

# INTRODUCTION TO THE 12-STEPS

## Skills to Be Taught

- Identifying What Is and Is Not Controllable
- Understanding When to Let Go and When to Take Action
- Identifying One's Personal Source of Strength
- Increasing Motivation for Change



## COUNSELOR TOOL BOX

### Multi-modal Presentation of Material:

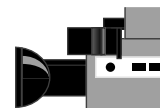
**Verbal** Didactic presentation of material  
Questioning  
Group discussion

**Visual** Visual presentation of major points using slides  
Group responses written on flipchart by counselor  
Written/Pictorial handouts provided in Client Workbook

**Experiential** 12-step game  
Post-group quiz  
Stress management/relaxation technique

**Materials** Flipchart and markers  
Overhead projector and slides  
Audio tape player and relaxation tape  
Clock/timer  
Pens/pencils  
Scissors and stapler  
Prizes  
“Loaner” Client Workbooks  
Handouts:  
Group agenda  
Group quiz  
Twelve Steps in a Journey of Recovery  
Schedule of 12-Step meetings in community (not provided)  
12-Step Game Worksheet  
Certificate of Achievement (as warranted)

**Reminders** Ensure that all material on quiz is covered well during group.  
Quiz material is indicated by **QUIZ ITEM** in the text.  
Instructions to counselors are provided in **this typeface.**



**AGENDA**

(Two-hour group: Adjust times based on beginning time)

- 0:00 **Begin Group** (5 mins)  
Introductions – Rules – Time keeper assignment
- 0:05 **Introduction to Topic:** 12-step program (5 mins)
- 0:10 **Step 1** (5 mins)
- 0:15 **Step 2** (5 mins)
- 0:20 **Step 3** (5 mins)
- 0:25 **Step 4** (5 mins)
- 0:30 **Step 5** (5 mins)
- 0:35 **Step 6** (5 mins)
- 0:40 **Step 7** (5 mins)
- 0:45 **Step 8** (5 mins)
- 0:50 **Questions** (5 mins)
- 0:55 BREAK** (10 mins)
- 1:05 **Review** (5 mins)
- 1:10 **Step 9** (5 mins)
- 1:15 **Step 10** (5 mins)
- 1:20 **Step 11** (5 mins)
- 1:25 **Step 12** (5 mins)
- 1:30 **12-Step Team Game** (15 mins)
- 1:45 **Quiz and Feedback** (5 mins)
- 1:50 **Relaxation Tape** (10 mins)
- 2:00 **End**

**BEGINNING OF EVERY GROUP (5 mins)**

- Group members and counselors introduce themselves and welcome new members.
- Group rules are reviewed.

**Visual**

**HHRP<sup>+</sup>**  
**GROUP RULES**     **RESPECT**

**R***elaxation* (complete quiet...no talking, shuffling of papers, or walking around during relaxation exercise)  
**E***ating* (No eating during group)  
**S***ober* (don't come to group high)  
**P***unctuality* (come to group on time)  
**E***veryone can't talk at once* (no crosstalk)  
**C***onfidentiality* (what's said in group, stays in group)  
**T***eamwork* (group members work together towards recovery)

**Show Slide 8.1**

- Copy of agenda for today's group is distributed to group members.
- Ask for a volunteer to serve as time-keeper (to keep group on track and on time).
- Announcement of any graduates from the group today.
- Presentation of Certificate of Completion to those who complete in good standing.

**Verbal**

**Counselor provides introduction to today's topic. (5 mins)**

Today we are going to introduce you to the 12-step philosophy of AA and NA (Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous). The philosophy can be helpful for people struggling with a variety of health problems, not only addiction, but also HIV. The 12-steps teach you that recovery not only involves being abstinent from drugs, it also involves changing your entire way of living—your attitudes, beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and behavior.

You've probably noticed that in this program we frequently refer to the serenity prayer.

## SERENITY PRAYER

*God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change,  
the courage to change the things I can,  
and the wisdom to know the difference*

**Show Slide 8.2**

Counselor reads the serenity prayer from the slide.

God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change,  
the courage to change the things I can,  
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Clearly, as suggested by the prayer, the first order of business is to identify those things in your life that can't be changed so that you can "turn them over" or "let them go." By doing this you become empowered to identify what problems require your attention and you gain courage to carry out whatever actions are required to make the necessary changes in your life. Finding the right balance between "letting go" and "taking action" is a sign of wisdom. The 12-steps have helped many people find this balance, not only in the addictions but also in coping with chronic illness. Individuals who are HIV-positive may find the 12-steps particularly helpful because when coping with HIV it is essential that you know what you can control and what you cannot. Today we will briefly introduce you to the 12-steps. In our introduction to the steps we do not take the traditional approach; rather, we provide a broad interpretation of the steps so that each of you can find what is meaningful to you. People spend their entire lives "working the steps"; therefore, this group is not meant to be comprehensive, and, in fact, we will cover some very important issues rather superficially. We strongly encourage you to attend 12-step groups in your community where you can get in-depth information and guidance about the 12-step program. You can get a 12-step meeting schedule from your counselor at the end of this group.

**Verbal/  
Discussion**

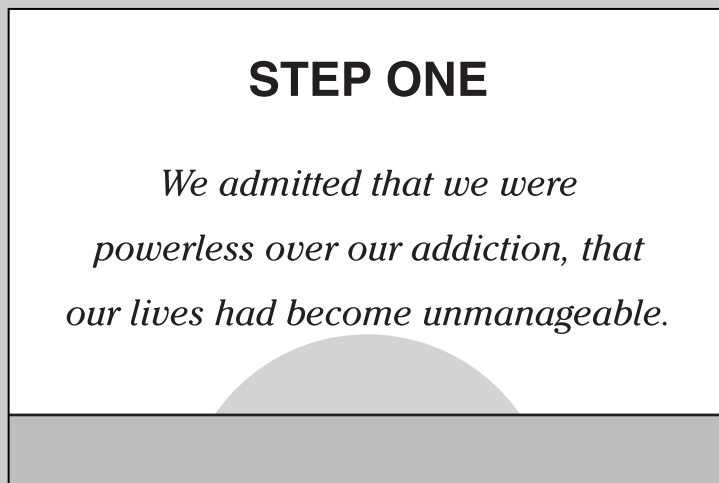
**Step One (5 mins)**

**Note to Counselors:** *You will have just five minutes to present and discuss each step as it pertains both to addiction and to HIV. Thus, good time management is essential. The inclusion of “answers” below does not imply that there is only one correct answer to the discussion question. The purpose of providing an “answer” is to ensure that the Counselor clarifies any possible misinterpretation of the Steps, and to ensure that all the material included in the quiz at the end of the group is presented by the Counselor during the group.*

Counselor reads Step One from slide.

“We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable.”

**Visual**



**Show Slide 8.3**

Counselor then leads a group discussion about Step One beginning with the following question:

**QUESTION:** How do you interpret the word “powerless” in this step?

**Answer:** Important points for Counselor to include in this discussion:

- The meaning of the word “powerless” is often misinterpreted in the context of this step.
- This step does **not** mean you are powerless to make changes in your life.

**QUIZ ITEM**

- As the serenity prayers suggests, your first priority is acceptance of things you cannot change. You have to begin with acknowledging that you have a problem.
- One thing you cannot change is the effect of drug use on your life; the chemical effect of the drug has enslaved you and you are powerless to change the drug’s negative effect.
- Your life has become unmanageable because the drug is in control.

**QUIZ ITEM**

- Once you admit your powerlessness, you empower yourself to begin to take control over those things in your life you can change—such as the decision not to use drugs.
- **Therefore, this first step actually empowers you to begin your journey of recovery. You find serenity in acceptance of the things you cannot change, such as the negative effect of drug use in your life, and then can then begin to gain the courage to change the things you can.**

Let’s see how we can apply Step One to HIV.

**STEP ONE AND HIV**

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*We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable.*

**You are powerless over your HIV status**

- you can't change your current HIV-seropositive status

**This does not mean you are powerless over your actions**

- you can do something to stay healthy

**Acceptance of HIV infection leads to:**

- awareness of health consequences
- good health care
- taking HIV related medications
- stopping risky behavior

**Acceptance of your HIV<sup>+</sup> status can empower you to take control of your life and help you maintain your health.**

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Visual

As shown in the slide,

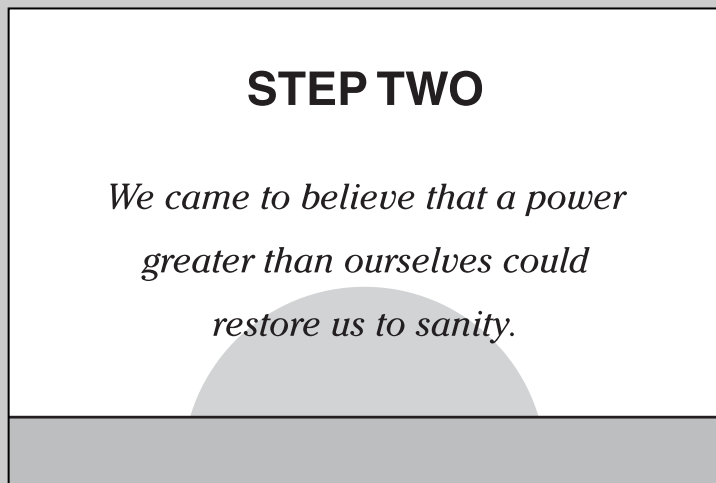
- You are powerless over the fact that you are now infected with HIV.

- Acceptance of powerlessness over HIV, does **not** mean that you could not have prevented being infected or that you can do nothing to stay healthy.
- Denying or minimizing the negative health consequences of being infected with HIV leads to unhealthy behaviors, such as not taking medications as prescribed.
- Thus, acceptance of the fact that you are now infected with HIV can actually empower you to make the changes in your life that are under your control and that can help you maintain your health.

**Discussion**

Step Two (5 mins)  
Counselor reads Step 2 from slide.

**Visual**



Show Slide 8.5

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

Counselor then leads a group discussion about Step Two beginning with the following question:

**QUESTION:** What is meant by “a power greater than ourselves” in this Step?

**Answer:** Important points for Counselor to include in the group discussion:



- No one can define your “higher power” for you.
- For some people, their “higher power” is the God of their religious beliefs and practices. **QUIZ ITEM**
- For others, it may be nature, love, the life force, chi, or energy. **QUIZ ITEM**
- It could even be your strong desire for “sobriety” or “a healthy lifestyle”—that part of your being that is your source of strength to achieve sobriety and good health. **QUIZ ITEM**
- You don’t need to be religious in the conventional sense to work the steps. **QUIZ ITEM**
- To summarize Steps One and Two—In Step One you accept that the effect of drugs on your life is beyond your control and that you have reached the point at which your life has become unmanageable. Then Step Two tells you that there is hope for a better life if you truly believe that there is a source of strength available to you that can enable you to live a drug-free life.

**STEP TWO AND HIV**

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

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**Your higher power is:**

- your personal source of serenity
- whatever empowers you
- whatever is healing for you

**Restored "sanity":**

- health of the mind
- health of the body
- health of the spirit

**Accept that you can not change your HIV<sup>+</sup> status.  
Believe that your life can change for the better.**

**Show Slide 8.6**

Visual

Let’s see how we can apply this step to HIV infection.  
As shown in the slide, and as we just discussed,

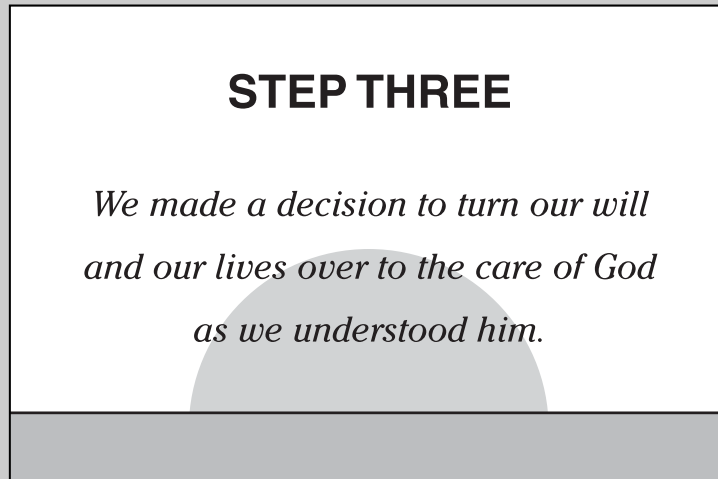
- Your higher power is  
    Your personal source of serenity, empowerment, healing.
- Being “restored to sanity” can be interpreted as improving your health.  
    Remember, good health may refer to the mind, body, and/or spirit.  
    So it does not necessarily mean regaining only physical health.
- So, in Step One you accepted that you cannot change the fact that you are

now HIV-positive, and in Step Two you strengthened your belief that there is a healing power available to you that can help you heal your life on various levels.

**Discussion**

Step Three (5 mins)  
Counselor reads Step Three from slide.

**Visual**



Show Slide 8.7

“We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.”

Counselor then leads a group discussion about Step Three beginning with the following question:

**QUESTION:** What does it mean to decide to turn your will and life over to God?

**Answer:** Important points for Counselor to include in this group discussion:

- “God” is your higher power—your source of strength, however, **you** define this.
- It does **not** mean that:
  - you must be religious in order to work the steps.
  - you surrender to another’s will.

- It **does** mean that you have now made the decision to give up your old life of addiction and devote yourself to a new drug-free life based upon whatever your “higher power” represents (for example: serenity, spirituality, balance). You surrender to (you become) your source of strength.
- In this step you actually make your decision. It is the connection between your strong belief that a drug-free life is possible for you (Step Two) and taking action in Step Four.

Let’s see how this step could be applied to HIV.

**STEP THREE AND HIV**

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

**With faith that your life can be healed,  
give up your former self-image.**

**Devote yourself to the new life  
represented by your higher power:**

- health
- enlightenment
- serenity
- love
- forgiveness

**Make the decision to give up your old life  
and to devote yourself to a healthier new life.**

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Visual

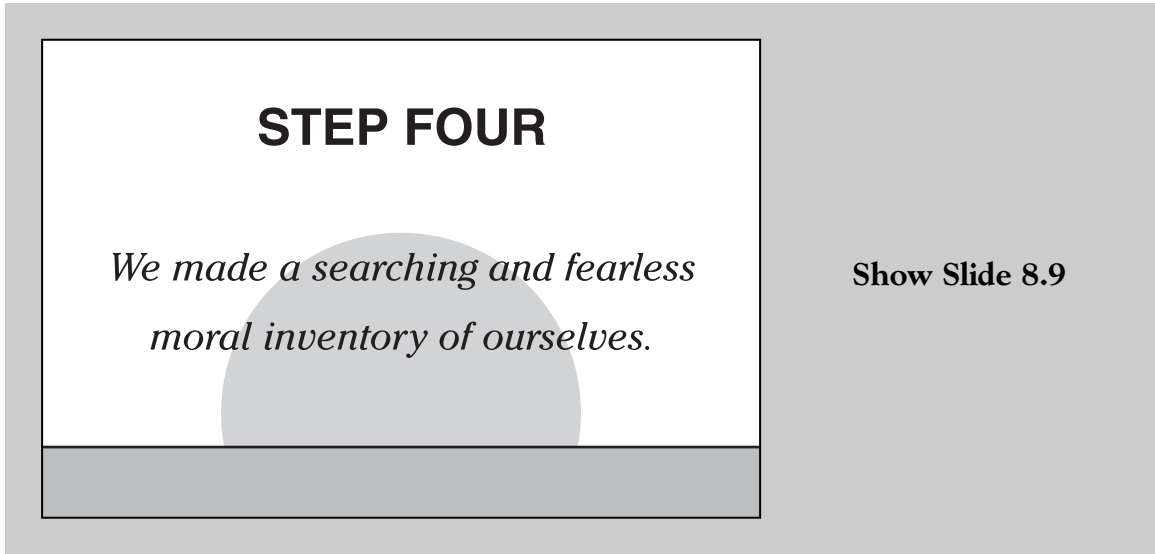
- Make the decision to give up living an unhealthy lifestyle.
- Make the decision to devote yourself to a new life that is spiritually, mentally, and physically healing—surrender yourself to (become) your source of healing power.
- To summarize—Step One is acceptance of HIV-infection, then Step Two is the belief that healing on some level is possible, and now Step Three is making the decision to give up your old life and to devote yourself to a new healthier life.

Only then are you ready for action necessary for Step Four.

**Step Four (5 mins)**  
Counselor reads Step Four from slide.

Discussion

Visual



“We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.”

Counselor then leads a group discussion about Step 4 beginning with the following question:

**QUESTION:** What is a searching and fearless moral inventory?

**Answer:** Important points for Counselor to include in this discussion:

- A fearless moral inventory is an honest self-examination to identify your strengths and weaknesses.
- It does **not** mean focus only on your weaknesses or focus on how others perceive you.
- It **does** mean:
  - Get to know yourself—your “addict” self, your “ideal self,” your many “selves.”
  - Understand the connection between your different senses of yourself and your addiction.
- So, in Step One you accept that addiction causes powerlessness, in Step Two you believe that a new life is possible, in Step Three you decide to devote yourself to this new drug-free life, and now in Step Four you begin to take action by conducting a thorough self-examination to determine what you may need to change in order to embark on this new drug-free life. This gets you ready for Step Five.

Let's see how this step can be applied to HIV.

Visual

**STEP FOUR AND HIV**

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

**A fearless, moral inventory is an honest self-examination**

- what are your deepest fears about HIV?
- what is your ability to cope with adversity?
- what characteristics do you have, or need, to live a new healthier lifestyle?

**This does not mean focusing on your weaknesses or focusing on how others see you.**

**It allows you to:**

- get to know yourself
- understand what you need to change
- understand the connection between your mind, body, and spirit.
- make positive connections with others

**Make an honest self examination to determine what does and does not need to change for you to embark on a healthy new lifestyle.**

Show Slide 8.10

- A fearless, moral inventory is an honest self-examination of:
  - Your deepest fears about HIV. Unless you face your fears, you cannot move forward.
  - Your ability and inability to cope with adversity. As we discuss in another group, the coping strategies used in your life of addiction are unlikely to work well in your new healthier life.
  - The characteristics you have, or lack, that are needed to live a new healthy lifestyle.
- It does not mean focus on how others perceive HIV-infected drug users.
- It does mean:
  - Get to know yourself—your attitudes and feelings about HIV and health.
  - Explore the connection between your physical body and your mind and spirit.
- To summarize—in Step One you accepted that you are infected with HIV and can do nothing to change this fact; in Step Two you strengthened your belief that a new healthier life is possible; in Step Three you made the decision to devote yourself completely to a new healthier lifestyle; and in Step Four you made an honest self-examination in order to determine what does and does not need to be changed in order to embark on this new life. This gets you ready for Step Five.

Step Five (5 mins)  
Counselor reads Step Five from slide.

Discussion

Visual

## STEP FIVE

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

Show Slide 8.11

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

Counselor then leads a group discussion about Step Five beginning with the following question:

**QUESTION:** What does it mean to admit our wrongs?

**Answer:** Important points for Counselor to include in this discussion:

- In this step, you begin to bring other people into your journey of recovery and give voice to that private self-examination you conducted in Step Four.
- It does **not** mean:
  - You should now admit your wrong-doings to all those you wronged. Not yet anyway!
  - You should wallow in shame and guilt. This can lead quickly back to addiction.
  - You should attempt to justify your actions to this other person.
- It **does** mean:
  - You should identify the specific harms that your life of addiction has caused to:
    - You (don't forget the ways in which you have harmed yourself).
    - Other people.
    - And your higher power (you have no doubt compromised your beliefs, values, integrity, and wasted the talents you were born with).

- Having the courage to reveal yourself with all your failings to another person—this requires trust which is essential for a drug-free lifestyle.
- So, this Step tells you that self-honesty and the ability to trust another person with knowledge of your shortcomings, as well as a willingness to examine where you have fallen short of your fundamental beliefs, is essential for embarking on a drug-free lifestyle.

Let's apply this step to HIV.

**STEP FIVE AND HIV**

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

**Be willing to disclose to another person that your past behavior contributed to HIV infection.**

**Admit the harm your past behavior has caused**

- to you—medically, emotionally, spiritually
- to others, such as placing others at risk for HIV infection
- to your "higher power" (compromising your values and beliefs, wasting your talents)

**Find the courage to trust yourself and others. Be open and honest about your vulnerabilities.**

**Show Slide 8.12**

Visual

As shown on the slide, this step could be interpreted as:

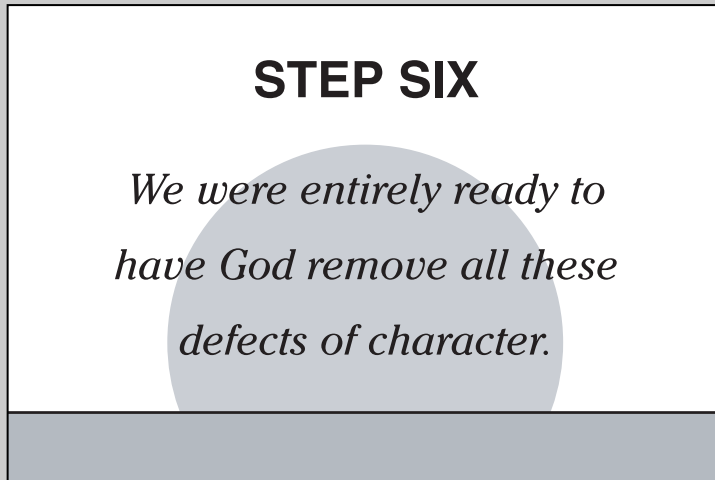
- Being willing to disclose to another person that your past behavior resulted in HIV infection
- Identifying the harm that your past behavior has caused to:
  - You—medically, emotionally, socially, spiritually.
  - Others—e.g., placing them at risk for HIV infection; effect on family/friends.
  - Your higher power (compromising your values and beliefs, wasting talents).
- So, in summary, in Step One you accepted that you cannot change your HIV seropositive status, in Step Two you believe that your life can be healed; in Step Three you make the decision to lead a healthier lifestyle; in Step Four you conduct an honest self-examination of your fears about HIV, your way of coping, and your strengths and weaknesses. Now in Step Five, you are ready for self-disclosure. This Step tells you that in order to have a new healthier lifestyle, you need the courage to be open

and honest with others, as well as with yourself, and you need to be willing to trust others with knowledge of your vulnerabilities.

**Discussion**

Step Six (5 mins)  
Counselor reads Step Six from slide.

**Visual**



Show Slide 8.13

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

Counselor then leads a group discussion about Step Six beginning with the following question:

**QUESTION:** What is meant by defects of character?

**Answer:** Important points for Counselor to include in this discussion:

- Having identified what needs to be changed in previous steps, this step involves being ready to actually make fundamental changes in your way of life.
- Defects of character refers to your old way of living—your “addict” self.
- You are ready for God, your higher power (however you define your source of strength) to eliminate your “addict” self and to permit your “ideal” self to emerge.
- So working this step means that you are now ready to let go of your old “addict” life.



Let's apply this step to HIV.

**STEP SIX AND HIV**

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

**In previous steps you admitted**

- your fears about HIV
- your inability to cope
- the harm you have caused yourself and others

**In step 6 you conclude that you are ready for change**

- you are ready for God or your "higher power" to guide you toward a better life
- you are ready to move beyond your fears and maladaptive ways of coping
- you are ready to begin your healthier lifestyle.

**You are mentally ready for change.**

**Show Slide 8.14**

**Visual**

- In previous steps you identified your fears about HIV, your inability to cope, and the harm you have caused yourself and others.
- You are now ready for God, your higher power, your desire for healthier lifestyle, to change your old unhealthier way of life.
- You are ready for change. You are ready to move beyond your fears and maladaptive ways of coping and to begin to live your new healthier life.
- This step represents the mental process that is necessary before you can take action in the next step.

**Step Seven (5 mins)**  
Counselor reads Step Seven from slide.

**Discussion**

**STEP SEVEN**

*We humbly asked Him to  
remove our shortcomings.*

**Show Slide 8.15**

**Visual**

“We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.”

Counselor then leads a group discussion about Step Seven beginning with the following question:

**QUESTION:** How does this step relate to Step Six?

**Answer:** Important points for Counselor to include in this discussion:

- Step Seven is the action part of Step Six.
- This is when you say goodbye to your old life and invite your new drug-free life to begin.
- It does **not** mean that your drug-free lifestyle is in someone else’s hands.
- It **does** mean:
  - Learning to say no to drugs, going to new places, meeting new people, changing your attitudes, setting and resetting goals.
  - Being patient—change takes time.
  - Working hard—change takes effort.
  - Asking for help when you need it.
- So in Step Seven you make the necessary changes to your attitudes and behavior.

Let’s apply this to HIV.

**Visual**

**STEP SEVEN AND HIV**

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*We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.*

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**You are ready to make active changes**

- make changes in your attitudes
- make changes in your behavior
- set goals
- work hard towards goals
- develop patience
- ask for help

**You take action to leave behind your "old self" and begin your new healthier lifestyle.**

**Show Slide 8.16**

- In the previous step you concluded you were ready for a healthier lifestyle.
- Now you take action—you move beyond your fears, and begin your new healthier life.
- This does **not** mean:
  - That your new healthy lifestyle is in someone else’s hands.
- This **does** mean that you begin to:
  - Make changes in your attitudes, beliefs, and self-perception (know that you can live a healthier life).
  - Make changes in your behavior (take your medications, eat well, exercise).
  - Set goals and work hard to achieve them.
  - Develop patience.
  - Ask for help when you need it.
- So, Step Seven is the self-improvement step. Here you make changes to your “self”—you change the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that have kept you from achieving physical, emotional, and spiritual health.

Step Eight (5 mins)  
Counselor reads Step Eight from slide.

Discussion

The slide content is presented in a white rectangular box with a thin black border. At the top, the words "STEP EIGHT" are written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Below this, the text "Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all." is written in a black, italicized serif font. The text is centered and partially overlaid by a large, semi-transparent grey circle. To the right of the box, the text "Show Slide 8.17" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The entire slide content is set against a light grey background.

Visual

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

Counselor then leads a group discussion about Step Eight beginning with the following question:

**QUESTION:** Is this step an action step or a mental process?

**Answer:** Important points for Counselor to include in this discussion:

- Although this step requires action in that you generate a list of those you have harmed, it is the essential mental process required for Step Nine.
- Before you can attempt to make amends, you need to be willing to do so, and you need to identify each person you have harmed. This requires:
  - being honest with yourself and others about the harm you have caused. **QUIZ ITEM**
  - having empathy for the feelings of another.
  - having regret for the harm you caused.
  - making the decision to disclose your feelings to someone who may not think highly of you.
- You must not proceed to the next step until you have done this. If you proceed to action without deep personal conviction, the result is insincerity; insincerity is part of your old “addict” life, and has no place in your recovery.
- Place yourself on your list of people you have harmed and be willing to forgive yourself. **QUIZ ITEM**
- Having given up your “addict” ways in the previous step, in this step you make the decision to demonstrate your sincere regret to others about your previous “addict” behavior.

Let’s apply this step to HIV.

## Visual

### STEP EIGHT and HIV

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

**Identify those you have harmed, including yourself.**

**How have you caused harm?**

- placing others at risk for HIV infection?
- emotional and financial harm caused by HIV to yourself and others?

**Look inside yourself to experience:**

- empathy for the feelings of another
- regret for the harm you caused
- forgiveness for yourself for becoming infected with HIV
- forgiveness for the person who infected you

**Make the decision to:**

- share your feelings with those you've harmed
- admit your responsibility
- communicate your sincere regret
- be willing to make amends if possible.

**You sincerely look inside yourself to prepare for action.**

Show Slide 8.18

- Through honest self-reflection, identify those you have harmed, including yourself.
- Harm includes:
  - placing others (and self) at risk for HIV infection.
  - harms caused by HIV to yourself and your family members:
    - emotional
    - medical
    - financial
- Experience:
  - empathy for the feelings of another.
  - regret for the harm you caused.
  - forgiveness **QUIZ ITEM**
    - for yourself for becoming infected with HIV.
    - for the person who infected you.
- Make the decision to:
  - share your feelings with those you've harmed.
  - admit your responsibility.
  - communicate your sincere regret.
  - be willing to make amends if possible.
- This step is the essential mental process required for taking action in the next step which we will get to after the break.

Before we break, does anyone have any questions or comments about the steps we've covered so far?

Counselor responds to any questions and comments. (5 mins)

(10 mins)

**Break**

Counselor briefly reviews Steps One through Eight as follows. (5 mins)

**Review**

Before the break we discussed the first eight steps in the Twelve-Step program of recovery. Although some of the steps seem similar upon first read-

ing, with careful analysis you saw that each step moves you to the next step. For example, the necessary mental process always comes before the action step. You also saw that the journey of recovery includes other people in your life and attempting to make amends for your previous lifestyle. Let's review the first eight steps briefly.

- Step 1.** You accept that your unhealthy lifestyle has become unmanageable—this is a mental process.
- Step 2.** You strengthen your belief in a healing power that can change your life—this is a mental process.
- Step 3.** You make the decision to give up your old lifestyle—this is a mental process.
- Step 4.** You identify what personal changes you need to make to live a healthier lifestyle—this is an action step that can't be taken in the absence of the previous mental processes.
- Step 5.** You then disclose to at least one other person what you need to change about yourself—action step.
- Step 6.** You experience readiness to change your life—mental process.
- Step 7.** You begin to make personal changes—action step.
- Step 8.** You made the decision to make amends to those you harmed—this was the mental process necessary for taking action and for involving others in Step Nine.

**Discussion**

Step Nine (5 mins)  
Counselor reads Step Nine from slide.

**Visual**

**STEP NINE**

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

**Show Slide 8.19**

“Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.”

Counselor then leads a group discussion about Step Nine beginning with the following question:

**QUESTION:** What does it mean to make direct amends?

**Answer:** Important points for Counselor to include in this discussion:

- This is an action step. Having made the decision to make amends, you now go into action and take responsibility for the harm you caused others.
- The point of this step is to acknowledge past harm (not necessarily fix it), and then let it go. **QUIZ ITEM**
- Making amends may include compensation of some kind, and/or a sincere apology, depending upon the situation.
- This step does **not** mean:
  - You will be forgiven by those you harmed. Being sorry does not ensure forgiveness. Remember one of the things you cannot control is someone else’s response. Go into this step with no expectations about the other’s response. Even if the other person does not accept your apology, you know you are sincerely sorry, and you can now let it go and move forward with your life.
  - That people who have harmed you will attempt to make amends to you. Remember you can’t control someone else’s behavior. If others have harmed you, you need to make amends to yourself. This means being willing to honor yourself and remove yourself from relationships that cause you harm.

Let’s apply this step to HIV.

Visual

**STEP NINE and HIV**

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

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<b>Take responsibility for:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• having infected others</li><li>• having harmed your health</li><li>• having hurt your family and friends</li></ul>	<b>Make amends by:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• acknowledging</li><li>• apologizing</li><li>• compensating (not necessarily financially)</li><li>• forgiving yourself and others</li><li>• preventing/reducing further harm</li></ul>
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**This does not mean:**

- you can fix the problem
- the other person will forgive you
- people who have harmed you will make amends, too.

**Take positive action by being honest, responsible, compassionate, and forgiving.**

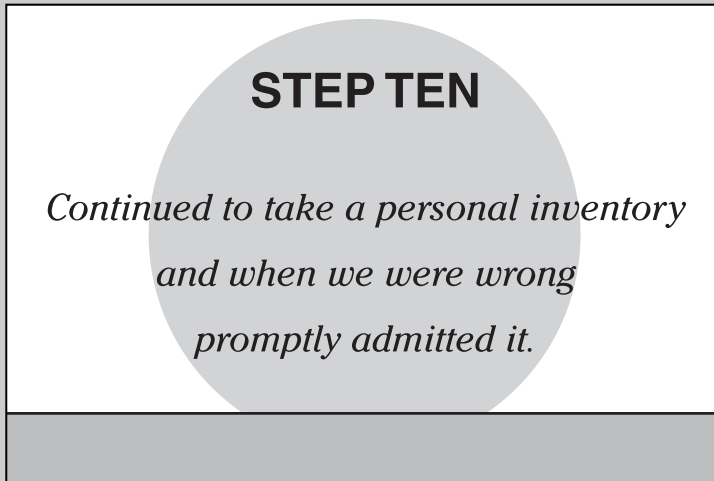
Show Slide 8.20

- Take responsibility for:
  - having infected others.
  - having harmed your health.
  - hurting your family, friends.
- Make amends by:
  - acknowledging.
  - apologizing.
  - compensating (not necessarily financial).
  - forgiving yourself.
  - preventing and reducing future harm (e.g., by using condoms; not sharing needles; disclosing your HIV status to your partners; taking HIV-related medications, etc.).
- It does **not** mean:
  - you can fix the problem.
  - the other person will forgive you.
  - you can expect people who have harmed you to attempt to make amends. If others are continuing to harm you, you owe it to yourself to remove yourself from the harmful situation.
- So, in Steps Eight and Nine, you take on the attributes that are essential for your new healthy lifestyle—being honest, taking responsibility, having compassion and empathy, and doing whatever you can to prevent future harm. Although you cannot reverse the harm you caused, you can reduce future harm.



Step Ten (5 mins)  
Counselor reads Step Ten from slide.

Discussion



Visual

Show Slide 8.21

“Continued to take a personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.”

Counselor then leads a group discussion about Step Ten beginning with the following question:

**QUESTION:** How does this step differ from previous steps?

**Answer:** Important points for Counselor to include in this discussion:

- This step is the maintenance agreement you make with yourself.
- Initiating abstinence from drugs is extremely important, but being able to maintain a drug-free lifestyle is equally important. This takes effort.
- It is easy to fall back into old patterns, so you need to be vigilant.
- You agree to monitor your moods, feelings, thoughts, and actions. (This can be done daily in quiet time, or in a diary, or through conversations with a friend).
- You agree to acknowledge to yourself and others when you are wrong (when you have inadvertently slipped back into old “addict” ways).
- In this step, identify and acknowledge your ongoing strengths and successes as well as continuing to address your weaknesses head on.

Let's apply Step Ten to HIV.

**Visual**

**STEP TEN and HIV**

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

**Leading a healthy lifestyle is an ongoing process.  
Watch out for the return of old attitudes and habits.**

**Monitor your emotions, attitudes, thoughts, and actions.**

**Watch out for:**

- depression, pessimism, hopelessness
- non-adherence to medical regimens
- poor diet, lack of exercise
- drug use, high risk behavior

**Acknowledge:**

- when you are harming your health
- when you might be harming others

**AND ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR SUCCESSES**

**Make an agreement with yourself to maintain a positive attitude and to maintain your health.**

**Show Slide 8.22**

- Step Ten is your health maintenance agreement:
  - Living a healthy lifestyle is an ongoing process.
  - Don't fall back into your old unhealthy lifestyle.
  - Be vigilant for the return of old attitudes and behavioral patterns.
- Monitor:
  - Your emotions, attitudes, thoughts, and actions, such as:
    - depression, pessimism, hopelessness.
    - non-adherence to medical regimens.
    - poor diet, lack of exercise.
    - drug use and other high risk behavior (unprotected sex, needle sharing)
  - Address them quickly before they can cause harm.
- Acknowledge:
  - When you may have harmed your physical, emotional, and spiritual health.
  - When you may have harmed others.
  - When you acknowledge mistakes, you reduce the risk of repeating them.
  - Acknowledge your successes. Identify what is working well in your life so that it can be strengthened even further. When you acknowledge your positive characteristics, you can strengthen them.

Step Twelve (5 mins)  
Counselor reads Step Twelve from slide.

Discussion

## STEP ELEVEN

*Sought through prayer and meditation  
to improve our conscious contact with  
God as we understood him, praying  
only for knowledge of his will  
and the power to carry that out.*

Show Slide 8.23

Visual

“Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.”

Counselor then leads a group discussion about Step Twelve beginning with the following question:

**QUESTION:** What is “God’s will for you?”

**Answer:** Important points for Counselor to include in this discussion:

- In Step 3, you made the decision to give up your old life of addiction and devote yourself to a new drug-free life and to your “higher power” (for example: serenity, enlightenment, balance). This is “God’s will for you.”
- Recovery from addiction is not a destination, it is a process. After you give up your old life and begin your new life, and ensure that you can maintain it, your life can continue to unfold in a positive way. This process is ongoing.
- Your life unfolds in a positive way, through prayer and/or meditation, self-reflection, and reaching out for help.

- Step Eleven is about:
  - the growth of serenity, courage, and wisdom.
  - acknowledging that you don't always have all the answers.
  - acknowledging that you need help and support in order to continue to grow.

Let's apply this step to HIV.

## Visual

**STEP ELEVEN and HIV**

*Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood him, praying only for knowledge of his will and the power to carry that out.*

**Living well with HIV is a process, not a destination**

**A process means continued growth**

- enhancing physical, emotional, and spiritual health
- increasing serenity, courage, wisdom
- Living each moment to the fullest

**This process requires:**

- focus
- self-reflection
- reaching out for guidance and support

- prayer
- support groups
- family / friends
- health care providers

**Having ensured that you can maintain your new healthy lifestyle, you are ready to allow your life to unfold and soar to its highest potential.**

Show Slide 8.24

- Living well with HIV is not a destination, it is a process.
- A process = continued growth:
  - enhancing physical, emotional, and spiritual health
  - increasing serenity, courage, wisdom
  - living each moment to its fullest
- This process requires:
  - focus (e.g., prayer and meditation; we've talked previously about how to use relaxation and meditation techniques to improve focus).
  - self-reflection.
  - reaching out for help, guidance, and support.
- To summarize the journey so far, you began by acknowledging and moving beyond your deepest fears about HIV and your maladaptive ways of coping. You then took action and began making the personal changes necessary for a new healthier lifestyle. Then you made sure that your new healthier lifestyle could be maintained. Now in this step you are ready to allow your new life to reach to its highest potential.

Step Twelve (5 mins)  
Counselor reads Step Twelve from slide.

Discussion

**STEP TWELVE**

*Having had a spiritual awakening  
as the result of these steps, we tried to  
carry this message to others and to  
practice these principles in all our affairs.*

Show Slide 8.25

Visual

“Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.”

Counselor then leads a group discussion about Step 12 beginning with the following question:

**QUESTION:** How can it help your recovery to help others?

**Answer:** Important points for Counselor to include in this discussion:

- When you share with others:
  - you strengthen your own beliefs.
  - you make the steps real, more concrete.
  - you make the steps more available to you in times of high risk.
  - you receive a gift of inner peace by sharing what you know.
- This step reminds you to:
  - share solutions, not problems. Rather than engage other drug users in what we call drug-a-logs (stories about drug use), communicate with others about what helps you to stay abstinent.

- remain humble—remember where you came from.
- practice what you preach (walk the walk, don't just talk the talk).

Let's apply this final step to HIV.

**Visual**

**STEP TWELVE and HIV**

*Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.*

**When you give to others, you give yourself the gift of healing**

Sharing the 12 Steps with others

- helps the other person to begin the process
- refreshes your memory of each step
- strengthens your belief in the process
- reminds you of where you once were
- inspires you to continue your healthier lifestyle
- makes the steps more available when you feel hopeless

This step reminds you to

- share the solutions, rather than the complaints
- remain humble; respect the power of this virus
- practice what you preach

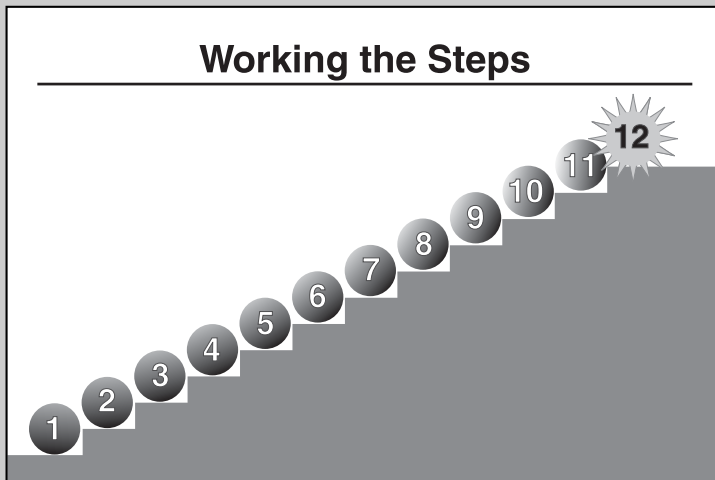
**In reaching out to provide support for others, you begin to experience the joy of living life to its highest potential.**

**Show Slide 8.26**

- When you give to others, you also give to yourself. You give yourself a gift of healing. Giving to others is healing on many levels.
- Sharing the steps with others:
  - refreshes your memory of the process.
  - strengthens your belief in the process.
  - reminds you of where you once were.
  - inspires you to continue your healthier lifestyle.
  - makes the steps more available to you when you feel unwell or hopeless.
- This step reminds you to:
  - share solutions, not problems. Rather than complaining about your life, communicate with others about what helps you keep physically, emotionally, and spiritually healthy.
  - remain humble—have respect for the power of this virus.
  - practice what you preach (walk the walk, don't just talk the talk).

In previous steps you reached out for guidance. You changed your life. You demonstrated a desire to allow your life to unfold to its highest potential. Now, in reaching out to provide support to others, you begin to experience the joy of living your life to its highest potential.

Counselor briefly summarizes the Steps, as follows:



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Visual

Recovery from addiction and living well with HIV are not destinations, each is a process—a journey. The journey requires honest self-reflection and reaching out to others. The 12 step program can guide you on this journey. It is important to remember that the steps have different meanings for different people. Your journey may not be the same as your neighbor’s journey. This is what makes the steps so powerful. In this group, we have de-emphasized the religious interpretation of the steps in order to demonstrate how the steps can be interpreted in different ways. We want to emphasize that it is not important how someone else interprets the steps. It is only important how you interpret them. Find what you need in them. Everything you need for your journey is right there if you are willing to look, and if you are truly open to discovering your highest potential. We strongly encourage you to attend a 12-step program in your community.

### 12-Step Game (15 mins)

Experiential/  
Game

#### Materials:

12-step game worksheets

Pencils

Scissors

Stapler

Clock/timer

Prizes (e.g., AA/NA products, such as refrigerator magnets, key chains, etc.)

**Therapeutic Goals:**

- Review the 12-Steps
- Increased concentration, memory, and rapid decision making
- Improved teamwork and appropriate social interaction

**Instructions:**

1. The group will be divided into pairs.
2. Each pair will be provided with a worksheet (face-down) upon which are written the 12 steps. The steps are not listed in the correct order on this worksheet.
3. When the worksheets are distributed make sure that the counselor writes an identifying letter on your worksheet (A, B, C, D, or E, etc.) so that you can identify your worksheet later.
4. When the counselor says “**go**” you will turn the worksheet over and you and your partner will begin working together to correctly number each of the steps. You will have a maximum of 10 minutes to write the number that corresponds to each step in the box next to that step. Do this as quickly as you can. This is a game of speed and accuracy. The team that places the steps in the correct order first wins the game and a prize. Do not look at your worksheet until the counselor says “**go**” and remember to work together. That means having to make decisions with your partner about who will do what and how the two of you will reach consensus. You may decide that it is easier to sort the steps by using the scissors to cut out each of the steps. If you do this make sure you staple them together when you are finished.
5. When you have finished numbering each step, one member of the pair should bring your worksheet, or the stapled steps, to the Counselor at the front of the room. Then return to your seat and sit quietly until each pair has finished.
6. Every pair should have the opportunity to finish the task because pairs that finish earlier may not necessarily have placed the steps in the correct order. Even the last pair finished has a chance to win, so don’t give up just because you see another team finishing ahead of you. Remember accuracy as well as speed is needed for this game. Time will be called after ten minutes. So you will all need to have finished by then. I’ll give a one minute warning signal, so that you can make final guesses if you have to.
7. The counselor will then check the accuracy of the worksheets in the order in which they are received at the front of the room. Those that are correct will be marked “correct” next to that team’s identifying letter.



8. When everyone has finished, the counselor will return your scored worksheets to you.
9. The counselor will then show a slide of a correctly completed worksheet so that teams that did not number the steps correctly get feedback concerning the correct order.
10. The first pair to have given the counselor a worksheet with the 12-steps numbered in the correct order wins the game and a prize.
11. Hint: remember that each step prepares you for the next step, and that steps requiring mental processes come before the corresponding action steps.

Counselor divides group into pairs and distributes one Twelve-Step game worksheet face down on the table in front of each pair. Counselor writes the pair's identifying letter (A, B, C or D etc.) on the back of each worksheet distributed. Counselor returns to the front of the room and gives the signal "go" for the pairs to turn over their worksheets and begin numbering the Steps in the correct order. Counselor remains at the front of the room in order to receive the worksheets as they are completed. Counselor writes the order received on each worksheet next to the team's identifying letter (A, B, C, D, etc.). Counselor checks each worksheet (or the order in which cut-out steps are stapled) for accuracy, and writes "correct" on those that are 100% correct. (See answer sheet below for correct answers.) If any one step is out of order, write nothing. Counselor provides a "60 seconds" warning signal after 9 minutes have elapsed. When a total of 10 minutes has passed since "go" was announced, counselor calls "time." Counselor then returns worksheets to each pair and shows slide of completed worksheet.

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

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Visual

Counselor instructs group members whose worksheets were not marked "correct" to check their worksheets against the completed worksheet shown on the slide in order to see which steps they placed out of order.

Counselor then announces the winning team and awards prizes.

### **Distribution of Hand-Outs:**

Counselor distributes handouts:

- (1) Twelve Steps in a Journey of Recovery (provided)
- (2) Schedule of Twelve-Step meetings in community (not provided)

### **Quiz**

#### **QUIZ WITH IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK (5 mins)**

As you know, we end each group with a quiz and a ten minute relaxation exercise. I'm going to pass around the quiz now.

Counselor distributes the quiz (attached), and reads the items aloud, providing sufficient time for group members to mark their answers.

### **Detailed feedback:**

Counselor re-reads each item aloud to the group, providing the correct answer after reading each item.

1. What do you ask for in the serenity prayer? The answer is **(d)** all of the above—serenity to accept what can't be changed, courage to change what can be changed, and wisdom to know the difference between what can and cannot be changed.
2. What does it mean to be powerless over your addiction? The answer is **(b)** if you use drugs you are powerless to change the effect of the drug in your life.

3. Do you need to be religious to benefit from working the 12 steps? The answer is **(b)** false. You do not need to be religious. Interpret the steps in the way that is meaningful to you.
4. What is a person's higher power? The answer is **(d)** any of the above. It may be God, nature, love, life force, an inner source of strength. No one can interpret this for you.
5. What does making amends include? The answer is **(d)** all of the above; forgiveness, honesty, acknowledging harm to yourself and others, and then letting that part of your life go, remembering that you may not necessarily be able to repair the damage done.

**STRESS MANAGEMENT/RELAXATION EXERCISE (10 mins)**

**Stress  
Management**

We are going to conclude by doing a brief relaxation exercise. I'll be dimming the lights and playing an audiotape. I'd like you to get comfortable in your chair, uncross your legs, and sit quietly with your eyes closed and just follow along with the tape as it asks you to imagine various relaxing scenes. Remember that learning to relax is a skill that takes practice, so if you feel restless at first, just remind yourself that this is a ten minute gift of quiet time that you give to yourself and to the other members of the group. As we've discussed in this group, this and similar techniques can be extremely useful to you if you incorporate them into your daily life. They can help you make that important connection to your higher power, whatever that may mean to you. When you quiet your thoughts and become centered, you can reach your source of physical, emotional, and spiritual healing.

Counselor dims the lights, says "quiet please," and begins the tape.

**END SESSION**

