Steps & Scripture

STEP GUIDE

12

STEP TWELVE

Service

A guide to the Twelfth Step, with Scripture and prayer



Work this step with Jimmy or Sarah.

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Steps & Scripture Step Guide: Step Twelve, Service
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If you are in danger, call or text 988, or call 911. If you have been drinking heavily and stopped, and you are shaking, sweating, confused, seeing things, or have had a seizure, go to the ER today.

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STEP TWELVE

Service

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

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.

GALATIANS 6:1 (ESV)

Where you are

You've walked a long road to get here. Before you start Step Twelve, look back at what you've done. Not to feel proud. To see what God has done.

Step One. You admitted you were powerless over alcohol, and that your life had become unmanageable.

Step Two. You came to believe that a Power greater than yourself could restore you to sanity.

Step Three. You made a decision to turn your will and your life over to the care of God.

Step Four. You wrote down your resentments, fears, sex conduct and other harms, and you looked for your own part in each one.

Step Five. You told God, yourself and another human being the exact nature of your wrongs.

Steps Six and Seven. You became ready to let God take your defects, and you humbly asked Him to remove them.

Steps Eight and Nine. You made a list of the people you had harmed, and you went to them and made it right wherever you could.

Steps Ten and Eleven. You turned all of that into a daily life. You watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear, and you set things right quickly. You pray and read Scripture morning and night, and you pause during the day to ask for the next right thing.

Now you give it away.

Haven't worked Steps One through Eleven? You can still serve from your first day: make the coffee, set out chairs, shake hands at the door, and tell what's happening to you at a meeting. That's real service. But carrying the whole message, and sponsoring someone, waits until you've done the work yourself. The book says plainly that "you cannot transmit something you haven't got" (p. 164). Talk to your sponsor about where to pick up.

Check your work first

Step Twelve starts with the words *having had*. It looks back. Before you call yourself ready to help someone else, ask yourself honestly:

- Did I finish my inventory and tell all of it to another person?
- Are my amends made, started, or living amends? Are any of them stalled?
- Am I doing a nightly review most nights, and admitting it quickly when I'm wrong?
- Do I pray and read Scripture most mornings?
- Am I still going to meetings, still calling my sponsor, still going to church?

If something is missing, that's not failure. It's information. Talk to your sponsor and go finish it. You'll carry a stronger message for it.

What Step Twelve is

Here is the step as it was first printed in 1939:

> "Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 60

Today's fourth edition says *spiritual awakening* instead of *spiritual experience*. It means the same thing. The step has three parts.

Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps. Something happened to you. Not because you were good, and not because you tried hard. It happened *as the result of these steps*. You did the work, and God did what you couldn't.

We tried to carry this message to alcoholics. You pass on what was given to you. Not advice, not a lecture, not your opinions. *This message*: what happened to you, and how.

And to practice these principles in all our affairs. Not just at meetings. At home, at work, with your money, at church, in traffic. All of it.

What a spiritual experience is

Some people hear "spiritual experience" and think of a bright light, or a voice. Bill had something like that in a hospital room. Most of us didn't. For most of us, it came slowly, the way the sun comes up.

The book describes what happened to its first members this way:

> "The great fact is just this, and nothing less: that we have had deep and effective spiritual experiences, which have revolutionized our whole attitude toward life, toward our fellows, and toward God's universe."
>
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 25

That's the test. Not a feeling. A changed attitude. Toward life, toward people, and toward God. You can see it in what you do. You don't drink. You don't need to. You tell the truth. You think about other people. You pray.

The book also shows when it often starts. After the Fifth Step, it says:

> "We may have had certain spiritual beliefs, but now we begin to have a spiritual experience."
>
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 75

Beliefs are what you think about God. An experience is what happens when you act on them. The steps are how you act.

What Step Twelve is, and what it isn't

Step Twelve is not a graduation. It isn't a title, a medal, or proof that you've arrived. It isn't a license to fix people.

Step Twelve is the result of the steps and the work that comes with it: giving away what you were given, and living the steps everywhere you go, for the rest of your life.

Your reading for this step

Read these in your own copies, in this order. Page numbers for *Alcoholics Anonymous* are from the fourth edition.

Alcoholics Anonymous

- **Pages 89–103.** "Working With Others." Read it now, and again before you sponsor anyone.
- **Page 60.** The Twelve Steps, and progress, not perfection.
- **Pages 14–16.** Bill carries the message, and it keeps him sober.
- **Pages 25 and 75.** What a spiritual experience is.
- **Pages 151–164.** "A Vision for You." End on page 164.
- **Then *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, pages 106–125.** The Step Twelve chapter. Take your time.

Scripture (ESV)

- Galatians 6:1–2 · Mark 5:18–20 · 2 Corinthians 1:3–4
- James 2:14–17 · Matthew 28:18–20 · 1 Peter 3:15–16
- Luke 10:33–37 · 1 Peter 4:10–11 · Colossians 3:23–24

Listen, if you like: Joe and Charlie, Session 15, "Working with Others—Step Twelve" (about 17 minutes), free in the SoberHub app. Steps & Scripture is not affiliated with SoberHub.

What the book says

Alcoholics Anonymous gives Step Twelve a whole chapter, "Working With Others." It's the most practical chapter in the book. It reads like a field manual. Read these pages in your own copy.

Nothing protects you like this (p. 89)

The chapter opens with the strongest claim in the book about staying sober:

> "Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 89

Not meetings alone. Not church alone. Not reading alone. All of those matter. But nothing protects you like sitting across from someone who is where you were.

Then it gives the step a voice:

> "Carry this message to other alcoholics! You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others fail."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 89

A doctor knows the disease. A pastor knows God. You know what it's like at three in the morning with the shakes and a lie ready for your family. That's why they'll listen to you.

Bill learned it in rough going (p. 15)

Bill wasn't sober long, he was out of work, and he was fighting self-pity and resentment. This is what saved him:

> "I soon found that when all other measures failed, work with another alcoholic would save the day."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 15

When you're in a bad stretch, the book's advice isn't to wait until you feel better. Go help someone.

How to talk to a newcomer (pp. 90–93)

The book walks you through it, step by step. Here is the heart of it.

Don't push. "If he does not want to stop drinking, don't waste time trying to persuade him" (p. 90). You may ruin your chance for later.

Let them talk. You go first, just enough to open the door:

> "Tell him enough about your drinking habits, symptoms, and experiences to encourage him to speak of himself. If he wishes to talk, let him do so."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 91

Don't preach. Talk about your drinking, "being careful not to moralize or lecture" (p. 91).

Don't label them. "Let him draw his own conclusion" (p. 92). You describe yourself as an alcoholic. They decide if they are one.

Stay with your own story. "Keep his attention focussed mainly on your personal experience" (p. 92). When they ask how you

got well, the book says: "Tell him exactly what happened to you. Stress the spiritual feature freely" (p. 93).

When they already know about God (p. 93)

Many newcomers grew up in church. Some know the Bible better than you. The book has a word for that:

> "To be vital, faith must be accompanied by self sacrifice and unselfish, constructive action."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 93

You don't argue doctrine. "Let him see that you are not there to instruct him in religion" (p. 93). Your story can show them where knowing the right things wasn't enough, and doing them was. And remember who's getting the most out of the visit: "Actually, he may be helping you more than you are helping him" (p. 94).

Not from a hilltop (p. 95)

This may be the best single paragraph on how to carry the message:

> "Never talk down to an alcoholic from any moral or spiritual hilltop, simply lay out the kit of spiritual tools for his inspection. Show him how they worked with you. Offer him friendship and fellowship."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 95

You're not above them. You're one beggar telling another where you found bread.

They have to want it (p. 95)

You can't make anyone recover. "If he is to find God, the desire must come from within" (p. 95). If they say no, you don't chase:

> "Do not be discouraged if your prospect does not respond at once. Search out another alcoholic and try again."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 96

Every day, if need be (p. 97)

Step Twelve isn't a good deed once in a while:

> "Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery. A kindly act once in a while isn't enough. You have to act the Good Samaritan every day, if need be."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 97

It may cost you sleep, time and convenience. The book is honest about that (p. 97).

Point them to God, not to you (p. 98)

The book warns against becoming someone's bank or nurse (p. 95). Help with a job or a meal when it's right, but watch for this:

> "...job or no job—wife or no wife—we simply do not stop drinking so long as we place dependence upon other people ahead of dependence on God."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 98

That's true of the newcomer, and it's true of you. If they're leaning on you instead of God, you aren't helping.

At home (p. 98)

"All our affairs" starts at your own front door. The book's advice for the newly sober at home:

> "He should concentrate on his own spiritual demonstration. Argument and fault-finding are to be avoided like leprosy."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 98

And when you fall short at home, which you will: "we must try to repair the damage immediately lest we pay the penalty by a spree" (p. 99).

Give freely (p. 164)

The book ends with a charge:

> "Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to him and your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find, and join us."
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 164

That's the whole program in four sentences. You've done the first three. Step Twelve is the fourth.

What the 12&12 adds

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions gives Step Twelve its longest chapter, on **pages 106–125**. It covers a lot of ground: what a spiritual awakening is, the joy of service, and how to live the steps at home, at work and with money. Read it slowly, in your own copy. Here is what to look for. These are our notes, not the book's words.

Page 106: The theme is joy, and the key is action. The chapter opens by saying this step is about turning outward and giving without expecting anything back. It describes a spiritual awakening as being able to do, feel and believe what you couldn't before on your own strength. Ask yourself: what can you do now that you couldn't do a year ago?

Pages 107–109: A look back. The chapter walks briefly through Steps One to Eleven, and shows how each one made you ready to receive the gift. It notes that people who started out unsure about God often come to love Him and call Him by name.

Pages 109–110: The joy of a job well done. It says that helping a newcomer brings rewards whether the newcomer gets sober or not. Then it widens the picture. Listening at a meeting, speaking when your turn comes, making the coffee: all of it counts as Twelfth Step work.

Pages 110–111: Setbacks and swelled heads. Two traps. You may pour months into someone who drinks again, and get discouraged. Or someone does well, and you get possessive and start giving advice you aren't qualified to give. Both are growing pains. The answer is to go back to all twelve steps.

Pages 111–112: The biggest question. Can you bring the same love and patience you show newcomers into your own home? Into your work? Into your church? Can you take failure without despair, and success without pride?

Pages 112–114: Two-stepping. The chapter names a trap: doing Step One and the carrying-the-message part of Step Twelve, and skipping everything in between. It can feel fine for years, until life hands you a blow you can't take. The answer is to work all twelve, and to lean on God's grace.

Pages 114–116: Emotional security. It says we tried to feel safe by running other people's lives or leaning on them too hard. Neither worked. Real security came from depending on God, and from giving to others without demanding anything back.

Pages 117–120: Marriage, family and being single. Honest notes on how drinking twisted family roles, how it takes patience to set them right, and how a newcomer's spouse may resent the program. It also has encouragement for people who are single, and the good they can do.

Pages 120–121: Money. We spent wildly while drinking, then often swung to fear and hoarding once sober. Over time, money can become a servant and not a master. The chapter says that being free from fear matters more than being free from want.

Pages 122–124: Ambition and staying right-sized. It describes how fear drove us to chase importance, and how pride and fear were two sides of one coin. It ends with a picture of true ambition: a life of usefulness, lived humbly under God's grace.

Page 125: The close. The chapter closes the book on the Twelve Steps with the Serenity Prayer. Read it there.

What Scripture says

The Bible is full of people who were changed by God and then sent to tell someone. Read these slowly. Read them out loud if you can.

Restore gently, and watch yourself

The verse on the opening page of this guide is the one to carry into every Twelfth Step call:

> *Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*
>
> GALATIANS 6:1–2 (ESV)

Gently. Not harshly, not from above. And *keep watch on yourself*. When you help someone who is struggling, you are near the fire too. Go humbly, go with someone if you can, and keep working your own program.

Go home and tell them

> *As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.*
>
> MARK 5:18–20 (ESV)

The man Jesus set free wanted to follow Him on the road. Jesus sent him home instead, with one job: tell people what the Lord did for you. He wasn't asked to preach a sermon. He was asked to tell his story. That's Step Twelve.

The comfort you received

> *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.*
>
> 2 CORINTHIANS 1:3–4 (ESV)

Your worst years are not wasted. The comfort God gave you in your trouble is the comfort you get to pass on. The very thing you were most ashamed of may be what lets a newcomer trust you.

Faith that works

> *What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.*
>
> JAMES 2:14–17 (ESV)

Bill's friend got his line *faith without works* from here (p. 14). It doesn't say works save you. It says real faith moves. It feeds people. It shows up. Step Twelve is faith with its sleeves rolled up.

Go and make disciples

> *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*
>
> MATTHEW 28:18–20 (ESV)

Jesus' last words in Matthew are called the Great Commission. Every Christian is sent, not just pastors. Carrying the message to alcoholics is one way you obey it. Your church is another place to obey it: in a small group, a men's or women's ministry, the nursery, the parking lot, the soup kitchen. And look at the last line. *I am with you always.* You never go alone.

With gentleness and respect

> *...but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.*
>
> 1 PETER 3:15–16 (ESV)

Be ready to say why you have hope, when someone asks. Notice the order: they ask, then you answer. And notice the manner: *gentleness and respect*. This is the Bible saying what the book says on page 95. No hilltops.

Who was a neighbor?

> *"But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."*
>
> LUKE 10:33–37 (ESV)

The book tells you to *act the Good Samaritan every day, if need be* (p. 97). The Samaritan didn't ask if the man deserved help.

He stopped, he got his hands dirty, he paid, and he came back. *You go, and do likewise.*

Use your gift

> *As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*
>
> 1 PETER 4:10–11 (ESV)

Every believer has been given something to serve with. Maybe it's talking. Maybe it's setting up chairs. Both are gifts, and both are from God. Serve *by the strength that God supplies*, so that He gets the credit, not you.

Work as for the Lord

> *Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.*
>
> COLOSSIANS 3:23–24 (ESV)

"All our affairs" includes your job. Show up on time. Do honest work. Don't steal time or supplies. Treat your boss and coworkers the way you'd want to be treated. You're working for the Lord now, even on a Tuesday afternoon.

How to work Step Twelve

Here is a plain way to work this step. Your sponsor may suggest something different. Go with your sponsor.

1. Look at what happened to you

Sit down with your sponsor and talk through how your life is different now from when you started Step One. Be specific: your drinking, your thinking, your family, your work, your faith. This is your spiritual experience. It's also your story, and you'll need it.

2. Take a service commitment

Ask your home group what needs doing. Make the coffee. Set out chairs and put them away. Greet people at the door. Keep the literature table stocked. Show up early and stay late. Small jobs are where a lot of newcomers first feel welcome, and they keep you coming back.

3. Learn to tell your story

Practice telling it in five minutes, and then in fifteen: what it was like, what happened, and what it's like now. The page after this chapter shows how. Then share it at a meeting when you're asked. Say yes when someone asks you to speak.

4. Carry the message the book's way

When you meet someone who's struggling, use the book's approach (pp. 90–96). Listen first. Tell your own story. Don't preach. Let them decide. Offer to take them to a meeting. Give

them your number. Then follow up. The "Helping a newcomer" page later in this guide is a checklist.

Some practical sense the book assumes and our day needs:

- **Men work with men, and women with women.** That's the long tradition, and it protects everyone.
- **Take someone with you** when you go to see a person you don't know, especially at their home.
- **Withdrawal can kill.** If someone is shaking, seeing things, confused, or has had seizures, they need a doctor or the ER, not a talk. Get them there, or call 911.
- **If someone talks about ending their life,** call or text 988 with them, or call 911.

5. Sponsor someone, when it's time

Sponsoring someone means taking them through the steps the way you were taken. Two things come first: you've worked all twelve steps yourself, and your human sponsor agrees you're ready. Read pages 89–103 again before you say yes.

Then do for them what your sponsor did for you. Go through the book with them, a little at a time. Take them through the steps in order. Point them to God, to meetings and to their own Bible, not to you. Keep what they tell you to yourself. You're not their therapist, banker, lawyer or doctor. If something is past what you know, say so, and send them to someone who does.

6. Serve at church too

Step Twelve is the program's version of something Jesus asked of every believer. Find a place to serve at your church. Usher, greet, set up, tear down, help in the kitchen, work with kids if

your church allows it, visit people in the hospital. If your church has a recovery ministry, offer to help. Tell your pastor your story. Many pastors don't know how to help alcoholics, and you might.

7. Practice these principles in all your affairs

Pick one area of your life each week and ask: *Am I living the steps here?*

- **At home.** Are you patient? Do you listen? Do you admit it fast when you're wrong?
- **At work.** Do you do honest work? Do you gossip? Do you take credit you didn't earn?
- **With money.** Do you pay what you owe? Do you give? Is fear running your bank account, or God?
- **At church.** Are you showing up, or just attending? Are you serving anyone?
- **With your body.** Are you sleeping, eating, and seeing a doctor when you need one?

8. Keep doing Steps Ten and Eleven

Step Twelve rests on the two before it. Keep your nightly review. Keep your morning prayer. Every morning, ask God what the book suggests: what you can do today for someone who is still sick (p. 164).

Telling your story in five minutes

Your story is the most useful thing you own. Here is a simple shape for it. The book uses the same one: what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now (p. 58).

What it was like (about two minutes)

- How drinking started, and when it stopped working.
- One or two true, specific moments. Not every war story. Pick the ones a newcomer would recognize.
- What you tried in order to control it, and how it failed.
- How you felt inside: alone, afraid, ashamed, stuck.

What happened (about two minutes)

- The bottom: what finally made you willing.
- Who carried the message to you, and what they said.
- The steps you took. Name them plainly: you admitted it, you came to believe, you turned it over, you wrote and told your inventory, you made amends.
- Where God came in. Say it simply. You don’t have to defend it.

What it's like now (about one minute)

- What's different: at home, at work, inside.
- What you do every day to stay sober.
- One honest thing that's still hard.
- Hope. If God did it for you, He can do it for them.

A few rules of thumb. Tell the truth, and don't polish it. Keep the drinking part shorter than the recovery part. Don't name other people or tell their secrets. Don't brag about the wreckage. Don't preach at the end. And keep it to five minutes when that's what you were given.

You can also say it in one sentence. The man born blind in John 9 had one:

> *He answered, "Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."*
>
> JOHN 9:25 (ESV)

Sometimes that's all a newcomer can take in.

Helping a newcomer: do and don't

Keep this page handy before a Twelfth Step call. The page numbers are from *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

Do

- **Find out about them first,** if you can (p. 90).
- **Wait until they want help.** Don't chase someone who doesn't (pp. 90, 96).
- **Listen.** Tell enough of your story to get them talking (p. 91).
- **Talk about your own drinking.** Describe the problem and how baffled you were (pp. 91–92).
- **Tell what happened to you.** Talk about God plainly, in everyday words (p. 93).
- **Lay out the tools** and show how they worked for you (p. 95).
- **Offer friendship.** Give your number. Offer a ride to a meeting (p. 95).
- **Lend them the book** if they're interested (p. 94).
- **Let them go** if they say no. Find another alcoholic (p. 96).
- **Point them to God,** not to you (p. 98).
- **Be kind to the family,** even if the drinker won't come (p. 97).
- **Pray for them** by name.

Don't

- **Don't preach, lecture or moralize** (pp. 91, 95).
- **Don't call them an alcoholic.** Let them decide (p. 92).
- **Don't argue about religion** (p. 93).
- **Don't rush them** through the steps (p. 95).
- **Don't wear out your welcome** (p. 95).
- **Don't become their bank** or their nurse (pp. 95–98).
- **Don't take sides** in family fights (p. 100).
- **Don't give advice** about medicine, law or money. Send them to a doctor, a lawyer, or someone qualified.
- **Don't go alone** to a stranger's home. Take someone.
- **Don't take it personally** if they drink again.

If they're in danger, don't try to handle it with a talk. Shakes, seizures, confusion or seeing things after stopping: get them to a doctor or the ER, or call 911. If they talk about ending their life, call or text 988 with them, or call 911.

Questions to think about

These aren't for writing in this guide. Think them over, pray about them, write in a notebook if that helps, and talk them through with your sponsor. Jimmy and Sarah ask some of the same questions in the app.

1. How is your life different now from when you started Step One? Be specific.
2. What would you call your spiritual experience? When did you first notice it?
3. Who in your life needs to hear your story?
4. What service commitment could you take on at your home group?
5. Is anyone asking you to sponsor them? Have you talked to your sponsor about it?
6. Where are you still not practicing these principles: at work, with money, at home?
7. Are you serving at church, or just attending? Where could you start?
8. Are you two-stepping anywhere: carrying a message you've stopped living?
9. How do you handle it when someone you help drinks again? When someone does well?
10. Read Mark 5:18–20. Who is your "home"? What would it look like to tell them?

Suggestions for this week

Pick one at a time. You don't need to do all of them.

- Take a service commitment: coffee, chairs, greeting, literature.
- Write your story out once, then practice telling it in five minutes.
- Share your story at a meeting when you're asked.
- Carry the message to one person this month.
- Read "Working With Others" (pp. 89–103) in one sitting. Read it again before you sponsor anyone.
- Read Step Twelve in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (pp. 106–125) in your own copy.
- Each morning, ask God what you can do today for someone who's still sick (p. 164).
- Find one place to serve at your church this month. Ask your pastor where you're needed.
- Do one thing at home this week that no one asked for.
- Call a newcomer just to ask how they're doing.
- Memorize Galatians 6:2: *Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ*.

When it's hard

Almost everyone gets stuck somewhere on this step. Here's what that usually looks like, and what to do.

"I don't think I've had a spiritual experience."

Look at your life, not your feelings. Are you sober? Do you pray? Do you tell the truth more than you used to? Do you think about other people? That's the change the book describes (p. 25). Ask your sponsor and your family what they see. If something really is missing, go back and do the step you skipped.

"I don't know what to say to a newcomer."

You don't need a speech. Tell them what it was like, what happened, and what it's like now. Listen more than you talk. If you're nervous, take someone with you. You don't have to be good at it. You have to show up.

"I helped someone, and they drank."

That hurts. It isn't your fault, and it isn't your failure. You can't make anyone well. Your job is to carry the message, not to carry the person. Pray for them, leave the door open, and find another alcoholic (p. 96). And notice that you stayed sober. That was the point too.

"I'm burning out."

Service that crowds out your meetings, family and prayer isn't service. It's self-will in work boots. *Keep watch on yourself* (Galatians 6:1). Ask your sponsor what to drop.

"I like being needed a little too much."

That's honest, and common. Pride sneaks in through good work. When people start depending on you instead of God, point them back to Him. Remember who did the work in your life. It wasn't you.

"It's easy at meetings and hard at home."

That's true for most of us. Home is where people remember who you used to be. Keep at it anyway: no arguing, no fault-finding, quick amends, and patience (pp. 98–99). Change at home is slow, and people will notice it before they say so.

If you want to drink, call someone before you do anything else. Your sponsor, someone from a meeting, your pastor. Get to a meeting today. If you are in danger, call or text 988, or call 911.

A morning question

The book doesn't give Step Twelve a prayer of its own. It gives a question to bring to God each morning. Keep this page where you'll see it.

> "Ask him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick. The answers will come if your own house is in order. But obviously you cannot transmit something you haven't got. See to it that your relationship with Him is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others."
>
> ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, P. 164

Read it slowly, and stop at each line.

What you can do each day. Not someday. Today.

For the man who is still sick. Someone is out there right now where you used to be.

If your own house is in order. Steps Ten and Eleven keep it that way.

You cannot transmit something you haven't got. Stay close to God first.

A prayer for this step

You can also pray in your own words. Here is one way:

Lord Jesus, thank You for what You've done in me. I was lost, and You found me. I was blind, and now I see. I didn't earn any of it.

Make me useful today. Put someone in my path who is still sick, and give me the courage to speak, and the sense to listen. Keep me gentle. Keep me honest about my own story. Keep me from preaching, and from pride.

Help me live what I've learned at home, at work, with my money and in Your church. Where I'm still running my own show, take it back.

Keep me close to You, so I have something to give. Thank You for this day sober. Thy will, not mine, be done. Amen.

This step never ends

There's no "Ready for Step Thirteen." Step Twelve is how you live from here on. Still, talk these over with your sponsor:

- Can you see the change in your life that came from working these steps?
- Are you carrying the message to others, in some way, regularly?
- Do you have a service commitment at your home group?
- Can you tell your story in five minutes?
- Are you practicing these principles at home, at work, with money and at church?
- Are you serving at your church, or working toward it?
- Are you still doing Steps Ten and Eleven every day?

You don't have to be perfect. The book says so: "We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection" (p. 60).

What's next

Keep going to meetings. Keep calling your sponsor. Keep going to church. Keep reading the book and your Bible. Keep doing your nightly review and your morning prayer. When something goes wrong, go back to the steps. They still work.

And keep giving it away. Someone you haven't met yet is drinking tonight, and one day they'll walk into a meeting scared to death. You'll know exactly how they feel.

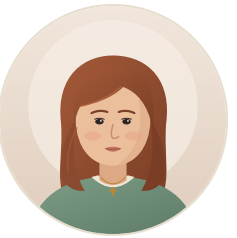
KEEP GOING

Talk it over with Jimmy or Sarah

Steps & Scripture is a Christian Twelve Step app for iPhone and Android. Your sponsor, Jimmy for men or Sarah for women, is an AI who knows *Alcoholics Anonymous* and the Bible. Your sponsor walks the steps with you, one conversation at a time, and keeps pointing you to meetings, a human sponsor, your church, and the phone.



Jimmy



Sarah

Download on the App Store

Get it on Google Play

Free to download. First month free, no card. For adults 18 and older. Jimmy and Sarah are AI. They are not people, and they say so.

IF TODAY IS A BAD DAY

Get help now

If you are in danger or thinking about hurting yourself: call or text **988**, the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, or call **911**.

Withdrawal can kill. If you have been drinking heavily and stopped, and you are shaking, sweating, confused, seeing things, or have had a seizure, go to the ER today. If you drink heavily every day, talk to a doctor before you stop.

If you want to drink

- Call someone before you pick up. Your sponsor, someone from a meeting, your pastor.
- Get to a meeting today, early, and stay late.
- Ask: am I hungry, angry, lonely or tired? Deal with that first.
- Play the tape forward. Walk past the first drink to tonight, tomorrow morning, and who you'll have to tell.
- Pray. Even "God, help me" counts.

The SAMHSA National Helpline is free and open 24/7: 1-800-662-4357.

THE PROGRAM

The Twelve Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. 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.
12. **Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.**

1939 wording (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 59).