

Introduction to the Twelve Steps for Narateen

The Twelve Steps provide a way for change to take place that can be profound and everlasting. Working these steps can help to transform our lives. This guide, written by teens based on their experiences, provides the opportunity to understand and work these steps in an easily understood format.

The Twelve Steps are one of many tools available to help us in our program. When we work these steps, we may learn a better way to live. We each work our program in our own way and time, understanding that the program works in different ways for different people. When we put forth the effort to work the Narateen program, we see small changes taking place that make our lives better.

This book is for teens who want a deeper understanding of the Narateen program. By working the steps, they may receive the benefits of peace and serenity.

APPROVAL DRAFT - NOT FOR USE IN MEETINGS

Step One: We admitted we were powerless over the addict – that our lives had become unmanageable.

Use the definitions below as reference while working Step One.

We admitted: we acknowledged

Powerless: have no control over habitual behaviors and changing others

Addict: someone unable to break a habit – must continue to do something (use drugs)

Become unmanageable: difficult to keep under control; difficult to deal with

~ A member shares ~

Feeling powerless is a feeling I know all too well. When I was going into third grade, my parents did not get my supplies on time. I had nothing each day I went into class. I felt so sad about it. I ended up not getting supplies until two weeks into the school year. That was extremely embarrassing.

Another thing that made me feel powerless was the food situation. We never had food in the house. We only ate fast food super late at night. I would come home from school, and I would be really hungry, then I wouldn't eat until ten at night. I'm glad things are different now, but I will never be able to forget that feeling. No matter what I did to try and help my parents, mainly my dad, I could not change anything. I was powerless.

~ A member shares ~

Sitting in my room, I feel weak. There is yelling going on downstairs that I caused. If only I had been quiet, I wouldn't feel so powerless. Days pass and the guilt is unbearable. I wish it would go away so I could just go on and forget.

Weeks pass, and I forget about it. Yet when I think back I know for sure it was out of my hands, and I did not cause the argument. I am powerless. I am okay.

~ A member shares ~

I am powerless over everyone except myself. I felt like I was not powerless when I found out she was an addict. I felt like it was my job to change or control her, but now I know I am powerless. When she would use or relapse, I used to feel compelled to fix and change her right away. I now know the only one I can change is myself and no one else.

~ A member shares ~

Being powerless means only having control over yourself and knowing it. You feel like you have to control the addict. Step One really helped me see that I am powerless. I had to tell myself that every day at one point. Now I know the addict might need my help along the way, but they don't need me to do it for them, as much as I want to. I want to get inside their head and tell them what they are doing is wrong, and they are just hurting themselves. I can't, and it is annoying, but that's life.

Activity 1: Write a definition of the key words and share what they mean to me.

We admitted

Powerless

Addict

Become

Unmanageable

Activity 2:

You do have power over some situations in your life. For example, you may choose the clothes you are going to wear for the day or whether you are going to carry your backpack on your back or over one shoulder.

Can you think of two examples or situations you have the power to control?

1.

2.

Activity 3:

There are situations we do not have the power to control, such as our parents' or guardians' decisions that may affect us. Some examples may be what school we will attend or what time we must go to bed.

Can you think of 2 examples in which the power is not in your hands?

1.

2.

Activity 4:

There are other areas in our lives where we may not have the ability to take care of something. This may be because of our age, because we have not learned those skills yet, or do not yet have the authority to manage.

Can you think of 2 things you are not able to manage?

- 1.
- 2.

Activity 5:

How does it make me feel when I admit I am powerless over the addict?

Activity 6:

Addiction is a disease. How are you affected by the disease of addiction?

Activity 7:

Share a story of your experience working Step One.

Step Two: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Use the definitions below while working Step Two.

Came to Believe: accept as true

Power: strength, right or means to control others

Greater than: beyond the average, mighty, grand

Ourselves: us

Could: able to

Restore: make better, put back into use

Sanity: soundness of mind, sensible

~ A member shares ~

Compared to how I felt when I was younger, I don't know where I would be if I didn't come to Narateen. I used to think what was happening was normal, and that is just how it was going to be. Now I realize that isn't true. I realize there is something or someone to help. They/It might not help my dad but can help me. I used to think I could help him and get him to stop. Now I realize it is up to him to get help and get better.

~ A member shares ~

This step helps me reconnect with my Higher Power and helps me see I'm not alone as much as I think I am. My Higher Power lets me know I am not alone.

~ A member shares ~

I think I am doing better since coming to Narateen. Since coming to the meetings, I have connected with my Higher Power in a different way. I only prayed or talked to my Higher Power when I slept at my grandmom's house or went to church. Now when I'm struggling, talking to Him helps. I am able to let things out without anyone talking back.

Narateen has also helped me in ways most people couldn't. It showed me that it's not my fault and things do get better. I wholeheartedly believe my Higher Power led my mom-mom into finding out about Narateen. I am forever thankful for that.

~ A member shares ~

I never thought about a Higher Power until Narateen. My Higher Power helped me so much. My Higher Power definitely led my mom to Nar-Anon. Then my mom told us about Narateen and I have been attending for almost 2 years. The people here, as well as the steps, help me.

Activity 1: Write a definition of the key words and share what they mean to me.

Came to believe

Power

Greater than

Ourselves

Could

Restore

Sanity

Activity 2:

1. How did I come to believe in a Higher Power?
2. How does my faith grow?
3. How do my beliefs control me?
4. What is the difference between belief and feeling?
5. How can I guide my thoughts and feelings in the same direction?
6. How do I decide what is important or unimportant in my life?

Activity 3:

1. Explain how I might have been different if addiction had not struck my family.

Activity 4:

1. How does my Higher Power help me feel or act better?
2. Explain how I feel more serene. How do meetings help me? How does the literature help me?

Activity 5: Share a story of your experience working Step Two.

Step Three: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

Steps One, Two, and Three: I can't, He can, I think I'll let Him.

Use the definitions below while working Step Three.

Decision: making a choice

Will: thoughts

Life: actions

Turn over: surrender control

Care: protection

~ A member shares ~

Once I let God take control of a situation regarding my grandmother. She has hurt my mom mentally, along with a lot of my other family. After going to the meetings, I realized I was going about it wrong. I can't control what she says or does. I realized I should not try to change or ignore what happened. I have accepted it and let God handle what happens to her.

~ A member shares ~

Let Go and Let God is such an important step for me. Sometimes when someone bothers you, or something happens you don't like, letting go helps a lot. My pop-pop and I (he lives with me) don't get along at all. We fight about everything under the sun. I try to let go of that and talk to my Higher Power. Anything in life that feels hard, or not fair, can be let go and shared with your Higher Power. When I let it go and let God take control, it relieves all of that stress knowing he will take control of it.

Activity 1: Write a definition of the key words and share what they mean to me.

Decision

Will

Life

Turn over

Care

Activity 2 –

1. What is the difference between making a decision and making a choice?
2. What does it mean to make a decision?
3. Do I have trouble making decisions?
4. Is it my responsibility to make decisions and choices for others?
5. What happened in the past when I made decisions for others?

Activity 3 –

1. What does turn over mean?
2. Do I believe that turning my life over to a Higher Power means giving up, or is it a chance to find guidance for a better life?
1. Can I trust a Higher Power will take care of me?
2. What areas of my life am I now willing to turn over to a Higher Power?
3. What does faith mean to me?
4. How does it help me to have faith in a Higher Power?

Activity 4 -

1. What is my will?
2. Is my Higher Power loving and understanding?
3. What is the difference between a Higher Power's will and my will?
4. How can I know and understand my Higher Power's will for me?
5. Have I tried to take my will back when a loved one makes decisions I don't like?

Activity 5

1. What is the care of God?
2. Have I learned to trust my Higher Power?
3. Do I believe my Higher Power can help me?

Activity 6

1. Write a prayer to God, turning your will and your life over to His care.
2. Find a special place alone with God and share your prayer.
3. Read your prayer to a trusted program friend.

Activity 7

1. How am I turning my will over?
2. Have I learned I do not have to solve every problem for everyone else?
3. How will this step help me to have a better life?
4. Can I now let go, let it be, let God?
5. Is it okay for me to live my own life without worrying so much about others?
6. What are some tools I can use to help me with this step?

7. Am I ready for Step Four?

Activity 8:

Share a story of your experience working Step Three

APPROVAL DRAFT - NOT FOR USE IN MEETINGS

Step Four: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Use the definitions below while working Step Four.

Made a searching: really thought about it – searched my memory

Fearless: unafraid, open-minded, not restricted by fear

Moral: conscious of right and wrong, conforming to a standard of right behavior

Inventory of ourselves: a list of my good traits and those that need improvement.

~ A member shares ~

When I'm in my room and am not doing anything, sometimes I'll look in a mirror and just make a list of the things I like and don't like. I'm getting better at thinking of good things, I think, not too much, but better than before. I used to only see bad things, but I'm seeing more than that now. I'm proud of how much better I've gotten compared to how I was before I learned about Step Four.

~ A member shares ~

When working this step, it's so easy for me to think of all the negatives about myself. It's easy for me to get consumed with the bad parts. This step forces me to be honest and say what the good parts of me are. It took a little help, but I quickly realized my good traits. Instead of me looking at a long list of things I think are not good, I also get to see the good parts of me. It makes it ten thousand times easier for me. Now when my brain goes down a dark path, I force myself, or at least I try, to say positive traits as well.

Activity 1: Write a definition of the key words and share what they mean to me.

Made a searching

Fearless

Moral

Inventory of ourselves

Activity 2: List my positive traits, what they mean, and an example to show I have this trait

Kind

Unselfish

Patient

Trusting/trustworthy

Smart

Calm

A leader

Brave

Helpful

Fearless

Responsible

Fun

Other

Activity 3: List traits that I need to improve upon and why I chose these traits

Anger

Resentment

Controlling

Gossipy

Fearful

Enabling

Jealous

Untrustworthy

Other

Activity 4:

1. How do the traits that I chose, both good and those needing improvement, make me feel?
2. What people or situations bring on feelings of fear, resentment, or anger?
3. Which feelings free me?

4. Which feelings make me feel powerless?

Activity 5: How can I improve the traits that make me feel badly about myself? Remember, no one is perfect, and we have more good traits than those we need to improve.

APPROVAL DRAFT - NOT FOR USE IN MEETINGS

Step Five: Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Use the definitions below while working Step Five.

Admit: take responsibility for, tell God

Exact nature: be specific

Wrongs: harm done to others or yourself

~ A member shares ~

Step Five, for me, is important because it helps me get my feelings out more. I usually can't get my feelings out that well, but with Step Five I'm getting better at it. I'm more honest with myself and how I feel, even if it takes a while for me to figure it out. I know when I figure that out, it will be easier for me to talk to another person about it. If I can tell myself what I did and know it, then I can tell someone else.

~A member shares ~

It's easy for me to admit my wrongs to myself. What's not so easy is admitting it to someone else. I don't like to be vulnerable to most people. But, when I am honest and admit my faults to someone, it feels so much better than keeping it all bottled up inside. When I do that, I realize I'm not as bad as I think I am. This step also forces me to talk with my Higher Power. Everything I'm carrying with me suddenly all goes away, not only because I talked about it but also because I was honest. Step Five forces me to stop lying to myself, and it helps me get to the root of the problem that maybe I wouldn't have realized otherwise.

~ A member shares ~

Three people I have to share with is me, my Higher Power and another person. My Higher Power is the easiest. I know I can talk with Him whenever I want to and his ears are open to listen. Another person and I will be a little harder. I don't really open up to people. No one knows about my sister. I just don't accept things sometimes. I try, but sometimes I just can't.

Activity 1:

Write a definition of the key words and share what they mean to me.

Admitted -

Exact nature

Wrongs

Activity 2:

1. Can I be honest, open, and willing? Explain.
2. How do I feel about sharing myself with my Higher Power?
3. How do I feel about admitting my wrongs to myself?
4. How do I feel about admitting my wrongs to another person?
5. How will I choose a trustworthy to share my story?

Activity 3: Complete the sentences below.

1. I admitted to God what I really learned about myself in the Fourth Step by...
2. When I admitted to myself what I have learned about myself I...
3. When I admitted to someone else what I have learned about myself I...

Activity 4:

1. How has Step Five helped me in my Narateen journey?

APPROVAL DRAFT - NOT FOR USE IN MEETINGS

Step Six: Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Use the definitions below while working Step Six

Entirely ready: completely prepared

Remove: take away

All: every one

Defects of character: traits that cause harm

~ A member shares ~

Most of the time, when I get in a bad mood or am just in a negative mood, I'll find a book. I also have my creative writing stuff, and I will write a poem. I will proofread, edit, and then date it. That usually takes an hour, depending upon how many poems I write or how long. After that very long process, I am in a calmer mood and feel much better. Afterward, it feels like I have gotten rid of that defect (mood).

~ A member shares ~

Just because you worked the other steps, and now you know all of your defects of character, doesn't mean you are ready to get rid of them. I am just now getting to the point where I am ready to get rid of them. It almost feels like you are getting rid of a part of you. In my eyes, one of my biggest defects is my temper. I want to turn it over to God. I get to the point where I am ready to, but then I don't. It's not that I like that part of me, but I keep holding onto it. I know by turning it over, I will feel so much better. I am pretty much ready. I know I will be soon. I am working on it.

~ A member shares ~

Sometimes I get upset too easily and over dumb stuff. When that happens, I like to go into my room, think it out, and cool off. Then I realize it really wasn't that bad. This really helps me. I think God helped me do this and is also helping me with all my other defects of character.

~ A member shares ~

I can't remove my defects, or God can't, until I know what they are. I come to terms with them. I have a lot of defects, but that is OK. One day at a time won't happen overnight. For me, I like going on my roof to breathe and chill out.

Activity 1:

Write a definition of the key words and share what they mean to me.

Entirely ready

Remove

All

Defects of character

Activity 2:

1. Review the list of traits I wish to improve upon.
2. How do these traits make me feel about myself?
3. How do these traits inhibit my recovery?
4. Which traits do I feel that I have the ability to change?

Activity 3:

1. Am I ready to have God remove/improve these traits?
2. How do I go about having Him remove/improve these traits?
3. Will these traits be permanently gone? Explain.

Activity 4:

1. Am I now getting to know myself better? Explain.
2. Am I making progress in my recovery? Explain.

Step Seven: Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Use the definitions below while working Step Seven

Humbly: simply, respectfully

Remove: be freed from

Shortcomings: traits that cause harm

~ A member shares ~

Something I would like to have removed would be saying I'm sorry about almost everything and to everyone and sometimes to objects. I saw something that suggested instead of saying "I'm sorry," say "thank you." For example, instead of saying "sorry for talking so much," I could say "thank you for listening to me." Doing this, I think, could help remove this particular shortcoming.

~ A member shares ~

When asking God to remove my shortcomings, it's always more about my actions. I'm now ready to have God remove my anger. By that I mean, when I'm angry I talk to my Higher Power, and I feel a lot better. When I am ready for God to remove it, He will. It never fully goes away, but knowing that God knows I want this gone, helps me cope with my feelings.

Activity 1: Write a definition of the key words and share what they mean to me.

1. Humbly
2. Remove
3. Shortcomings

Activity 2:

1. What does being humble mean to me?
2. Why must I be honest in working the steps?
3. How does honesty help me to get humble?

Activity 3:

1. Are shortcomings and defects of character I discovered in Step Four the same thing?
2. How can my previous step work help me with this step?

3. Complete this sentence. My shortcomings make me feel...How do I know I'm entirely ready to have my shortcomings removed?
4. How can this step help me to turn my negative traits into positive ones?
5. How will this step help me in my recovery?

APPROVAL DRAFT - NOT FOR USE IN MEETINGS

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

Use the definitions below while working Step Eight

List: a written record of those we make amends to

All: everyone

Harmed: injured, hurt, damaged

Willing: eager, prepared to do something

Amends: make up for a wrong doing

~ A member shares ~

Hearing, thinking, and reading about Step Eight made me realize at least two things:

- 1. Not only should other people be on my list, but also I should be on my list. Even if it is the tiniest thing, it could become something bigger. The faster you realize you hurt yourself, the faster you can heal.*
- 2. Don't rush to apologize to those you have hurt. If you do apologize immediately, then it's like when your parent makes you say you are sorry to someone, but you don't really mean it; it is just words being said that mean nothing to anyone. You have to give it some thought.*

~ A member shares ~

In the moment, I don't realize I am hurting people. I say things I don't mean in the heat of the moment. This step makes me sit and think about it. When I realized how many people I may have hurt, including myself, I wanted to make amends immediately. I never want people to be hurt by something I did. Therefore, this step is most important to me. After making the list, and it getting longer than I would like it to, I wrote down everything I want to make amends for, and I am ready to do that.

~ A member shares ~

You need to think before you do something. If you don't, you could hurt someone. When you are wrong or hurt someone, you need to make amends because hating someone/something takes more energy than forgiveness.

Activity 1:

1. What does it mean to harm someone?
2. Explain what willing to make amends means.

Activity 2:

1. Who should be the first person on my list? Why?
2. Who else should be on my list?
3. What were the feelings I had about the people I put on my list? (anger, resentment, made me feel sad/uncomfortable)
4. When I make my list, it is helpful to put what I did to harm them next to the name (yelled, ignored, was impatient, was mean, called them names)
5. What tools of my program can I use to prepare this list? (prayer, meditation, journaling)

Activity 3:

Make the list with following column headings:

Name	Harm I Caused	Tools of Program Used to Recognize This Harm	Can I Make Amends?	Ideas for making amends

Activity 4:

1. Have I been honest about the people I have included on my list? Explain
2. Have I included myself on this list? Explain

Step Nine: Made direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others.

Use the definitions below while working Step Nine

Direct: to the person you have harmed

Amends: make up for wrong

Whenever possible: doable

Injure: hurt

What does "direct amends" mean?

Make a list of ways to make amends.

~ A member shares ~

When I think about the Ninth Step, I think about how difficult it is for me, because I have difficulty speaking about a lot of things. Therefore, doing this step is difficult, but the feeling after making amends must be worth it. That's what motivates me to go and do this step. People who have trouble with this step should think about how good they will feel after making amends.

~ A member shares ~

It takes more energy to hate someone than to make amends with that person.

Activity 1:

Using the list made in Step 8, fill in the last column

Name	Harm I Caused	Tools of Program Used to Recognize This Harm	Can I Make Amends?	Ideas for making Amends

Activity 2:

1. Why is it necessary to make amends to the people on my list?
2. Will I be able to make amends to everyone on the list? If not, why?
3. What do I do if it isn't possible to get in touch with someone on my list?
4. Write a letter to someone on your list that you cannot make amends to in person.
Why can be helpful to consult with a sponsor before making your amends?

Activity 3:

1. How does making amends make me feel?
2. How has this step helped me to feel better about myself?

APPROVAL DRAFT - NOT FOR USE IN MEETINGS

Step Ten: Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

Use the definitions below while working Step Ten

Continued: keep going/doing

Personal inventory: private life, character, conduct and motives

Wrong: error, mistake

Promptly: right away, without delay

Admit: acknowledge

~ A member shares ~

Although I don't think about my defects often, Step Ten helps when I do. The main thing it helps with is my anger. I know my anger has gotten worse lately. Since working the steps, Step Ten is in my brain. So when I do get angry I realize it faster and can remove myself from the situation.

~ A member shares ~

I look at my personal inventory and compare myself to other people. I realize I don't need to compare myself to anyone else because I'm where I need to be. Once I take time to think about my inventory, I try to work on my defects to improve myself.

Activity 1:

Write a definition of the key words and share what they mean to me.

Continued

Personal Inventory

Wrong

Promptly

Admit

Activity 2: In Step Four we learned traits on which we needed to work. Will I include these traits in my personal inventory? If so, why? If not, why?

1. If I am mean to someone, how quickly do I make amends?
2. Do I hold a grudge? How does that make me feel? How do I think it makes the other person feel?
3. How often should I review my personal inventory, good and bad? Why?

Activity 3: In steps Eight and Nine we made a list of people we had harmed and to whom we made amends.

1. In Step Ten, we learn to make amends quickly so we don't accumulate another list. What do I think about that?
2. How does Step Ten help me feel good about myself?
3. What have I done today that makes me happy?
4. How am I different today compared to before I started working the steps?

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 for us and the power to carry that out.

Use the definitions below while working Step Eleven

Sought: searched with purpose, go after

Prayer: talking to your Higher Power

Meditation: listening to your Higher Power

Conscious: awareness

Only: exclusively

His will: what my Higher Power wants

Power: ability to do something

Carry out: follow through

~ A member shares ~

As a kid, after having gone to church, I started to pray. I never got anything I prayed for, so I assumed God didn't care and stopped praying. After going to Narateen meetings, I started to pray again because I realized I don't have to pray to God. It can be something else. My Higher Power might not always do something to help, knowing I can handle it by myself.

~ A member shares ~

If you ask for help, you get it. You can't assume that you will get help without asking. I used to just wait and wait for someone to ask me if I needed help, and I would say no. Now I know I need to ask my Higher Power, and He will listen and help. All we need to do is ask.

Activity 1:

Write a definition of the key words and share what they mean to me.

Prayer

Meditation

Conscious

Only

His will

Power

Carry out

Activity 2:

1. How does prayer help me with this step?
2. How have my prayers changed since I started practicing this program?
3. What is the purpose of meditation in this step?
4. How do I practice meditation?

Activity 3:

1. How often do I need to do this step? Why?
2. Has my understanding of a Higher Power changed as I've worked the steps? How?
3. Have I learned to let my Higher Power direct my decisions? Explain.

Activity 4:

1. Have there been any situations where I noticed my Higher Power's guidance? Explain.
2. How does this step help me feel powerful?

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

Use the definitions below while working Step Twelve

Spiritual Awakening: self-discovery, becoming aware, ah ha moment

Result: outcome

Tried: make an effort

Carry the message: share the Nar-Anon program with others

Practice: keep at it

Principles: values to live by

All our affairs: in all we do, everything

~ A member shares ~

After having gone to Narateen meetings, I don't think I'll ever be the same. They have helped me in so many ways. I don't think I'm as confused about certain things as I used to be. When I am talking about addiction or hear someone talking about it, I don't just say, "Oh that stinks. Why would someone do that to the people around them?" I now realize it isn't their fault they have an addiction. It's a disease they have, and everyone deals with it differently. I get that now.

~ A member shares ~

I had a spiritual awakening at a time in my life when my sister was using drugs. I lost faith in my Higher Power because I thought, "If God chooses how our life comes out, why would people be addicted to drugs?" I prayed to my Higher Power, and He helped my sister. Both my sisters happened to be at the beach at the same time. They hung out together for the weekend. When they came home, my addicted sister went to rehab. Although she went out afterwards, she still made memories and was okay for a while.

Activity 1: Write a definition of the key words and share what they mean to me.

Spiritual

Awakening

Result

Tried

Carry the message

Practice

Principles

All our affairs

Activity 2:

1. What is a spiritual awakening?
2. Have I had a spiritual awakening? If so, please share.
3. If I have not had a spiritual awakening, how might I experience it?
4. How would I know if I had a spiritual awakening?

Activity 3:

1. What message would I carry to others that this step suggests?
2. What are ways in which I can carry this message to others?

Activity 4:

1. What are the principles that I practice?
2. How do I practice these principles in other aspects of my life?

Activity 5:

1. What benefits have I received from working these Twelve Steps?
2. Now that I am aware of the benefits of the Twelve Steps, how does this make me feel?

Challenge:

1. How are you planning to share the message?
2. How can you use what you have learned to carry the message to others?



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