

Step 12: Having had a spiritual awakening through the Atonement of Jesus Christ as a result of taking these steps, we share this message with others and practice these principles in all we do.

Key Principle: Service

As we approach step 12, we acknowledge that this is not the end of our journey. As a result of working these steps, we enjoy a life of recovery through the grace and mercy of God. We testify that working through the steps one time is never enough. We found it was critical to continue working these steps, practice these principles in all areas of life, and carry the message of hope to others.

We have a message of hope for others struggling with addiction and for all people facing the challenges of mortality: God is a God of miracles, as He has always been (see Mormon 9:11, 16–19). Our lives prove that. We are each being made new through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. We can share this message best by serving others. Sharing our testimonies of His mercy and His grace is one of the most important services we can offer. President Spencer W. Kimball noted, “One of the most vital things we can do is to express our testimonies through service, which will, in turn, produce spiritual growth, greater commitment, and a greater capacity to keep the commandments” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* [2006], 87).

Bearing one another’s burdens through acts of kindness and selfless service is part of our new lives as followers of Christ (see Mosiah 18:8). The desire to help others is a natural result of spiritual awakening. Just as the sons of Mosiah desired to share the gospel with the Lamanites after their own conversion, we too may desire to share the hope and healing we have experienced through Christ’s Atonement (see Mosiah 28:1–4). We may desire to bless, help, and lift those around us. We realize the truth King Benjamin taught when he said, “When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” (Mosiah 2:17).

A natural way to serve others is to become a sponsor or to mentor others who are new to the recovery process. (Please review the “Choosing a Sponsor” document to find out more.) We inform other participants from recovery groups we attend or our local Church leaders that we would like to help as a sponsor or mentor. When we become aware of someone battling addiction, we share information about the Addiction Recovery Program. We tell them about the hope for recovery through the Savior Jesus Christ, and we invite them to attend a meeting with us.

In addition to helping those who struggle with addiction, we also serve their family members and loved ones. Oftentimes people rally around the person struggling with the addiction and neglect to attend to their loved ones. We can validate and acknowledge the difficulties they

face. We can share the hope that they can turn to the Savior and find peace and healing, regardless of whether or not their loved one chooses recovery. We can share the *Support Guide: Help for Spouses and Family of Those in Recovery* and invite them to attend a spouse and family group meeting.

As we serve others by supporting them in recovery, we need to be careful not to allow others to become overly dependent on us. Our responsibility is to encourage them to turn to Heavenly Father and the Savior for guidance and power. In addition, we should encourage them to seek support from others. Great blessings come from the Lord through Church leaders, sponsors, family members, friends, and others. We can share the “Support in Recovery” document with them, which is found in the appendix of this guide.

As we try to help others, they may not be ready to take these steps. As we share the message of recovery and hope through the Savior, we must be patient and meek. There is no place in our new lives for ego or any sense of superiority. It is helpful to remember our own captivity and how Jesus Christ has redeemed us through His mercy and grace (see Mosiah 29:20).

In our enthusiasm to help others, we strive to keep a balance between sharing the message and continuing to apply these steps in our own lives. Our primary focus must be on continuing to apply these recovery principles to ourselves. Our efforts to share these ideas with others will only be as effective as the recovery we maintain.

If we are willing, we will find many opportunities to share the spiritual principles we have learned in this program. As we bless others’ lives, our own lives are blessed. We experience the principle that President Ezra Taft Benson taught: “Men and women who turn their lives over to God will discover that He can make a lot more out of their lives than they can. He will deepen their joys, expand their vision, quicken their minds, strengthen their muscles, lift their spirits, multiply their blessings, increase their opportunities, comfort their souls, raise up friends, and pour out peace. Whoever will lose his life in the service of God will find eternal life” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Ezra Taft Benson* [2014], 42–43).

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.

Serve others

The desire to serve is a natural outcome of our healing process through the Lord. Through our recovery, we have experienced a mighty change of heart toward ourselves and others (see Alma 5:14). President Russell M. Nelson taught: “[We] truly seek to live the first and second great commandments. When we love *God* with all our hearts, He turns our hearts to the well-being of *others* in a beautiful, virtuous cycle” (“The Second Great Commandment,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2019, 97).

However, service is not always easy. Though we may want to, we cannot possibly serve everyone in need. We will continue to need direction and power from the Lord to serve others. We can pray for help to notice and identify ways He would have us serve. We can ask those around us about opportunities and needs. We may be surprised by how many opportunities are readily available to us. Serving others can be as simple as a smile, or it can be more involved like a major project. We should use wise judgement in our service to avoid going beyond our strength or capacity.

One of the best ways we can serve is to share our stories of recovery. We can continue to attend recovery meetings and testify of Jesus Christ's grace and healing power. When we were newcomers, we received hope from those who had worked the steps and found recovery before us. We now have the opportunity to share the message of recovery by telling our stories. We also share our testimony of the Savior's power when we are at church and with our family and friends.

Participate in temple and family history work

One meaningful and powerful way we can serve is through temple and family history work. This service blesses not only those who have died, but it also blesses us. President Russell M. Nelson reminded us: "While temple and family history work has the power to bless those beyond the veil, it has an equal power to bless the living. It has a refining influence on those who are engaged in it" ("Generations Linked in Love," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2010, 93). For many of us, temple and family history work is an important part of our recovery.

Some of us may not feel ready to serve in the temple. We may not feel motivated or even know where to begin with family history work. But we can decide to start. We can visit with our bishops or branch presidents about our desires to serve. Our desire to do the Lord's will and continue in our recovery can motivate us. We may need to make some changes in our lives to enter the temple. We may not even know how to do family history work, but we can ask for help. Relief Society and elders quorum presidents can help us know where to start. There are also online resources to help us at FamilySearch.org and ChurchofJesusChrist.org.

Temple and family history work provides power and strength for our recovery. "You will find not only protection from the temptation and ills of the world, but you will also find personal power—power to change, power to repent, power to learn, power to be sanctified, and power to turn the hearts of your family members to each other and heal that which needs healing" (Dale G. Renlund, "Family History and Temple Blessings," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Feb. 2017, 39). The principles in this guide lead us to follow the Savior and enjoy all the blessings He has for us, especially those found in the temple.

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.

Conversion and recovery

“True conversion is more than merely having a knowledge of gospel principles and implies even more than just having a testimony of those principles. ... Being truly converted means we are acting upon what we believe and allowing it to create ‘a mighty change in us, or in our hearts,’ [Mosiah 5:2]. ... [Conversion] takes time, effort, and work” (Bonnie L. Oscarson, “Be Ye Converted,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 76–77).

As the Lord changes our hearts through conversion and recovery, we become sources of strength to others who are just starting out on this path. The Savior told Peter, “And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:32).

- How does Sister Oscarson’s definition of conversion apply to my experience in recovery?

Create a Note

- How do I feel about strengthening others as they recover from addictive behaviors?

Create a Note

Great progress from small steps

“Be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great” (Doctrine and Covenants 64:33).

- How do I feel when I think of living these principles in all aspects of my life?

Create a Note

- How does it help me to realize that great works are done in small steps?

Create a Note

Share our testimonies and comfort others

“This is my glory, that perhaps I may be an instrument in the hands of God to bring some soul to repentance; and this is my joy.

“And behold, when I see many of my brethren truly penitent, and coming to the Lord their God, then is my soul filled with joy; then do I remember what the Lord has done for me, yea, even that he hath heard my prayer; yea, then do I remember his merciful arm which he extended towards me” (Alma 29:9–10).

We have learned that it is critical in recovery to be willing to share our testimonies of these principles.

- How will sharing my experience help me to remain strong in my recovery?

Create a Note

“[As ye] are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life—

“Now I say unto you, if this be the desire of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him, that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you?” (Mosiah 18:9–10).

Your experience with addiction helps you to empathize with those who struggle with addiction; your experience in recovery helps you to comfort them.

- How has my desire to stand as a witness of God increased since I have followed the steps of recovery?

Create a Note

Serve despite imperfection

“Except in the case of His only perfect Begotten Son, imperfect people are all God has ever had to work with” (Jeffrey R. Holland, “Lord, I Believe,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2013, 94).

“None of us have perfect lives or perfect families; I certainly don’t. When we seek to empathize with others who *also* experience challenges and imperfections, it can help them feel that they are not alone in *their* struggles. *Everyone* needs to feel that they really *do* belong and *are* needed in the body of Christ” (J. Anette Dennis, “His Yoke Is Easy and His Burden Is Light,” *Liahona*, Nov. 2022, 81).

Sometimes we wonder if we are ready to share recovery with others because we are not yet practicing these principles perfectly.

- How does knowing that the Savior works through imperfect people help me become more willing to share my experience with recovery?

Create a Note

The power of God unto salvation

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Romans 1:16).

- What are my thoughts and feelings as I look back at my spiritual transformation throughout the recovery process?

Create a Note

- Am I reluctant to share my experience in recovery? If so, why?

Create a Note

“Go your way whithersoever I will, and it shall be given you by the Comforter what you shall do and whither you shall go.

“Pray always, lest you enter into temptation and lose your reward.

“Be faithful unto the end, and lo, I am with you. These words are not of man nor of men, but of me, even Jesus Christ, your Redeemer, by the will of the Father” (Doctrine and Covenants 31:11–13).

The scriptures are full of guidance to help us maintain a spiritual way of life that will lead us back to God.

- What specific guidance do I find in these verses?

Create a Note

Create a Note