed the truth regarding his circumstances with God unless he repented and changed his ways. What would be your thoughts if you were to come into the presence of God today?

Mosiah 27:28, 29

“Nevertheless, after wading through much tribulation, repenting nigh unto death, the Lord in mercy hath seen fit to snatch me out of the everlasting burning, and I am born of God.

My soul hath been redeemed from the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity. I was in the darkest abyss; but now I behold the marvelous light of God. My soul was racked with eternal torment; but I am snatched, and my soul is pained no more.”

If you have had a similar experience with repentance, how would you describe it to someone who had not yet sought repentance?

Step Eight

**We made a list of all persons
we had harmed, and became willing
to make amends to them all.**

***“And blessed are all the peacemakers,
for they shall be called the children of God.”
(3 Nephi 12:9)***

What is Step Eight?

Step Eight is the process of making personal amends towards those we harmed by our past behavior. To make amends means to “apologize and make restitution to another person.” Taking care to not place blame on others, we examine our actions of wrongdoing without justifying or excusing ourselves. This step is not about what others have done to us. It is about taking personal responsibility for what we have done to others. If we have caused harm to anyone, at any time, we need to include them on our list of those people to whom we owe amends.

As we reflect upon our past, we should consider everyone in our immediate and extended relationships. Did our misbehavior betray their trust in us? Did we lie to them? Did we steal from them? Did we break promises or covenants we made with them? We should prayerfully seek clarification from Heavenly Father if we are uncertain as to our role in past conflicts or who to include in our amends.

By making a list of the people we have injured, we are taking ownership of the harm we have caused each person on that list. We will begin to feel relief from the burden of guilt we have carried as we take personal ownership and responsibility for our past actions. As each person is added to the list, we can reflect on what we might say to them if we were given the opportunity. Remember to include your *own name* on the list, for we have also harmed ourselves. If we can show love to those we have harmed, by being willing to make amends, we shall then receive the blessing of becoming peacemakers.

Applying this step to our lives will render us more Christ-like in character. Jesus said,

“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another”
(John 13:35)

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Romans 14:13,19

“Let us not therefore judge one another anymore; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.”

How does seeking for peace turn away contention from your life?

James 3:18

“And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”

How will extending love and peace to people in your life return love and peace to you?

Mosiah 4:13

“And ye will not have a mind to injure one another, but to live peaceably, and to render to every man according to that which is his due.”

What is it that causes us to no longer desire to injure, nor seek revenge upon another? (Read Mosiah Chapter 4).

David O. McKay, former LDS Church president is quoted as saying:

"If you want peace, yours is the responsibility to obtain it."

(Church News, 11 Mar.1961, page 15).

The gospel has to be lived in order to be fully realized and its power received. What weaknesses do you yet find in your character that prevents you from being a peacemaker?

3 Nephi 12:9

"And blessed are all the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

What are some of the blessings that come from being a peacemaker?

How would you benefit from making a list of all persons you have harmed?

Step Nine

We made direct amends to such people where ever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

“Go thy way unto thy brother, and first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I will receive you.”
(3 Nephi 12:24)

What is Step Nine?

Having completed our amends list from Step Eight, and having gained a willingness to attempt reconciliation, we are now ready to put that willingness into action. Our character has acquired the principles of humility, selflessness, and meekness. Step Nine requires that we apply these principles with actions.

We are ready to step forward and apologize for our past actions and behaviors to those we have harmed.

Our worst fears may surface as we plan to make amends. The transition from considering what amends we may need to make; and actually putting them into a physical reality requires courage, trust, and faith. We cannot know how the other person will receive our petitions or respond to our attempts at making amends. We may not be received at all, or we may face retaliation and anger for our past behaviors. What we expect and want to happen can deter us in working this step. However, we cannot make our decision to make amends based on our expectations of what we would like to have happen. Every possibility exists, good and bad, and we must be willing to follow through regardless of the potential outcome.

Making direct amends does not include asking others to forgive us. Expecting others to forgive us may create an uncomfortable situation for those we are making amends to and possibly cause further injury. When making direct amends, we are simply apologizing for our part in past conflicts. Forgiveness is a gift given by another and will come *over time* as others observe our sincere change of heart, changed character, and improved behavior. Remember that when we make amends by offering apologies and performing restitution (as needed); it is only the starting point in rebuilding relationships. We need to continue to make a conscious effort each day to not injure others, or to return to former destructive behaviors.

It is possible that attempting to make amends may cause further harm to some of those on our list or other persons. If this is the case, we will need to delay making amends to a future time when we would not be creating more problems. If there are any questions about proceeding, we should ask Heavenly Father for guidance.

The burden of our past conflicts can be eased as we complete the task of making amends to those persons whom we can. We have done what God has asked us to do. As we reconcile ourselves with others, we fulfill the Lord's purposes in our part of becoming peacemakers. Having done this with full purpose of heart (as far as we have been able to), we are promised to be received by Christ concerning the amends we have now been able to make. (See 3 Nephi 12: 24.)

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Mosiah 27:35

“And they traveled throughout all the land of Zarahemla, and among all the people who were under the reign of King Mosiah, zealously striving to repair all the injuries which they had done to the church, confessing all their sins, and publishing all the things which they had seen, and explaining the prophecies and the scriptures to all who desired to hear them.”

What did “striving to repair all the injuries” and “confessing all their sins” do for Alma the younger, and the sons of Mosiah? What will it do for you?

3 Nephi 12:24

“Go thy way unto thy brother, and first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I will receive you.”

Why must we first be reconciled to one another before we can be received of God regarding our past conflicts?

Helaman 5:17

“...they came forth and did confess their sins, and were baptized unto repentance, and immediately returned to the Nephites to endeavor to repair unto them the wrongs which they had done.”

What is it that motivates us to “repair the wrongs” when we are converted to God?

Moroni 7:45

“And charity suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not, and is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.”

A measure of charity is required in order to make direct amends to anyone. What qualities, from the above list, do you find present in your character as you begin your work on this step?

James 1:5

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.”

If you are concerned that making amends would cause further injury to another, what should your course of action be?

Summary of what you have learned or special notes for Steps Seven through Step Nine:

Step Ten

We continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

*“And as often as my people repent
will I forgive them their trespasses against me.”*
(Mosiah 26:30)

What is Step Ten?

Step Ten is a reminder to regularly inventory our personal behavior and to make amends immediately, for anything we may have done that may block our continued spiritual growth and recovery. We have discovered that even as we put forth our best efforts in doing God’s will, there are times when we will fall short in our ability to continually do all that God asks us to do, as our *“sins do so easily beset [us].”* (See 2 Nephi 4:18) Fortunately, the Savior will make up for us where we fall short (*after all we can do*) as we promptly admit our wrongs, make needed corrections, and ask Heavenly Father for forgiveness. (See 2 Nephi 25:23)

Step Ten is asking us to look inside ourselves and to be aware of what is going on in our lives *today*. Self-examination allows us to confront our unbridled thoughts and behaviors for the purpose of taking responsibility for our thoughts and actions before they get out of control. We can help to avoid relapse by keeping in touch with our thoughts, attitudes, and feelings, before they turn into destructive behaviors or actions.

Daily reviews help us handle situations as they arise. We no longer need to hide or escape from the challenges and disappointments that life brings us. We now live by a higher set of values. By promptly reaffirming our dependence upon, and love of our Heavenly Father, we seek His help in working through whatever we may be called upon to deal with.

We now have learned valuable skills by practicing the previous steps, along with additional tools to assist us. These include:

- The scriptures, which teach us all things necessary to return to God.
- How to show respect, love, and forgiveness to our fellowman.
- Personal prayer, which allows us to call upon the powers of heaven for guidance and assistance with our trials.
- Priesthood blessings, which add a measure of strength and hope toward overcoming challenges.
- The Twelve Steps of recovery which provide simple and clear steps in finding peace with God, with our fellowman, and with ourselves.
- Support and spiritual growth through attendance at church and recovery meetings.
- And true friends, with whom we share common goals.

How will we know if something isn't quite right in our lives? We need only listen to the still, small voice from within ourselves that warns us when we start down the path that leads to self-destruction. Sometimes called our conscience, the "Light of Christ" is a gift we were all born with. It will always warn us, will never lie to us, nor lead us astray. When we seek the Savior's help daily while reviewing our thoughts and actions, He will guide and direct us on what corrections need to be made. Father in Heaven has not left us alone in the world to work out our own recovery. He has provided us with a Savior to restore, heal and strengthen us in our daily recovery efforts.

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D&C 136:31

“My people must be tried in all things that they may be prepared to receive the glory that I have for them.”

What good have you gained from your struggles?

A part of the plan of this life is that we would have experiences that will cause us to struggle and suffer. What have been some of your struggles today?

Alma 36:3

“...for I do know that whosoever shall put their trust in God shall be supported in their trials, and their troubles, and their afflictions, and shall be lifted up at the last day.”

How does reading this scripture bring you hope that God is aware of you and the difficult challenges you face in your life?

3 Nephi 27:27

“...Therefore, what manner of men ought ye to be? Verily I say unto you, even as I am.”

How does daily personal inventory help you become a better person?

2 Nephi 4:18, 20

“I am encompassed about, because of the temptations and the sins which do so easily beset me...nevertheless, I know in whom I have trusted... My God hath been my support; he hath led me through mine afflictions in the wilderness...”

How have you come to rely upon God when dealing with your daily temptations?

2 Nephi 10:20

“And now, my beloved brethren, seeing that our merciful God has given us so great knowledge concerning these things, let us remember him, and lay aside our sins, and not hang down our heads, for we are not cast off; nevertheless, we have been driven out of the land of our inheritance; but we have been led to a better land, for the Lord has made the sea our path, and we are upon an isle of the sea.”

How does knowing that God has not “cast you off,” but that He is leading you to a better life, give you strength to meet the daily challenges?

Mosiah 26:30

“And as often as my people repent will I forgive them their trespasses against me.”

What does this scripture say about the character of God?

D&C 29:39

“And it must needs be that the devil should tempt the children of men, or they could not be agents unto themselves; for if they never should have bitter they could not know the sweet.”

How does knowing that we are supposed to be tempted, as a part of Heavenly Father’s plan, help you to accept your trials and tribulations?

Luke 9:23

*“And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross **daily**, and follow me.”*

JST Matthew 16:24

“And now for a man to take up his cross, is to deny himself all ungodliness, and every worldly lust, and keep my commandments.”

What is the Savior asking you to do on a daily basis?

2 Nephi 4:16-19

“Behold, my soul delighteth in the things of the Lord; and my heart pondereth continually upon the things which I have seen and heard. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the great goodness of the Lord, in showing me his great and marvelous works, my heart exclaimeth: O wretched man that I am! Yea, my heart sorroweth because of my flesh; my soul grieveth because of mine iniquities. I am encompassed about, because of the temptations and the sins which do so easily beset me. And when I desire to rejoice, my heart groaneth because of my sins; nevertheless, I know in whom I have trusted.”

The Prophet Nephi was a very righteous man, yet like all of mankind, he struggled with his own set of temptations. Openly venting his frustration because of the ease in which he falls into temptation seems very familiar. Yet he never gives up as he comments his trust in the Savior by promptly admitting to his wrongs and repenting as many times as he sins; always trying to do better, always reconciling to the will of the Lord.

Is your approach to temptation and sin any different than Nephi’s? Explain:

Step Eleven

**We sought through prayer and meditation
to improve our conscious contact with God,
praying only for knowledge of His will for us,
and the power to carry that out.**

***“Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings,
and He will direct thee for good...”***
(Alma 37:37)

What is Step Eleven?

We have come to understand that recovery is a spiritual journey. Step Eleven is a daily exercise in prayer and meditation that is necessary to continue our spiritual growth and recovery. Step Eleven keeps us in spiritual balance. Personal prayer, reading and pondering the scriptures, regular attendance at Church meetings and recovery groups, and a sincere effort to obey the commandments of God will keep us sensitive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. It is through the Holy Spirit that we are provided not only with an understanding of God’s will, but also the ability to receive His direction in accomplishing His purposes.

“For by my Spirit will I enlighten them, and by my power will I make known unto them the secrets of my will-yea, even those things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor yet entered into the heart of man.” D&C 76:10

The still small voice of the Holy Ghost will comfort and guide us. Promptings or counsel from the Holy Ghost will come as thoughts and may be difficult at first to separate from our own individual thoughts. However, the language of the Holy Ghost is accompanied with a unique feeling which is described as:

“The language of peace as spoken by the Lord, embraces a sense of quiet confidence, comfort and warmth. It is gentle, calm, amiable, and sweet. It is temperate and kind. It is orderly and identified by happiness, joy, and feelings of love.”
(Dallin H. Oaks, Ensign March 1997)

According to the law of agency, God will allow us take whatever course in life we choose, regardless of the consequences our choices will bring. God wants us to use our knowledge and intelligence to meditate and problem solve in finding our own solutions and course of actions. After thoughtful meditation, we can then seek God’s confirmation of His will for us. When we approach Heavenly Father with patience and humility, the Spirit will affirm to us if the course we have chosen is correct.

“You must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; Therefore, you shall feel that it is right. But if it be not right you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong... D&C 9:8

We should not be discouraged if at first God’s direction for us is not clear. Like the steps that we have worked previously, listening to God’s direction is a process that takes patience and practice. We must continue to pray, read the scriptures, and attend meetings to be able to improve our spiritual knowledge, improve our conscious contact with God, as well as understanding His will for us.

Through practicing the discipline of spiritual living, we empower ourselves with the knowledge that we need not fear because the Lord will direct and protect those who do His will. In the process of working Step Eleven, our thoughts and desires will continue to move closer and closer to the will of God, until the time comes when we find ourselves *at one* with Him.

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Proverbs 3:5-6

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

What comfort do you take as you come unto the Lord and allow Him to provide you with direction?

D&C 42:61

“If thou shalt ask, thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal.”

What blessings can you expect in your life as you seek to receive knowledge and revelation from God?

Name a few of the “mysteries” and “peaceable things” that have brought you joy:

3 Nephi 17:3

“Therefore, go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things which I have said, and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye may understand, and prepare your minds for the morrow, and I come unto you again.”

Has there been a time when the Spirit has indicated to you that what you are hearing (such as when someone is testifying of Christ), or what you are reading (such as during your scripture study) is true? Describe your experiences:

What are some of the things that you can do to prepare your mind to receive and understand personal revelation?

2 Nephi 28:30

“For behold, thus saith the Lord God: I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto my counsel, for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have.”

Describe a time when you received spiritual confirmation that has prepared you for a later spiritual experience?

2 Nephi 10:24

“Wherefore, my beloved brethren, reconcile yourselves to the will of God..”.

As you pray to Heavenly Father to know His will for you, what is it that the Spirit is asking you to do?

Alma 37:36-37

“...cry unto God for all thy support; yea, let all thy doings be unto the Lord, and whithersoever thou goest let it be in the Lord; yea, let all thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord; yea, let the affection of thy heart be placed upon the Lord forever. Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings...”

How does counseling with or praying to God keep you safe and on the straight and narrow path?

3 Nephi 13:8

"...your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him."

What comfort do you receive when you consider that you are known to your Heavenly Father, and that He is aware of your circumstances and needs?

Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles said,

"If we become casual in our study of the scriptures, we will become casual in our prayers. We may not cease to pray, but our prayers will become more repetitive, more mechanical, lacking real intent. Our hearts cannot be drawn out to a God we do not know, and the scriptures and the words of living prophets help us know Him. As we know Him better, we love Him more." (Ensign November 2001).

Has a casual or complacent attitude about your recovery ever brought you to the edge relapse? How did your personal relationship with God improve and draw you back into recovery as you returned to sincere study of the scriptures and honest communication, through prayer, with Heavenly Father?

2 Nephi 32:9

"But behold, I say unto you that ye must pray always, and not faint; that ye must not perform any thing unto the Lord save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that he will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul."

Why would it be to your advantage to pray to the Father before you start on our own course of action?

Step Twelve

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others still suffering from the effects of compulsive behaviors, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

“When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”
(Luke 22:32)

What is Step Twelve?

Step Twelve is our commitment to apply all of the Twelve Step principles in all that we think and do. As we have experienced a “spiritual awakening” (conversion), we find that it is no longer difficult to apply these principles to our lives. We have moved away from our self-centered and self-obsessive behavior and have come to realize how much better our lives are as a result of practicing these steps daily.

When we first started in recovery we acknowledged that our lives were out of control. We came to believe that we wanted and needed divine intervention to restore our lives. We made a commitment to try our best to do God’s will by obeying His commandments. We inventoried our past, confessed our wrongful behavior, and sought help from God in replacing the defects in our character with a more Christ-like character. We then humbly asked our Heavenly Father to remove our sins. We continued to rebuild relationships by making amends to those we harmed in the past. We continued to be accountable for our thoughts and behaviors on a daily basis. We continued to draw closer to God through prayer and meditation, receiving personal knowledge and direction in doing His will. We are now prepared for Step Twelve.

The changes in our character are obvious to those around us. As questions come up of “how did it happen” and “what are we doing different in our lives,” we discover a strong desire to share our personal message of recovery and the spiritual principles which have brought us to where we are today. We find that our recovery experiences can provide guidance and hope to others struggling with compulsive addictive behaviors.

Others have reached out to assist us in our struggle by sharing with us their experiences of hope and faith; it is now our privilege to carry the message of hope to others. Let us remember however, as we reach out to others, that we cannot force recovery on anyone and must respect their own agency. Giving advice or counsel is not ours to give. However, it is entirely proper to share what is worked (or not worked) for us in our recovery. Recovery is a personal journey involving one’s self, individual agency, and their relationship with Heavenly Father.

In Step Twelve, the Lord is asking us to witness, through sharing our personal testimonies, that God, and God alone, has the power to free us from our addiction(s) and to restore our lives as we turn our will to His. We have learned to follow the Savior's example as He would always be kind to those who were lost and would continually look for the good in everyone. We have discovered the joy of living the principles of the Twelve Steps and we now desire to share what we have learned, by offering our message to anyone who will listen. The message we carry is that no matter how destructive our lives have been, no matter how badly our hearts have been broken by others, we can "be made whole" through the redemptive power of our Savior, Jesus Christ. (*See John Chapter 5*)

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Hymn 219

*“Because I have been given much, I too must give.
Because of thy great bounty, Lord, each day I live,
I shall divide my gifts from thee
With every brother that I see,
Who has the need of help from me.”*

Why is it that when we become converted to a good principle, we feel the desire to share it with everyone that may benefit by it?

D&C 18:15-16

“And if it so be that you should labor all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring, save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father! And now, if your joy will be great with one soul that you have brought unto me into the kingdom of my Father, how great will be your joy if you should bring many souls unto me!”

Why is it that we feel joy when we guide Heavenly Father’s lost children back to Him?

3 Nephi 12:16

“Therefore let your light so shine before this people, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

How is God glorified when others are affected as a result of the spiritual changes we have made?

Mosiah 27:36

“And thus they were instruments in the hands of God in bringing many to the knowledge of the truth, yea, to the knowledge of their Redeemer.”

How does sharing our stories of recovery help others who are still struggling in their compulsive behaviors?

What do we gain personally by sharing our stories of recovery?

Why would God choose an addict to reach out to another addict?

Mosiah 2:17

“And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God.”

What wisdom have you learned as you have served God by being of service to others?

Alma 29:9-10

“...and this is my glory, that perhaps I may be an instrument in the hands of God to bring some soul to repentance; and this is my joy. And behold, when I see many of my brethren truly penitent, and coming to the Lord their God, then is my soul filled with joy; then do I remember what the Lord has done for me, yea, even that he hath heard my prayer; yea, then do I remember his merciful arm which he extended towards me.”

What has the Lord done to bring you where you are today?

How does helping others become a way to helping yourself to stay on the right path?

3 Nephi 18:32

“Nevertheless, ye shall not cast him out of your synagogues, or your places of worship, for unto such shall ye continue to minister; for ye know not but what they will return and repent, and come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I shall heal them; and ye shall be the means of bringing salvation unto them.”

What do we learn from this scripture concerning the character of God and the worth of a soul?

What have been your feelings as you have reached out to others in need?
