

Step Twelve

NA Deep Dive · The Recovery Files

Spiritual Awakening — Carrying the Message — Living the Principles

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

Awakened · Transformed from within · Carrying · Sharing recovery with others · Practicing · Principles in all affairs

In this workbook

- Part 1 · What Is Step Twelve? — The Culmination and the Beginning
 - Exercise: Before & After Inventory
- Part 2 · The Spiritual Awakening: What Changed and How You Know
 - Check-in: Spiritual Awakening & Transformation
 - Exercise: Spiritual Awakening Evidence
- Part 3 · Carrying the Message: Service as Survival
 - Check-in: Carrying the Message to Others
 - Exercise: Defining Your Message
 - Exercise: Service Inventory & Expansion
 - Exercise: Sponsorship Readiness
- Part 4 · Practicing These Principles in ALL Our Affairs
 - Check-in: Practicing Principles — Personal Life
 - Check-in: Practicing Principles — Relationships
 - Check-in: Practicing Principles — In All Affairs
 - Exercise: Twelve Principles Audit
 - Exercise: "All Affairs" Life Inventory
 - Exercise: Integrity Gap Analysis
- Part 5 · The Step Twelve Life: Purpose, Growth, and Legacy
 - Exercise: Purpose & Legacy Mapping
 - Exercise: Step Twelve Living Blueprint

Each reading is followed by its check-in questions and exercises, in the same order as the app. Your scored results are shown in the app.

PART 1 OF 5 · READING

What Is Step Twelve? — The Culmination and the Beginning

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

Step Twelve is simultaneously the culmination of the twelve-step journey and the beginning of a new way of living. It is the step that transforms recovery from something you are doing into something you are becoming.

The step contains three distinct components. The first — "having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps" — is a statement of accomplished fact. The assumption is that if you have genuinely worked Steps One through Eleven, a fundamental change has occurred within you. Your thinking has shifted. Your values have reoriented. Your relationship with yourself, others, and a Higher Power has been transformed.

The second component — "we tried to carry this message to addicts" — is the service dimension. Recovery is not a private possession to be hoarded but a gift to be shared. Recovery literature consistently teaches that you cannot keep what you have unless you give it away. The act of carrying the message reinforces your own transformation and produces a sense of purpose that self-centered living could never provide.

The third component — "to practice these principles in all our affairs" — is perhaps the most challenging. "All our affairs" means exactly what it says: all of them. Not just in meetings. Not just when talking to your sponsor. Recovery principles — honesty, humility, compassion, courage, patience, integrity, service, faith, perseverance, justice, willingness, and love — are meant to be applied in every dimension of your life.

Step Twelve is the step that refuses to let recovery remain a compartmentalized activity. It insists that recovery become your entire way of living. The NA Basic Text says: "Step Twelve is about actively practicing the spiritual principles of recovery in all our daily activities. It is about carrying the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers." This is not a vague aspiration — it is a daily assignment.

Reflection Questions

1. Can you identify specific ways you have changed since entering recovery — not just in behavior but in your thinking, values, and orientation to life?

2. What does "spiritual awakening" mean to you? Was yours sudden or gradual? Can you pinpoint when you knew something fundamental had shifted?

3. How are you currently carrying the message? Is it through formal service, sponsorship, your example, all three, or something else?

4. Where are you practicing recovery principles well? Where are you struggling to apply them?

5. What is the purpose of your recovery? If staying clean is the foundation, what is being built on it?

YOUR EXERCISE

Before & After Inventory

Measuring the Distance You Have Traveled

The Power of Contrast

Gratitude deepens when you can see the contrast between where you were and where you are. This exercise examines ten dimensions of your life — then versus now — to make the transformation visible and concrete.

My relationship with honesty

IN ACTIVE ADDICTION

IN RECOVERY TODAY

My relationship with other people

IN ACTIVE ADDICTION

IN RECOVERY TODAY

My relationship with work and responsibility

IN ACTIVE ADDICTION

IN RECOVERY TODAY

My relationship with money

IN ACTIVE ADDICTION

IN RECOVERY TODAY

My relationship with my body and health

IN ACTIVE ADDICTION

IN RECOVERY TODAY

My relationship with fear

IN ACTIVE ADDICTION

IN RECOVERY TODAY

My capacity for joy and gratitude

IN ACTIVE ADDICTION

IN RECOVERY TODAY

My willingness to ask for help

IN ACTIVE ADDICTION

IN RECOVERY TODAY

My ability to handle conflict

IN ACTIVE ADDICTION

IN RECOVERY TODAY

My sense of purpose and meaning

IN ACTIVE ADDICTION

IN RECOVERY TODAY

Before & After Synthesis

1. Which dimension shows the most dramatic change? What does that tell you about the power of recovery?

2. Which dimension has changed the least? What work remains to be done there?

3. How does seeing this contrast affect your gratitude for recovery? Your motivation to continue growing?

4. If you could go back and show this inventory to the person you were in active addiction, what would you say?

PART 2 OF 5 · READING

The Spiritual Awakening: What Changed and How You Know

The phrase "spiritual awakening" intimidates many people in recovery. It sounds dramatic — a bolt of lightning, a vision, a conversion experience that splits life neatly into before and after. While some people do experience awakening in this sudden, dramatic form, the majority experience what the recovery literature calls "the educational variety" — a gradual, cumulative shift in perception, values, and way of being.

The spiritual awakening of Step Twelve is not a mystical event reserved for the spiritually elite. It is the natural result of doing the work. When you admitted your powerlessness (Step One), something shifted. When you came to believe a power greater than yourself could restore you (Step Two), something opened. When you turned your will over (Step Three), something loosened. When you did a fearless moral inventory (Steps Four and Five), something was released. When you became willing to have your defects removed (Steps Six and Seven), something softened. When you made amends (Steps Eight and Nine), something healed. When you practiced daily inventory (Step Ten), something stayed current. When you sought conscious contact through prayer and meditation (Step Eleven), something deepened.

The spiritual awakening is the cumulative effect of all of this — not one step but the entire journey working together to produce a fundamentally different person.

How do you know you have had a spiritual awakening? Not by measuring its drama but by measuring its evidence: Can you feel emotions now that you were completely disconnected from in active addiction? Can you sit with discomfort without needing to immediately escape it? Do you care about other people's wellbeing as a genuine impulse? Have your priorities changed? Can you admit when you are wrong without being destroyed by it? Do you experience moments of peace, gratitude, or clarity that have no external cause?

If the answer to even some of these questions is yes, you have had a spiritual awakening. Awakening does not mean you are finished. It means you have been given a new foundation — a different starting point from which to navigate life.

Reflection Questions

1. Describe your spiritual awakening. Was it sudden or gradual? When did you first realize that something fundamental had changed inside you?

2. Which evidence questions above can you answer "yes" to? What specific evidence demonstrates that your awakening is real?

3. What was the most significant single shift in your thinking or values since entering recovery? What caused it?

4. How do you maintain awareness that your awakening is ongoing — that you are still growing and being shaped?

5. Have you fallen into the trap of believing your awakening is "complete"? How does complacency threaten continued growth?

CHECK YOURSELF · CHECK-IN 1 OF 5

Spiritual Awakening & Transformation

Scale: 1 = Not at all · 2 = A little · 3 = Somewhat · 4 = Quite a bit · 5 = Very much

1. I can identify specific ways my thinking, values, and behavior have fundamentally changed since entering recovery

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

2. I experience a genuine connection with a Higher Power or spiritual source that influences my daily decisions

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

3. I recognize that my perspective on life has shifted from self-centered survival to something broader and more meaningful

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

4. I have moments of gratitude, clarity, or peace that I did not have access to during active addiction

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

5. I am aware that my spiritual awakening is ongoing — not a single event but a continuing process of change

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

6. I can see how working Steps One through Eleven produced the internal transformation that Step Twelve describes

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

7. I feel genuinely different from the person I was in active addiction — not just in behavior but in my fundamental orientation to life

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

8. I am open to further spiritual growth rather than assuming I have arrived at a finished state

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

YOUR EXERCISE

Spiritual Awakening Evidence

Documenting the Transformation You May Not See

Why This Matters

Spiritual awakening is often invisible to the person experiencing it — the change is so gradual that you only notice it when you compare where you are now to where you started. This exercise asks you to systematically examine the evidence of your transformation.

Changed Thinking

How has the way you THINK fundamentally changed? Consider your automatic assumptions, mental habits, what you worry about, how you interpret situations.

How significant is this change on a scale of 1-5?

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Changed Values

What do you VALUE now that you did not value in active addiction? What did you value then that you now recognize as destructive?

How significant is this change on a scale of 1-5?

- ☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Changed Emotional Capacity

What can you FEEL now that you could not access before? How has your emotional range expanded?

How significant is this change on a scale of 1-5?

- ☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Changed Relationships

How have your RELATIONSHIPS changed? Not just who you spend time with, but how you show up — your honesty, availability, capacity for intimacy.

How significant is this change on a scale of 1-5?

- ☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Changed Behavior

What do you DO now that the person you were in active addiction would never have done? What behaviors have you abandoned?

How significant is this change on a scale of 1-5?

- ☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Changed Spiritual Orientation

How has your relationship with a Higher Power, with meaning, and with purpose changed? What do you believe now that you could not have believed before?

How significant is this change on a scale of 1-5?

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Awakening Synthesis

1. Looking at all six dimensions, which area shows the most dramatic transformation? What contributed most to that change?

2. Which area shows the least change? What might be blocking further transformation in that dimension?

3. If someone who knew you during active addiction could see you now, what would shock them most about who you have become?

4. Write a statement acknowledging your spiritual awakening — a declaration that says honestly: "I have been transformed."

PART 3 OF 5 · READING

Carrying the Message: Service as Survival

"We tried to carry this message to addicts." This simple sentence describes one of the most counterintuitive principles in all of recovery: that the best way to keep what you have been given is to give it away.

Carrying the message is not the same as giving advice. It is not preaching, lecturing, or telling other people how to live. It is sharing your experience — honestly, humbly, and without agenda — so that another suffering person can recognize themselves in your story and realize that recovery is possible for them. The message is not "Do what I did." The message is "If someone as broken as I was can recover, maybe you can too."

SPONSORSHIP is the most direct form of carrying the message. Taking someone through the steps is the most intimate and effective form of service in the twelve-step community. It requires time, patience, honesty, and the willingness to be inconvenienced.

SERVICE AT MEETINGS keeps the infrastructure of recovery functioning. Making coffee, setting up chairs, greeting people at the door, sharing, chairing meetings, serving as secretary or treasurer — these acts demonstrate that you have moved from taking to contributing.

SERVICE IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY extends the message beyond the meeting room. Volunteering at treatment centers, speaking at schools, mentoring people in early recovery, or simply being a reliable, principled presence in your neighborhood and workplace — these are all forms of carrying the message.

Important cautions: First, you cannot give what you do not have. If your own recovery is shaky, your message will carry no weight. Second, carrying the message is not saving people. You can only make recovery visible and available. Third, carrying the message should never feed your ego. The moment your service becomes about your reputation, it has stopped being Step Twelve work.

The paradox of carrying the message is this: you do it for others, but it saves you.

Reflection Questions

1. How are you currently carrying the message? List every form of service you are engaged in, no matter how small.

2. Are you sponsoring anyone? If yes, how is it affecting your own recovery? If no, what is preventing you from being willing?

3. Can you identify a time when carrying the message directly strengthened YOUR recovery?

4. Are there ways your service has become self-centered — about recognition, status, or being needed?

5. If you were a newcomer walking into a meeting for the first time, what would you need to see and hear? Are you providing that?

CHECK YOURSELF · CHECK-IN 2 OF 5

Carrying the Message to Others

Scale: 1 = Not at all · 2 = A little · 3 = Somewhat · 4 = Quite a bit · 5 = Very much

1. I actively share my experience, strength, and hope with others in recovery

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

2. I carry the message through my actions and behavior, not just my words

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

3. I am willing to be available to newcomers and those who are struggling, even when it is inconvenient

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

4. I can share my story without glorifying my addiction or centering myself as the hero

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

5. I understand that carrying the message is about sharing recovery, not giving advice or fixing people

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

6. I practice attraction rather than promotion — I let the quality of my recovery speak for itself

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

7. I am involved in service at some level — sponsorship, meeting commitments, outreach, or recovery community support

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

8. I give back to the recovery community that saved my life, not out of obligation but out of gratitude

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

YOUR EXERCISE

Defining Your Message

What Is the Message You Carry?

Your Story Is the Message

The message you carry is not a lecture — it is your story. Your experience of addiction and your experience of recovery, shared honestly, is the most powerful tool for reaching another suffering person.

What It Was Like

1. Describe the reality of your active addiction — not the dramatic highlights but the daily experience. What was it really like?

2. What did you lose? What consequences accumulated? What was the emotional, relational, and spiritual cost?

3. When did you know — even if you could not admit it — that you had lost the ability to stop on your own?

4. What was the moment (or period) that brought you to recovery? What was the breaking point?

What Happened

1. How did recovery begin for you? What were the first steps? Who helped?

2. What was the turning point — the moment when you began to believe recovery was possible for you?

3. Which step or experience was most transformative? What cracked you open?

4. How did your relationship with a Higher Power develop? What changed in your spiritual understanding?

What It Is Like Now

1. What is your life like in recovery? Not perfect — real. What is genuinely different?

2. What gifts has recovery given you that you never expected or could not have imagined?

3. What challenges do you still face? How do you handle them differently than you would have in addiction?

4. In one or two sentences, what is the core message of your recovery story?

YOUR EXERCISE

Service Inventory & Expansion

What You Give — and What You Could Give

Service Is Recovery

Service is not something you do after recovery stabilizes — it is a core component of recovery itself. Every act of service pulls you out of self-centeredness, reconnects you with gratitude, and reinforces the transformation that the steps have produced.

Current Service Activities

List every form of service you currently provide — no matter how small.

Service activity 1...

Service activity 2...

Service activity 3...

Service activity 4...

Service activity 5...

Service activity 6...

How does your current service affect YOUR recovery? What do you get from giving?

Describe the impact on your own recovery...

Service Expansion Opportunities

1. What form of service are you not currently doing that you know you should be? What is preventing you?

2. Are there people in your recovery community who need help that you are uniquely positioned to provide?

3. How could you expand your service beyond the recovery community — into your workplace, family, or neighborhood?

4. What is one new service commitment you are willing to make this month? Be specific about what, when, and how.

5. Is your service balanced — or are you doing too little (avoiding) or too much (burning out, feeding ego)? What adjustment is needed?

YOUR EXERCISE

Sponsorship Readiness

Preparing to Walk Someone Through the Steps

The Heart of Step Twelve

Sponsorship is the most direct and powerful form of carrying the message. This exercise examines your readiness to sponsor — or to deepen the sponsorship you are already providing.

Your Sponsorship Status

1. Are you currently sponsoring anyone? If yes, how many people? How is it going? If no, why not?

2. Do you have a sponsor? How does your relationship with your own sponsor inform how you would sponsor others?

3. Have you completed all twelve steps with a sponsor? How does your own step work prepare you to guide someone else?

4. What are your fears about sponsorship? (Not knowing enough? Being responsible? Being inconvenienced? Being found out as imperfect?)

5. What are your motivations for sponsorship? (Genuine desire to help? Ego? Obligation? Gratitude? All of the above?)

Sponsorship Skills Inventory

Rate your current capacity in each sponsorship skill:

Listening deeply without immediately jumping to advice or solutions

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Sharing your own experience honestly — including struggles, not just successes

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Holding someone accountable with firmness and compassion simultaneously

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Guiding someone through the steps using the literature, not just your opinion

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Setting healthy boundaries in the sponsorship relationship

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Allowing your sponsee to make their own mistakes without trying to control their recovery

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Being honest when you do not know the answer and directing them to additional resources

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Maintaining your own recovery as the foundation from which you sponsor

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

PART 4 OF 5 · READING

Practicing These Principles in ALL Our Affairs

"To practice these principles in all our affairs" is the phrase that transforms recovery from an activity into a way of life. "All our affairs" is brutally comprehensive. It means your recovery principles do not stay in the meeting room. They follow you to work, to the dinner table, to the bedroom, to the tax return, to the argument with your teenager, to the traffic jam, to the moment when nobody is watching.

The twelve steps are typically associated with twelve spiritual principles: honesty, hope, faith, courage, integrity, willingness, humility, brotherly love, justice, perseverance, spiritual awareness, and service. Each step cultivates a specific principle, and Step Twelve asks you to deploy all of them, everywhere, all the time.

IN YOUR WORK LIFE: showing up reliably and doing your job with integrity; being honest about your capabilities; taking responsibility for mistakes; treating colleagues with dignity; not cutting corners.

IN YOUR FAMILY LIFE: being emotionally present; communicating honestly rather than through passive-aggression or manipulation; taking responsibility for your role in family dynamics; making amends through sustained changed behavior.

IN YOUR FINANCIAL LIFE: paying your debts; being transparent about money; living within your means; being honest on tax returns; managing resources as a steward.

IN YOUR INNER LIFE: being honest with yourself about what you are feeling and why; monitoring your motives; addressing resentments before they become toxic; maintaining humility.

Nobody practices all principles in all affairs perfectly, all the time. But that is not the point. The point is the aspiration — the daily commitment to bringing your best recovery self into every dimension of your life, knowing that you will fall short, making corrections when you do, and showing up tomorrow to try again.

Reflection Questions

1. In which area of your life — work, family, finances, inner life, or public life — are you strongest at practicing principles? Where are you weakest?

2. Where is the gap between your "recovery self" and your "everyday self" most visible? What would it take to close that gap?

3. Can you identify a specific situation this week where you failed to practice principles? What would you do differently?

4. Which recovery principle is most challenging for you to practice consistently? Why?

5. If the people who see you only outside of recovery contexts had to describe you, would they describe someone who lives by principles?

CHECK YOURSELF · CHECK-IN 3 OF 5

Practicing Principles — Personal Life

Scale: 1 = Not at all · 2 = A little · 3 = Somewhat · 4 = Quite a bit · 5 = Very much

1. I practice honesty in my daily life — not just refraining from lies but actively pursuing truthfulness

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

2. I demonstrate humility by admitting when I am wrong, asking for help, and recognizing my limitations

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

3. I practice patience with myself and others, especially when things do not go according to my plan

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

4. I make decisions based on recovery principles rather than impulse, convenience, or self-will

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

5. I handle money, work, and responsibilities with integrity, even when no one is watching

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

6. I maintain emotional sobriety — I can experience difficult feelings without being controlled by them

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

7. I take care of my physical, mental, and spiritual health as an expression of gratitude for recovery

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

8. I live with an awareness that my character defects still operate and require daily attention

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

CHECK YOURSELF · CHECK-IN 4 OF 5

Practicing Principles — Relationships

Scale: 1 = Not at all · 2 = A little · 3 = Somewhat · 4 = Quite a bit · 5 = Very much

1. I show up in my relationships with honesty, kindness, and accountability

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

2. I set healthy boundaries without guilt and respect the boundaries of others without resentment

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

3. I am present and emotionally available to the people in my life, not just physically present

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

4. I can navigate conflict using recovery principles — addressing issues directly, owning my part, and seeking resolution

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

5. I practice forgiveness — both extending it to others and accepting it for myself

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

6. I am honest about my needs and feelings in relationships rather than people-pleasing or manipulating

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

7. I contribute to my family, friendships, and community rather than only taking from them

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

8. I am rebuilding trust with people I harmed during active addiction through consistent, principled behavior

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

CHECK YOURSELF · CHECK-IN 5 OF 5

Practicing Principles — In All Affairs

Scale: 1 = Not at all · 2 = A little · 3 = Somewhat · 4 = Quite a bit · 5 = Very much

1. I bring recovery principles into my workplace — integrity, teamwork, accountability, and service

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

2. I am a responsible member of my community — paying bills, following through on commitments, being a reliable citizen

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

3. I act with compassion and fairness toward people outside the recovery community
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
4. I am growing in my capacity to contribute to the world rather than just consuming from it
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
5. I handle stress, disappointment, and adversity using recovery tools rather than reverting to old patterns
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
6. I am engaged in life — pursuing goals, developing interests, building something meaningful beyond just staying sober
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
7. I make amends through changed behavior in every area of my life, not just with people on my formal amends list
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
8. I live in a way that, if others could see everything, I would not need to be ashamed
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

YOUR EXERCISE

Twelve Principles Audit

Rating Your Practice of Each Principle

The Principles Behind the Steps

Each step cultivates a specific spiritual principle. Step Twelve asks you to practice ALL of them in ALL your affairs. This audit rates your current practice of each principle and identifies where focused growth is needed.

Honesty (Step 1)

How consistently do you practice honesty in your daily life?

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Give a specific recent example of practicing this principle well:

Give a specific recent example of failing to practice this principle:

Hope (Step 2)

How consistently do you practice hope in your daily life?

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Give a specific recent example of practicing this principle well:

Give a specific recent example of failing to practice this principle:

Faith (Step 3)

How consistently do you practice faith in your daily life?

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Give a specific recent example of practicing this principle well:

Give a specific recent example of failing to practice this principle:

Courage (Step 4)

How consistently do you practice courage in your daily life?

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Give a specific recent example of practicing this principle well:

Give a specific recent example of failing to practice this principle:

Integrity (Step 5)

How consistently do you practice integrity in your daily life?

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Give a specific recent example of practicing this principle well:

Give a specific recent example of failing to practice this principle:

Willingness (Step 6)

How consistently do you practice willingness in your daily life?

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Give a specific recent example of practicing this principle well:

Give a specific recent example of failing to practice this principle:

Humility (Step 7)

How consistently do you practice humility in your daily life?

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Give a specific recent example of practicing this principle well:

Give a specific recent example of failing to practice this principle:

Brotherly Love (Step 8)

How consistently do you practice brotherly love in your daily life?

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Give a specific recent example of practicing this principle well:

Give a specific recent example of failing to practice this principle:

Justice (Step 9)

How consistently do you practice justice in your daily life?

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Give a specific recent example of practicing this principle well:

Give a specific recent example of failing to practice this principle:

Perseverance (Step 10)

How consistently do you practice perseverance in your daily life?

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Give a specific recent example of practicing this principle well:

Give a specific recent example of failing to practice this principle:

Spiritual Awareness (Step 11)

How consistently do you practice spiritual awareness in your daily life?

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Give a specific recent example of practicing this principle well:

Give a specific recent example of failing to practice this principle:

Service (Step 12)

How consistently do you practice service in your daily life?

☐ 1 Not at all ☐ 2 A little ☐ 3 Somewhat ☐ 4 Quite a bit ☐ 5 Very much

Give a specific recent example of practicing this principle well:

Give a specific recent example of failing to practice this principle:

YOUR EXERCISE

"All Affairs" Life Inventory

Where Are You Practicing Principles — and Where Are You Not?

The Comprehensive Audit

'All our affairs' is deliberately comprehensive. This inventory examines eight major life domains and asks you to honestly assess where recovery principles are being applied and where they are being ignored.

Work & Professional Life

How are you applying recovery principles in this area? What is going well?

Where are you falling short? Where do old patterns, dishonesty, selfishness, or fear still operate?

What one specific change would bring this area into greater alignment with your recovery values?

Family & Household

How are you applying recovery principles in this area? What is going well?

Where are you falling short? Where do old patterns, dishonesty, selfishness, or fear still operate?

What one specific change would bring this area into greater alignment with your recovery values?

Romantic / Intimate Relationships

How are you applying recovery principles in this area? What is going well?

Where are you falling short? Where do old patterns, dishonesty, selfishness, or fear still operate?

What one specific change would bring this area into greater alignment with your recovery values?

Finances & Money

How are you applying recovery principles in this area? What is going well?

Where are you falling short? Where do old patterns, dishonesty, selfishness, or fear still operate?

What one specific change would bring this area into greater alignment with your recovery values?

Physical & Mental Health

How are you applying recovery principles in this area? What is going well?

Where are you falling short? Where do old patterns, dishonesty, selfishness, or fear still operate?

What one specific change would bring this area into greater alignment with your recovery values?

Community & Citizenship

How are you applying recovery principles in this area? What is going well?

Where are you falling short? Where do old patterns, dishonesty, selfishness, or fear still operate?

What one specific change would bring this area into greater alignment with your recovery values?

Recreation & Leisure

How are you applying recovery principles in this area? What is going well?

Where are you falling short? Where do old patterns, dishonesty, selfishness, or fear still operate?

What one specific change would bring this area into greater alignment with your recovery values?

Inner Life & Self-Relationship

How are you applying recovery principles in this area? What is going well?

Where are you falling short? Where do old patterns, dishonesty, selfishness, or fear still operate?

What one specific change would bring this area into greater alignment with your recovery values?

YOUR EXERCISE

Integrity Gap Analysis

The Distance Between Who You Claim to Be and Who You Are

Integrity = Integration

Integrity literally means 'wholeness' — a state where what you say, what you believe, and what you do are integrated into a single, consistent way of being. The 'integrity gap' is the distance between the person you present to the world and the person you actually are.

Identifying Your Gaps

For each area, honestly assess the gap between your stated values and your actual behavior.

1. Honesty: You value honesty — but where are you still dishonest? (Omissions, exaggerations, image management, financial dishonesty, emotional dishonesty?)

2. Humility: You value humility — but where does pride, grandiosity, or the need to be right still operate?

3. Service: You value service — but where are you still primarily focused on what you can get rather than what you can give?

4. Compassion: You value compassion — but where do you still judge harshly, withhold empathy, or treat people as less than?

5. Courage: You value courage — but where does fear still prevent you from doing the right thing or having the hard conversation?

6. Gratitude: You value gratitude — but where does entitlement, complaint, or taking-for-granted still characterize your thinking?

Closing the Gaps

1. Which integrity gap is the most significant — the one that, if closed, would most transform your Step Twelve living?

2. Who knows about this gap? Have you discussed it with your sponsor? If not, what is preventing you?

3. What specific, measurable action would begin to close your most significant gap?

4. Write an accountability statement: "I will close this gap by [specific action] and I will ask [specific person] to hold me accountable."

PART 5 OF 5 · READING

The Step Twelve Life: Purpose, Growth, and Legacy

Step Twelve is not the end of the journey — it is the doorway to a life that most people in active addiction could never have imagined. The Step Twelve life is not defined by the absence of substances but by the presence of meaning, purpose, connection, and ongoing growth.

THE LIFE OF PURPOSE — The most common experience reported by people who live the Step Twelve life is a growing sense of purpose — the feeling that your life means something, that your existence contributes to something beyond yourself, and that even the darkest chapters of your story have value because they equip you to help others. You discover that you are uniquely positioned — by your suffering, your recovery, and your ongoing growth — to be useful to other human beings in ways that no one else can be.

THE LIFE OF GROWTH — The Step Twelve life is a life of perpetual growth — not growth toward perfection, but growth toward ever-deeper honesty, ever-greater compassion, ever-expanding capacity for connection. The person who stops growing in recovery is the person who begins drifting toward relapse. Growth happens through continued practice of all twelve steps — not as a one-time project but as a cyclical, deepening engagement with the same principles at progressively deeper levels.

THE LIFE OF LEGACY — Step Twelve ultimately raises the question of legacy. In active addiction, the legacy was wreckage: broken relationships, damaged health, wasted potential. In recovery, the legacy is transformed: repaired relationships, restored integrity, realized potential, contribution to the community.

The most powerful form of legacy in recovery is the "spiritual lineage" — the chain of recovery that extends from the person who carried the message to you, through you, to the people you carry it to. When you carry the message, you are participating in something much larger than yourself.

The Step Twelve life is not easy. But it provides a framework within which suffering becomes meaningful, loss becomes bearable, and difficulty becomes an opportunity for growth rather than a justification for relapse.

Reflection Questions

1. What sense of purpose has emerged in your recovery? If it has not yet emerged, what do you sense it might involve?

2. In what areas are you still actively growing? Where have you stopped growing or become complacent?

3. What do you want your legacy to be? If you continue on your current trajectory, what will the people who know you remember about how you lived?

4. Who is in your "spiritual lineage"? Who carried the message to you? Who are you carrying it to?

5. Write a vision statement for your Step Twelve life — a description of the person you are becoming and the life you are building in recovery.

YOUR EXERCISE

Purpose & Legacy Mapping

What Is Your Recovery For?

Beyond Staying Clean

Staying clean is the foundation — but it is not the building. Step Twelve asks: what is being built ON the foundation of sobriety? What are you here to do, to give, to become?

Emerging Purpose

1. What are you passionate about in recovery? What lights you up, gives you energy, and makes you feel most alive and useful?

2. What are you uniquely equipped to contribute — based on your experience, your skills, your suffering, and your recovery?

3. If you knew you could not fail, what would you do with your recovery? What contribution would you make?

4. What do the people who know you best say are your greatest gifts? How are you using those gifts in service of others?

5. What is the next right thing you need to do in your recovery — the action that aligns with your emerging sense of purpose?

Your Legacy

1. What do you want your children, family, or closest people to say about how you lived your recovery?

2. Who is in your spiritual lineage? Who carried the message to you? Name them and describe what they gave you.

3. Who are you carrying the message to? How will the chain of recovery continue through you?

4. Write your legacy statement — a description of the person you are becoming and the mark your recovery will leave on the world.

YOUR EXERCISE

Step Twelve Living Blueprint

Your Plan for Awakened, Service-Centered, Principled Living

Bringing It All Together

You have explored your spiritual awakening, your message, your service, your principles practice, your integrity gaps, and your purpose. Now bring it all together into a comprehensive plan for Step Twelve living.

Maintaining My Awakening

1. What specific daily practices maintain your spiritual awakening? (Prayer, meditation, step work, meetings, literature, service?)

Design your maintenance plan...

2. What are the warning signs that your spiritual condition is deteriorating? What early indicators tell you that you are drifting?

Design your maintenance plan...

3. What will you do when you notice the drift? What is your recovery emergency plan?

Design your maintenance plan...

My Service Commitments

1. What are your current service commitments? List them specifically — who, what, when.

2. Are you sponsoring or willing to sponsor? What is your specific commitment to sponsorship?

3. How will you remain available to newcomers and those who are struggling?

4. What new form of service will you explore this year? How will you expand your contribution?

Practicing Principles in All Affairs

1. Which three principles are you committed to strengthening this year? Why these three?

Plan your principles practice...

2. In which life domain (work, family, finances, health, community) will you focus your principles practice? What specific changes will you make?

Plan your principles practice...

3. Who will hold you accountable for practicing principles in all affairs? How often will you check in with them?

Plan your principles practice...

Your Step Twelve Commitment Statement

Final Declaration

You have completed this intensive exploration of Step Twelve — the culmination of the twelve-step journey and the beginning of a new way of living. Write your commitment below. Make it personal, specific, and honest.

My Step Twelve Commitment:

Having had a spiritual awakening, I commit to... (Include how you will maintain your awakening, carry the message, and practice principles in all your affairs. Be specific. Be honest. Be willing.)

What is at stake? Why does this matter — not in the abstract, but for YOUR life, YOUR recovery, and the people you are meant to serve?

Connect this commitment to everything that matters to you...
