
District 41 Messenger

WINTER –2019/2020

Addison – Bensenville – Elmhurst - Lombard – Oakbrook Terrace
Villa Park – Wood Dale

The 12 Steps ...STEP 10

Editor Note: This series is focusing on the The Twelve Steps of our Fellowship ...One Step at a Time. This month we explore Step Ten. We urge you to get out your Big Book and the 12 & 12 to read and comprehend what our founders have written in more detail.

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

▣ The Twelve Step program of recovery from alcoholism rests on a notion of spirituality which is not about having the "right" beliefs. Instead, it is about daily practices which help people stay clean and sober. Step Ten is Steps Four through Nine done every day as a habit.

▣ As we continue our step work we seek to have a basis for daily living and soon realize a need to continue to take personal inventory and when we are wrong promptly admit it. It is a way to enter the plan of continuous growth. We cannot remain at a certain point. Step Ten is not really a "maintenance" step. To maintain something is to keep it "as is." We need to grow.

▣ Nothing in our universe ever stays "as is." Everything in our universe is in a constant state of change. It is either growing or it is dying. It is progressing or it is regressing. It is going forward or it is going back. Which way are we going? We seek Spiritual Progress.

▣ We have made tremendous spiritual growth through the first nine steps and we have The Promises. But if just "try" to maintain eventually we will start slipping back. We start having trouble with people. Then with ourself. Then with God. And we end up drunk all over again. We cannot stop growing in our relationship with God, with ourselves, and with other human beings.

▣ We have been running from ourselves for so long, and now we take an interest in ourselves. We begin to see what we can contribute to life, what our talents may be, what our lives are all about. We begin to consciously know when we are in a troubling or uncomfortable situation. We begin to look at our behavior and our ways of thinking. We begin to see and understand threats to our serenity.

▣ If I am wrong, and promptly admit it, I have a chance to be free.

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Motives ...Words ...Actions



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**THE KEY TO
STEP TEN IS
~CONTINUED~**

*Continued Practice
Of the Twelve Steps
On a Daily Basis.
We Grow or Deteriorate !!!*

**The Officer Said,
"You Drinking?"
I Said, "You Buying?"
We Just Laughed
And Laughed.
I Need Bail Money.**

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▣ Step Ten is the cornerstone of growth in our program. We renew our commitment and energy every day, with moment to moment attention to our behavior. We strive toward continuous self-examination and prompt correction. Development of our spiritual lives and letting go of Ego is an ongoing process. We receive a daily reprieve contingent on our spiritual condition. We are never cured of alcoholism.

▣ The task we are attempting with Step Ten is to be Awake and Aware, with Compassion, in each moment of every day. We begin to recognize the opportunities for spiritual development which are in our lives "right now." We begin to recognize the qualities of our spiritual life which are not developing. We are given the opportunity to look at the whole of our spiritual path. Investigation of our spiritual condition on a regular basis is our goal.

▣ The key to Step Ten is "continued" ..continuous practice of the steps on a daily basis. We grow or we deteriorate. We detect discomfort early and we analyze it immediately. We then work our way out of it. We learn to Pay Attention to Ourselves and spot trouble right away. The quality of our lives is up to us. The longer we wait to correct our mistakes, the more we hurt others and ourselves. If we wait too long it may become impossible to correct our mistakes, causing us further turmoil and anxiety.

▣ We are never going to be perfect every day. We are never going to be on the right side or the wrong side in every instance. With our vision we can only see so far. We ask God to direct our thinking, to help us control our thoughts and actions. Step Ten will guide us to efficient use of our daily experiences and we will learn the meaning of One Day at a Time. We are given strength for one day. We do not have to Overload.

▣ Truth (Reality) requires a life of continuous and never-ending stringent self examination. We self monitor ourselves to ensure what we say, and how we say it, reflects the Truth as accurately as we understand it.

▣ What do I need to do today to grow my recovery and keep making spiritual progress? What do I need to do today to meet my obligations and responsibilities in life? What have I done well today? What have I done poorly? What do I need to do about it? Are there any signs telling me to be careful?

▣ What are our motives when we act unskillfully toward others, or ourselves? With practice of Step Ten we can clearly see the layers of our deceptions, self justification, and craving after craving. Repurcussions of our actions continue outward until we correct them. After we have said something, or done something, we look back at how it worked out. Sometimes our motives behind rash acts or words are all mixed up. With help from our sponsor we may gain a more clear comprehension of the problem and decide what to do next.

▣ With a healthy practice of Step Ten we can once again find Joy in our lives and in our practice. We begin to inject lightness and pleasure in our lives. We live Sober, Playful, Spontaneous, Joyful lives of Bliss and Balance. We learn to enjoy pleasures without becoming addicted to them. Our goal is to live skillfully in the world with a gentleness toward others.

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Step Ten ...Cornerstone of Growth

**WHEN YOU'VE DONE
SOMETHING WRONG
ADMIT IT AND
BE SORRY. NO ONE
IN HISTORY HAS EVERY
CHOKED TO DEATH
FROM SWALLOWING
HIS PRIDE.**

via thispostcardpostcard.com

**"Mistakes are
always forgivable,
if one has the
courage to
admit them."**

**BRUCE LEE
KUSHANDWIZDOM**

**Forgiveness
Every Day Let
Five People
Off the Hook**

**Anatomy
of an Apology:**

**1. I'm sorry
2. Here's my
understanding
of how I hurt you.
3. I will never
do that again.**

How We Practice Step Ten

Embrace what we have learned in the previous steps and apply this knowledge to our daily lives. It is, simply, learning to take responsibility for ourselves and our actions.

There are two components. First, we need to be honest about where we are right now. Second, we need to be mindful of when we do something wrong and admit it promptly. This is the big picture of what happens in Step Ten. We focus on how to apply our new frame of mind at an intimate level and we constantly strive to make better decisions.

When we sit down and work on our steps, especially with our sponsor, we look at situations in retrospect and clearly see how we could have reacted more gently. We then plan for "if this happens again" and begin to explore better reactions.

Working Step Ten does not mean we can never become angry again. We do not have to feel frustrated and overwhelmed over a troubling situation. It means we learn to control our actions and emotions in a more skillful way. We now understand how our unchecked emotions and reactions can lead us back down the path we have worked so hard to leave behind.

There is not an easy way to flip the switch in our heads to suddenly become calm and reasonable in all situations. But we can practice our principles as best we can.



As Bill Sees It...

A spot check inventory taken in the midst of disturbances can be of very great help in quieting stormy emotions.

Today's spot check finds its chief application to situations which arise in each day's march. The consideration of long-standing difficulties had better be postponed, when possible, to times aside for that purpose.

The quick inventory is aimed at our daily ups and downs, especially those where people or new events throw us off balance and tempt us to make mistakes.

Daily Practice Of the 12 Steps Includes Spot Checks

Pay Attention to Yourself

GSR Meetings

Monthly GSR Meeting is held on the third Thursday of every month at 7 pm in Elmhurst Presbyterian Church 367 Spring Rd at St. Charles Rd

District 41 Elections For Committee Positions

District Committee Chair

Tom M.

Treasurer

Lydia S.

Answering Service

Maggie A.

Accessibilities

Eric Z.

Cooperation with Professional Community

Holt

Corrections

Brian L.

Literature

Ed R.

Local Committee Chair

Leroy L.

Webmaster

Jeane M.

"We make our amends quickly and then we turn our thoughts to someone we can help."

Been there—done that. Then, been there several more times, because apparently I never learn.

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☞ With the practice of Step Ten we begin to realize our limitations. We don't have to know everything or be able to answer every question presented to us. God has the answers to everything if we meditate on our struggles and listen for guidance. Take it Easy. Do not Struggle.

☞ Continuing to do anything in our lives usually means we get better at it. And so it goes with Step Ten. Nobody ever really enjoys admitting to being wrong. It's much easier to blame others. Admitting when we are wrong and promptly being accountable for our side of the street is absolutely necessary in order for us to maintain our spiritual progress. The best part of practicing the Tenth Step is the more we are exercising self-discovery, honesty, humility and reflection, the less apologies and amends we have to make to others.

☞ Acknowledging what's working and balanced may also help us pinpoint what's out of balance and NOT working. Continuing to take personal inventory isn't only about finding out when we are wrong. We can't identify times we are wrong, unless we have identified times when we have handled things 'rightly' as a basis for a comparison. Working with our sponsor in Step Ten to identify the times and situations when we do things right helps us to form a personal value system. This is as much a part of taking a personal inventory as is identifying our liabilities.

☞ What makes Step Ten different in our journey is we are no longer thinking about the past. We are coming to terms with our own truths. Now we are putting what we have learned into action. In the previous steps we learned more about how the world sees us and what our behaviors have been. We can now begin to apply such knowledge to our actions in real life. We have chosen to be better than we were and have principles to guide us.

☞ The Tenth Step is about staying awake and present in our daily lives. We observe our internal space and look for resentments, fear, selfishness and dishonesty. When these crop up, and they will, we ask God to remove them AT ONCE. We practice a code of Love and Tolerance. We cease fighting drugs, alcohol, people and circumstances. All suffering is resistance to the reality of how things are in real life. Step Ten allows us to see this and practice a moment by moment submission and acceptance of things which are not going our way. We Pay Attention to Ourselves.

District 41 Messenger is published quarterly by District 41 of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is intended as a service letter to inform district members of service opportunities, events, and experiences relevant to carrying the AA message, in and through service. Opinions expressed herein are those of the contributors and do not necessarily express or reflect the thinking of Alcoholics Anonymous, District 41, or the editor. This newsletter is a confidential document. Please do not take it to jails, treatment centers, etc.

Editor's Note: The words of guidance in this newsletter are taken from years of scribbling in notebooks after listening to meeting comments and reading books. I don't often remember exactly where comments come from, and every paragraph has a little from one place and a little from another to promote fluidity. BUT, I can make a list of some references from my book shelf. "Shift Happens" by Robert Holden, Ph.D. "Drop the Rock" by Bill P. and Todd W. "Carry this Message" by Joe McQ. "The Steps We Took" by Joe McQ "Understanding the 12 Steps" by Terrence Gorski. "Emotional Resilience" by David Viscott, Ph.d "The Spirituality of Imperfection" Kertz & Ketcham, Joe & Charles Big Book Studies and The Twelve & Twelve and The Big Book along with numerous on-line AA sites.

When we practice the Tenth Step, we are preventing toxic emotions and attitudes such as self-pity, shame and irrational fears from appearing in our lives and wreaking havoc in our recovery.

We must be diligent in working a solid program. There is no time to rest on our laurels or have the dangerous thought our recovery is complete. Recovery is a process which is never done.

Repeating the same mistakes over and over without proper amends will not do anything but keep us stuck.

We learn the art of self-restraint. We learn to respond thoughtfully instead of mindlessly. We learn to go with the flow of what life brings to us ...living and accepting life on life's terms.

(Editor Note) Information on upcoming workshops, reports, contacts, and other information can be found on our D41 website. It is the responsibility of GSRs (Group Service Representatives) to provide flyers and information to their groups. If you do not have a GSR for your group please choose your representative so they may attend the monthly meetings on the Third Thursday of every month.



Good, sober is.