



STEP TWELVE

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, I try to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all of my life.

Although we enter recovery to heal a particular affliction, we find that, in the end, we have received far more than a specific healing of an addiction; we have received the gift of a profound spiritual awakening. In a sense, the addiction, the pain, the healing of the addiction, have only been stepping-stones to spiritual transformation and renewal. There is a phrase from the oral tradition of A.A. and other Twelve-Step groups by which people in meetings introduce themselves: "Hi, I'm a grateful, recovering alcoholic." What they mean is that there is an element of gratitude for their addiction or dependency since it has served as the key to a spiritual awakening.

The second phrase in Step 12 reads: "We tried to carry this message to others." Twelve-Step programs place great emphasis on outreach to those who still suffer. Another oral tradition says, "You can't keep it unless you give it away." Having received healing and spiritual renewal, we can retain them only as we offer them to others. This evangelism aspect of Twelve Step recovery provides a bridge between recovery programs and the Christian church, which has a two-thousand-year history of evangelism.

On a practical level, psychologists have long believed that there is a special capacity for empathy between persons who have shared the same addictions. That is why Bill Wilson encouraged alcoholics to help other alcoholics, and it is also why we now have such a proliferation of recovery support groups for different dependencies. Again, the premise is that people who have suffered from an addiction and have found spiritual healing from it are in better positions to understand and help others with similar problems.

The final phrase in Step 12 emphasizes practicing the Twelve-Step principles "in all of our affairs." This means that if we have been spiritually transformed, people will begin to observe it in our financial lives, in our relationships, in our community lives, in our sexual conduct, and the list goes on and on. Our transformation will be apparent in all arenas of our lives.

Healing our addictions or codependencies is not the only goal of recovery. Rather, it is the starting place. Certainly we have to cap our addictions and put them in a state of balance or abstinence, but then begins the real journey of spiritual growth. Can our lives be remade?

We must remember that this growth is a process with one of the growth directions being toward God. Bill Wilson left the door open, saying, "It's God as I understand Him," but he was very explicit about who his God was. He was the God of our Fathers and of the Lord Jesus Christ. We may start as agnostics. We may then come to view the group or recovery process as our higher power, looking to other people for strength. Gradually, we accept a vague notion of god, which grows to a more specific monotheistic god. We may even begin to try and dialogue with this god. Eventually, we come to know the one true God.

If you are growing and searching for the true God, may we suggest the God of the Scriptures. Try reading the book of John in the New Testament as a starting place.



How to Sponsor

If you have these guidelines, you are a blessing to Victory Group and have completed our twelve-step workshop. What you do is appreciated and needed to help change the lives that Christ would have us touch through Victory Group! Following are guidelines on how to be a good sponsor.

FREQUENTLY ASKED SPONSOR QUESTIONS

What suggestion should I give about calling your sponsor?

- Ask him or her to call you at least once a day. This is on good days and bad days. This is very important in early recovery to help you develop a friendship. Later after a period of time (usually 90 days), this can be relaxed to a couple times a week, or when needed. Be firm, but insist that they sponsor find a way to try to reach you. This is important! We, as Christians, will be praying for our sponsored person, and they need to be accountable to the heart and effort that we put into their lives. Their recovery or relapse impacts us also, and we need to protect our own hearts with all diligence. They want what we have, and they need to come and get it.

How often should I call or return a call from someone I am Sponsoring / Mentoring?

- Return all phone calls as soon as possible, unless the person said not to call after a set time (like 11:00 p.m.). Your support may be the difference between a person relapsing or not.

What about calling other people for support?

- Suggest to the person you are sponsoring to get phone numbers from other Christians and people in recovery that attend Victory Group and also outside meetings like AA, NA, CA, Alanon, etc., and *call them*. This will help them have the confidence to call and talk to someone when you are not home. It is critical to get comfortable talking about their problems with other people and to help them develop friendships and tools to keep their sobriety on danger days. Have them create a list, and then call the first person on their list; if no answer, keep calling the next person until they talk with someone. They may leave their number on an answering machine to have the other person call them back, but this is not a contact. The larger the list of phone numbers, the better the chance that they will reach someone on the other end of the phone.

What about getting involved?

- All persons in recovery should have a home group and a sponsor and use both of them actively. By volunteering at Victory Group, it can be considered their home group.

What should I do when a question comes up that I do not know how to answer?

- First make sure that you completely understand the problem. Ask questions. In other words, be a good listener. For example, if they say, "I feel like using, or going back out," *this is a frequently-heard statement*. You may ask: "What is going on to make you feel like this? Can we talk about this? Can we meet somewhere for coffee? Or, let me call my sponsor, and I will call you right back whether I reach him or her or not!"
- Try to stick with one subject at a time if possible. When there is too much information about many different subjects, (on danger days) it makes it harder for people to sort things out.
- When asking for help from your own sponsor, be sure to include enough information about the problem so that they can help you grow in the topic and develop a solution on how to best respond back to the person you are sponsoring.
- If you are asked to do something and you are not sure whether you should do it or not, call your own sponsor and ask him or her how it should be handled. Reply back to the person to let him or her know whether you'll do it or not. If you need input on the problem, please talk to your sponsor without using any names. You should leave this with God unless he or she is talking about hurting himself or herself or others! At this point you may have to call the police to protect that person or persons from harm!

How many meetings should they attend?

- Suggest that they attend as many meetings as they can. Just attending Victory Group each week is not enough. In early recovery they should do a "90 in 90" (90 meetings in 90 days).
- If you have the opportunity, attend meetings with the person you are sponsoring. You may even be able to meet him or her for coffee or lunch to keep in contact, once in a while.

What if someone approaches me to be a sponsor someone who is challenged by addiction and I was not an addict?

- Offer to be a temporary sponsor until he or she is able to get to some meetings and meet another sponsor.

Is it okay to pray with the person I sponsor?

- If the person you sponsor is open to it, prayer with him or her would be wonderful. You'll hear this often in recovery: "If you ain't praying, you ain't staying."

More than one person has approached me to be a sponsor. How many people should I sponsor at one time?

- When you start sponsoring more than four individuals, you start overloading yourself and will become ineffective.; however, you know your limitations, so don't take on more than you can actually handle.



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What does it mean to you to have completed the 12 Steps?

What does *spiritual awakening* of this step mean?

What is *try to carry this message* for us?

Have you been able to reach out to another recovering addict? If so, describe the situation and how it feels to you?

What would you say if someone asked how the Twelve-Step program has worked for you?



If you are struggling with issues in your life, help is available to you through the following:

- **Private prayer with one of our prayer partners**
- **Victory Group Lending Library: We have books and CDs on marriage, family, finances, forgiveness, prayer, etc.**
- **Connection groups at Victory Family Church: there are groups to help you deal with loss, dignity and worth, single parent families, healing, divorce, etc.**
- **Help and encouragement from one of Victory Group's leaders**
- **Services at Victory Family Church. If you haven't yet been invited to attend, we welcome you!**
- **Giving back by serving others at Victory Group helps you to heal and grow in your recovery**
 - **There are many areas where you can serve**
 - **Sponsorship**
 - **Attending the meeting each week and encouraging others**
 - **Becoming a group leader (training required)**
 - **Setup/cleanup**

What is your plan to get additional help in your recovery?

**Congratulations on completing the 12 Steps at Victory Group!
Don't make your main goal in life to live clean. God has bigger
plans and a purpose for you. Discover His plan for your life; it is
better than you can think or imagine!**



Volunteer Signup

Please print clearly so that your information can be easily read.

Today's Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

E-mail Address _____

Comments (please note any privacy guidelines) _____

I am actively serving in the Victory Group (circle one) YES NO

What church do you attend (if any)? _____

I would like to serve in the following areas. Remember, that you can serve in more than one area per meeting. For example, you could help set up for the meeting, clean up after the meeting, and be a part of the prayer team. Please circle the weeks that you can serve.

Set up meeting (arrive by 5:30 p.m.)	1 st week	2 nd week	3 rd week	4 th week	5 th week
Clean up meeting	1 st week	2 nd week	3 rd week	4 th week	5 th week
Greeter (arrive by 6:00 p.m.)	1 st week	2 nd week	3 rd week	4 th week	5 th week
Server at the meeting	1 st week	2 nd week	3 rd week	4 th week	5 th week
Group Leader*	1 st week	2 nd week	3 rd week	4 th week	5 th week
Child Care*	1 st week	2 nd week	3 rd week	4 th week	5 th week
Prayer Team*	1 st week	2 nd week	3 rd week	4 th week	5 th week
Willing to help anywhere needed	1 st week	2 nd week	3 rd week	4 th week	5 th week

* Must be approved by Victory Group ministry.

_____ Please initial to show that you read the following statement: In the Victory Group, we believe "It is the goodness, kindness and mercy of God which causes a man to change." Romans 2:4. Unasked for advice is criticism. Telling others what they need to do to change drives them away. We believe that showing the love of God will give others the grace to grow and change through His love, which is the same mercy that He has extended to us. Therefore, we ask that you refrain from preaching and teaching and encourage our guests to attend a good church to hear God's Word directly.