

Step 10: Continue to take personal inventory, and when we are wrong, promptly admit it.

Key Principle: Daily Accountability

Step 10 helps us progress in our new, spiritually minded way of life. It's about holding ourselves accountable every day through personal evaluation, accepting what we discover, and promptly repenting. We are not perfect and will continue to make mistakes in our lives as well as in our recovery. Some of us may worry that we can't progress in our recovery unless we complete each step perfectly or live without mistakes. Step 10 protects us against the pressure to live perfectly. We are reminded that we continually need the Lord as we progress in our recovery.

In the Book of Mormon, Alma taught that a mighty change of heart takes faith in Christ's Redemption and Resurrection (see Alma 5:14–15). Using the scenario of the Judgment Day and providing multiple examples of questions we can ask ourselves, Alma emphasized the key role of honest self-appraisal in opening ourselves to Christ's redeeming power. We can apply this principle by asking the kind of searching questions that Alma suggested about our feelings, thoughts, motives, and conduct. Daily personal evaluation and the Lord's redeeming help can stop us from slipping into denial, complacency, and relapse.

The incredible process of recovery is about allowing the Lord to change our thoughts, feelings, and hearts. As a result, our behaviors will change. Those who have gone before us encouraged us to watch for pride in all its forms and to humbly take our weaknesses to Heavenly Father. Daily accountability helps us recognize when we need help and prevents us from reverting to old habits.

It's normal to have negative thoughts and feelings. When we worry or feel self-pity, anxiety, resentment, lust, or fear, we can immediately turn to the Father and ask Him to bless us with peace and perspective. We may also discover that we are still holding onto negative beliefs. We can ask our Father in Heaven to help us make an honest effort to change. In working step 10, we no longer feel the need to justify, rationalize, or blame. Our goal is to keep our hearts open to and our minds focused on the Savior and His grace.

We work step 10 by taking a daily inventory. As we plan our day, we prayerfully examine our actions and possible motives: Are we doing too much or too little? Are we taking care of our basic spiritual, emotional, and physical needs? Do we serve others? Are there any situations in our day that are hard or stressful? Do we need help from others to deal with these hard things? Do we see any old behaviors or thinking patterns? These kinds of questions help us live intentionally, strengthen our recovery, and move us closer to Jesus Christ.

We can evaluate ourselves at any time by taking time to think, ponder, and apply the steps we have learned. When we find ourselves in a moment of crisis, we can ask ourselves and God, "What character weakness in me is being triggered? What have I done to contribute to this

problem? Is there anything I can say or do without pretense that will lead to a respectful solution for me and the other person?” We can remind ourselves, “The Lord has all power. I’ll give this to Him and trust Him.”

Whenever we find ourselves taking a negative action toward another person, we can make amends as quickly as possible. It’s important to cast aside our pride and remember that sincerely saying, “I was wrong” is often just as important in healing a relationship as saying, “I love you.”

At the end of the day, we evaluate how things went. How did we do? Do we still need to counsel with the Lord about any negative behaviors, thoughts, or feelings? We can also talk to a family member, friend, sponsor, or trusted adviser to help us see things more clearly.

Of course, we will continue to make mistakes despite our best efforts. But daily accountability is a commitment to accept responsibility for these mistakes. As we examine our thoughts and actions each day, resolve them, and repent through the Savior, negative thoughts and feelings will fade away.

“Nothing is more liberating, more ennobling, or more crucial to our individual progression than is a regular, daily focus on repentance. Repentance is not an event; it is a process. It is the key to happiness and peace of mind. When coupled with faith, repentance opens our access to the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ [see 2 Nephi 9:23]” (Russell M. Nelson, “We Can Do Better and Be Better,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2019, 67).

Daily accountability, or daily repentance, helps us experience the joy and freedom the Savior offers us. We no longer live in isolation from the Lord or others. We can have the strength and faith to face difficulties and overcome them. We can rejoice in our progress and trust that practice and patience will ensure continued recovery.

Action Steps

This is a program of action. Our progress depends on consistently applying the steps in our daily lives. This is known as “working the steps.” The following actions help us come unto Christ and receive the direction and power necessary to take the next step in our recovery.

Spiritual preparation for each day

An important part of daily accountability is to plan our day, follow through on our plans, and then review how things went at the end of the day. When we deliberately do this, we are protected from drifting back into old habits.

Elder David A. Bednar counsels us to prepare our day with the Lord in the morning: “Meaningful morning prayer is an important element in the spiritual creation of each day—and precedes the temporal creation or the actual execution of the day” (“Pray Always,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2008, 41).

As we go about our day, we keep a prayer in our hearts for continued assistance and guidance. Sometimes things don't go as we planned, and we need to be flexible and continually seek Heavenly Father's help.

Elder Bednar further counsels us: "At the end of our day, we kneel again and report back to our Father. We review the events of the day" ("Pray Always," 42). As we follow up with the Lord and review our day, we can celebrate our successes and recognize where we may have fallen short. We counsel with the Lord about what we need to do to repent or make amends and how we can do better next time.

Daily repentance

"One day at a time" is a familiar phrase that means living one moment at a time. By continually taking account of our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, we have an opportunity to repent and draw closer to our Father in Heaven. As we repent, we discover the truth that repentance is not a sad, restrictive ordeal but rather a joyful and liberating experience that we look forward to embracing.

As we repent daily, we may discover additional shortcomings or remember past actions that need attention and, in some cases, restitution. It may become part of our daily repentance to refocus on earlier steps designed to remove our shortcomings or make restitution. Reviewing with our sponsors what we have learned from our efforts to repent daily can clarify what else we might need to do to fully repent. We may also need to confess to proper priesthood authority.

President Russell M. Nelson urges us to "experience the strengthening power of daily repentance—of doing and being a little better each day" ("We Can Do Better and Be Better," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2019, 67). As we humble ourselves and strive for honesty each day, we grow closer to the Savior. The Savior instructed His disciples, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). Repenting and taking up our cross to follow the Savior each day prepares us for step 11.

Study and Understanding

The following scriptures and statements from Church leaders can help in our recovery. We can use them for meditation, study, and journaling. We must remember to be honest and specific in our writing to gain the most benefit from it.

Watch our thoughts, words, and deeds

"If ye do not watch yourselves, and your thoughts, and your words, and your deeds, and observe the commandments of God, and continue in the faith of what ye have heard concerning the coming of our Lord, even unto the end of your lives, ye must perish. And now, O man, remember, and perish not" (Mosiah 4:30).

It could be dangerous or deadly if we didn't pay attention to what we were doing while driving a car. Write about being self-aware.

- How does self-appraisal help me avoid lapsing again into my addictions (and perishing)?

Create a Note

Humility and self-control

“Blessed are they who humble themselves without being compelled to be humble” (Alma 32:16).

Being willing to eliminate negative thoughts before they erupt into hurtful behavior is a way of humbling ourselves without being compelled. Write about your willingness to humble yourself. Experiment for a day with eliminating negative thoughts.

- What blessings come to me?

Create a Note

Live in the present

“The more enlightened a person is, the more he seeks the gift of repentance, and the harder he strives to free himself from sin as often as he falls short of the divine will. ... It follows that the sins of the godfearing and the righteous are continually remitted because they repent and seek the Lord anew every day and every hour” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary* [1973], 3:342–43).

One of the most beneficial effects—mentally, emotionally, and spiritually—of living the principles described in these steps is that we learn to live in the present.

- How does step 10 help me deal with life one hour at a time when necessary?

Create a Note

- How does it help me to know that I have to live these principles only one day at a time?

Create a Note

Continue repentance and forgiveness

“As oft as they repented and sought forgiveness, with real intent, they were forgiven” (Moroni 6:8).

Knowing that the Lord is willing to forgive us as often as we repent with real intent can give us courage to try again each time we fall short.

- What does it mean to me to repent and seek forgiveness with real intent?

Create a Note

Be patient

“I would that ye should be humble, and be submissive and gentle; easy to be entreated; full of patience and long-suffering; being temperate in all things” (Alma 7:23).

Whoever coined the old saying “Practice makes perfect” didn’t mention how much patience it takes to keep practicing. As we are patient and continue to make daily amends and take daily inventories, we will progress on our road to recovery.

- How does self-appraisal and making daily amends ensure that I will continue in my humility and spiritual development?

Create a Note

- How does taking an inventory at the end of each day help me overcome the tendency to hold on to anger or other hurtful emotions?

Create a Note

Lifelong improvement

“I still feel to urge upon the Latter-day Saints the necessity of a close application of the principles of the Gospel in our lives, conduct and words and all that we do; and it requires the whole man, the whole life to be devoted to improvement in order to come to knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1954], 11).

Taking these steps could be described as a “close application” of gospel principles.

- How does being willing to evaluate myself daily at every level (actions, words, thoughts, feelings, and beliefs) help me devote myself to lifelong improvement?

Create a Note

Create a Note