

The Program

Here are the exercise questions again, without my answers so that you can think about your own.

Step 1: Are you a bit fucked?

- 1** What do I want to change?
- 2** What pain or fear do I associate with change in this area?
- 3** What pleasure am I getting out of not changing?
- 4** What will it cost me if this doesn't change?
- 5** What are the benefits I could gain by having this changed?
- 6** How has this problem placed my important relationships in jeopardy?
- 7** Have I lost respect/reputation due to this problem?
- 8** Has this problem made my home life unhappy?
- 9** Has this problem caused any type of illness?
- 10** Do I turn to the type of person that enables me to practise this behaviour or to companions who enable me?
- 11** What part of the problem do the people who care about me object to most?
- 12** What type of abuse has happened to me and others due to this problem?
- 13** What have I done in the past to try to fix, control or change this area of my life?
- 14** What are the feelings, emotions and conditions I have tried to alter or control with this problem?
- 15** Right now, if this is such an important area in my life, why haven't I changed?
- 16** Am I willing to do whatever it takes to have this changed, healed or transformed?

Step 2: Could you not be fucked?

- 1** Do I believe that I need to change?
- 2** Do I accept that change means I must think/feel/act differently?
- 3** Do I know people who have made comparable changes that seem quite radical?
- 4** Is this change likely to be easy and driven by the ideas I already have, techniques I already use and support systems that I already have access to?
- 5** What is my conception of a power greater than me? Is it nature? Is it consciousness beyond the individual? Is it the power of people coming together in the pursuit of a noble goal? Describe your personal understanding of a power greater than yourself.
- 6** Do I have doubt and prejudice about spirituality and the power of a new perspective to solve my problem? What are those doubts and prejudices?

Mantra

'Limitless consciousness, source of all light and love, please lay aside for me doubt and prejudice and give me willingness to believe that you can solve this problem, too, the way you have solved other problems.'

- 1** What is my conception of a personal Higher Power? Describe it here.
- 2** Can I now accept there is a power greater than me at work in this cosmos?
- 3** Do I know people who have changed their lives and live according to spiritual principles who are connected, happy and real?
- 4** Is this how I'd like to be?
- 5** Do I know people who have engaged with a new Power and used these techniques to induce revolutionary change in their way of living and thinking and have found a new peace and direction?
- 6** Is this what I want?

- 7 To reiterate, is this how my life is now? Or am I struggling with relationships? My emotions?
- 8 Do I lack purpose and drive?
- 9 Am I creating conflict and chaos?
- 10 Even beyond my primary addictive behaviour (drink/drugs/food/sex/spending/technology) are things hard?
- 11 Am I getting depressed?
- 12 Am I afraid?
- 13 Am I helping others?
- 14 In other areas of my life have I exhibited behaviours that if repurposed could serve me now? Like for example my belief that I can make myself feel better with drugs or sex or tech or the right relationship or job or some chocolate?
- 15 Have I kind of worshipped drugs or my phone or sex or shopping?
- 16 Can I see that this impulse applied to something less mundane, materialistic and shallow may motivate change?
- 17 In fact this problem I have could be seen as the misdirection of a positive impulse if I look at it differently, couldn't it?
- 18 Can I connect to this love within me that I sometimes misdirect?
- 19 Can I connect to the love outside of me that I see in others?
- 20 Can I connect to this Power that I see elsewhere in my life?

Mantra (put this into your own words)

'Divine Power, Supreme Truth, love within and without, guide me to a new way of being. Help me to put aside all previous thoughts and prejudices that I may be open to a "New Way". I ask the creative power deep within me to guide me towards the person I was always meant to be, to seek out relationships and experiences that will move me closer to this Truth.'

Step 3: Are you, on your own, going to ‘unfuck’ yourself?

- 1** Am I feeling unsatisfied, limited, empty or anxious in my relationships?
- 2** Do my feelings lead me to make (or not make) decisions, take (or not take) actions, or say (or not say) things that I then regret?
- 3** Am I suffering from misery, depression, unhappiness, or low self-worth?
- 4** Am I suffering from anxiety, doubt or perfectionism? Am I projecting imaginary future scenarios then worrying about them?
- 5** Is it becoming clear to me that my plan is not working?
- 6** Is it clear that I need a new plan that is not sourced from my own head and drives if I am to find fulfilment?
- 7** This plan of mine is like a mind virus of self-obsession. Can I surrender it? Am I open to a different plan? Am I open to being guided?

We are trapped in a way of ‘being’ that is not working. Here are some categories which will help us amend our perspective. We can usually identify the root of pain and spiritual discomfort within these areas.

- 1** Pride (what I think you think about me)
- 2** Self-esteem (what I think about myself)
- 3** Personal relations (the script I give others)
- 4** Sexual relations (as above, pertaining to sex)
- 5** Ambitions (what I want in life, my overall vision of my ‘perfect’ self)
- 6** Security (what I need to survive)
- 7** Finances (money and how it affects my feelings)

It is good to be reminded of these categories as we undertake Step 4.

Step 4: Write down all the things that are fucking you up or have ever fucked you up and don't lie, or leave anything out.

Use the table on the next page.

- 1** Where did I make a Mistake?
- 2** Where have I been Selfish?
- 3** Where was I Dishonest?
- 4** Where was I Self-seeking?
- 5** Where was I Afraid?
- 6** Where am I to Blame?
- 7** Where am I at Fault? *
- 8** Where was I Wrong?

* Here are some example 'defective characteristics' which are often present when we are resentful: Arrogance, Avarice, Contempt, Cowardice, Cruelty, Disobedience, Distrust, Domination, Envy, Gluttony, Impatience, Impenitence, Indifference, Intolerance, Jealousy, Lack of discipline, Laziness, Lust, Malice, Over-ambition, Over-sensitivity, Presumption, Pride, Prudery, Pugnacity, Retaliation, Self-pity, Sentimentality, Shame (hurt pride), Snobbery, Timidity, Vanity, Violation of confidence, Wastefulness.

I Resent	Because	This Affects My

My Part

Choose which of these are relevant for the third column:

- Pride
- Self-esteem
- Personal relations
- Sexual relations
- Ambitions
- Security
- Finances

Choose which of these are relevant for the fourth column:

- Mistakes
- Selfishness
- Dishonesty
- Self-seeking
- Fear
- Blame
- Fault
- Wrong

Step 5: Honestly tell someone trustworthy about how fucked you are.

Before beginning this step, ask yourself:

- 1** Have I been entirely honest in this inventory?
- 2** Have I been clear about the motives beneath my behaviour?
- 3** Have I reached into my innermost self and asked for truth to be revealed?
- 4** Am I open to a new truth?
- 5** Am I willing to take full responsibility for my feelings, perceptions and my behaviour?
- 6** Am I willing to fully disclose the most intimate and previously concealed nature of myself to another person?

The person we choose should themselves have undertaken this process and have no investment in our life other than a desire to help us.

Ask yourself:

- 1** Why am I doing Step 5?
- 2** Why am I doing it with the person that I have chosen?
- 3** What is the function of Step 5?

Step 6: Well that's revealed a lot of fucked up patterns. Do you want to stop it? Seriously?

With each defect we identify (from the third and fourth columns), ask:

- 1** Why do I do this? How does it help me? (What do I want, or want to avoid?)
- 2** If I do not change, what will happen?
- 3** If I am willing to change, how could my life improve?
- 4** Do I want this defect removed? Am I ready to let go?
- 5** If the answer is 'no', ask yourself: how is my life unmanageable due to my powerlessness to change this attitude/thought/behaviour pattern?

Ask yourself:

- 1** Am I willing to let go of my egocentric, self-centred world view?
- 2** Am I willing to tear up my plan?
- 3** Am I willing to stop blaming others? To let go of resentment?
- 4** Am I willing to use this program as the new plan for my life?
- 5** Am I willing to accept that there are more powerful forces than me in the universe and that in this context my motives and notions are ridiculous?

Step 7: Are you willing to live in a new way that's not all about you and your previous, fucked up stuff? You have to.

Ask yourself:

- 1** What do I want to change?
- 2** Am I going to change it?
- 3** Do I commit to change?

Step 8: Prepare to apologize to everyone for everything affected by your being so fucked up.

Go through your Step 4. Anybody, or any institutions you have harmed, add to a list. The fourth column, 'Wrongs' section will be of particular use.

Then for each item or person on the list note the name and:

- 1** What I did that was harmful
- 2** What should I have done instead
- 3** Who suffered as a result, and how

Once you have completed the list and the above questions you have to ask yourself in each case:

Am I willing to make amends to this person?

Step 9: Now apologize. Unless that would make things worse.

Ask yourself:

- 1** Am I willing to change?
- 2** Am I willing to be changed in ways I may not be aware of or in control of?
- 3** Am I willing to address each harm that I am aware of?
- 4** Am I being completely honest with my mentor about the nature of the harm?
- 5** Have I thoroughly prepared each amend with a mentor?
- 6** Am I willing to complete all my amends using creative solutions for individuals I can't meet?
- 7** Is finishing my amends a top priority in my life?
- 8** Have I finished my amends? Am I avoiding some?

Step 10: Watch out for fucked up thinking and behaviour and be honest when it happens.

A written Step 10 can be completed by using the Step 4 table on a daily basis.

Consider:

- 1** Am I committed to daily growth? How do I demonstrate this?
- 2** Am I prepared to live a truly awakened life and to be alert to the inevitable deviations that will come?
- 3** Am I willing to hold myself accountable to another human being whenever I am disturbed?
- 4** Can I be self-compassionate and trust in my concept of a Higher Power?
- 5** Am I willing to make amends whenever I cause harm?
- 6** Do I consciously try to live a life contrary to the defective impulses that previously governed my life?

Step 11: Stay connected to your new perspective.

Ask yourself:

- 1** Do I accept that the material and mechanical world as I see it is not objective reality? (Is there stuff I don't know, that no one knows?)
- 2** Do I accept that there is an aspect of my consciousness that is not governed by primal biochemical drives and biographical, social and familial inculcation? (Is there more to my mind than what I've been brainwashed into and what the animal instinct wants?)
- 3** Am I willing to live in service of this Higher Self, this Ulterior Realm? (Do I want to be more than a tangle of greed, need and fear?)

Create your own incantation, your own 'tune-in code' and use it daily.

E.g. *I know I cannot be happy pursuing instinct and will. I devote myself to channelling love, to serving beauty.*

Step 12: Look at life less selfishly, be nice to everyone, help people if you can.

- 1** What are your motivations right now? Is it to get something? Prestige? Power? Glory?
- 2** Have you done anything for anyone else today? Especially without being 'found out'?
- 3** Have you meditated and connected?
- 4** Have you called anyone else for help? Have you prayed?

Consider:

- 1** Have I experienced a deep change in my thinking, feeling and behaviour?
- 2** Am I willing to share my life to help those I encounter?
- 3** How can I particularly help others?
- 4** Do I balance my life between helping others, self-care, relationships and work?
- 5** How can I improve?
- 6** Do I put this program before all else?
- 7** Do I transmit this new life, this recovered life or my old ideas, my old egoic plan?
- 8** Do I continually ask that I may be useful to others?

Resources

A note on severe addiction issues

I can attest personally that the 12 Steps work with severe addiction issues, if you have them, you should engage with the appropriate support group. There are now hundreds of 12 Step organizations with objects of unwitting fetishization: alcohol, narcotics, gambling, food, sex, hoarding.

A quick online search will help you find the right resource in your area. Here are a few places to start:

AA contact details

Alcoholics Anonymous UK

www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

0800 9177 650

Alcoholics Anonymous Australia

www.aa.org.au

1300 222 222

Alcoholics Anonymous New Zealand

www.aa.org.nz

0800 229 6757

Alcoholics Anonymous South Africa

www.aasouthafrica.org.za

0861 435 722

NA contact details

Narcotics Anonymous UK

www.ukna.org

0300 999 1212

Narcotics Anonymous Australia

www.na.org.au

1300 652 820

Narcotics Anonymous New Zealand

www.nzna.org

0800 628 632

Narcotics Anonymous South Africa

www.na.org.za

083 900 69 62

GA contact details

Gamblers Anonymous UK

www.gamblersanonymous.org.uk

Gamblers Anonymous Australia

www.gaaustralia.org.au

Gamblers Anonymous New Zealand

www.gamblinghelpline.co.nz

Gamblers Anonymous South Africa

www.gasouthafrica.wordpress.com

DA contact details

Debtors Anonymous UK

www.debtorsanonymous.org.uk/

0207 1177 533

Debtors Anonymous Australia & New Zealand

www.debtorsanonymous.asia

CODA contact details

Co-Dependents Anonymous UK

www.coda-uk.org

Co-Dependents Anonymous Australia & New Zealand

www.ozcoda.webs.com

Co-Dependents Anonymous South Africa

www.codasouthafrica.co.za

Literature

There is a lot out there but here are some classic 12 Step books:

Alcoholics Anonymous

- *Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book*
- *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*
- *Daily Reflections: A Book of Reflections by A.A. Members for A.A. Members*

Narcotics Anonymous

- *It Works: How and Why*
- *Just for Today: Daily Meditations for Recovering Addicts*