

CoDA-Tulsa – Melody Beattie “Codependents Guide to the 12 Steps”

STEP 1, Exercise 1

“...We admitted we were powerless over others – than our lives had becomes unmanageable...”

1. Have you been trying to exert power or influence where you may, in reality, have none? Have you been trying to control someone or something, trying harder and harder with less and less beneficial results?

WHAT have you been trying to control?

WHO have you been trying to control?

RESULTS?

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STEP 1, Exercise 2

“...We admitted we were powerless over others – than our lives had becomes unmanageable...”

2. Who or what in your life is making you feel crazy & causing you stress? Whom do you feel victimized by? Who do you feel is now controlling you, your emotions, or some other area of your life? What situations, feelings, or realities have you been running from, denying or avoiding?

WHAT is making you crazy? Causing you stress?

WHO do you feel victimized by? Who is controlling you, your emotions or some other area of your life?

WHAT have you been running from, denying, or avoiding?

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STEP 1, Exercise 3

“...We admitted we were powerless over others – than our lives had becomes unmanageable...”

3. What would you have to face in your own life if you stopped trying to control someone or something? What might happen if you stopped allowing someone or something to control you?

WHAT would you have to face if you stopped trying to control?

WHAT might happen?

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STEP 1, Exercise 4

“...We admitted we were powerless over others – than our lives had becomes unmanageable...”

4. What are some areas in your life that may reflect unmanageability? What is your current condition in these areas: emotions, finances, spirituality, physical health, and career? What are you doing for fun, pleasure and enjoyment?

What in your life may reflect unmanageability?

Emotions

Finances

Spirituality

Physical Health

Career

Doing for FUN

Doing for PLEASURE.

Doing for ENJOYMENT.

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STEP 1, Exercise 5

“...We admitted we were powerless over others – than our lives had becomes unmanageable...”

5. What is the current state of your relationships with these people: Family, Friends, and Co-Workers? Do you have any relationships, or are you feeling alone and isolated.

Family?

Friends?

Co-Workers?

Relationships you have.

Are you feeling alone or isolated?

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STEP 1, Exercise 6

“...We admitted we were powerless over others – than our lives had becomes unmanageable...”

6. Does your mind feel clear and consistent? Who are you holding responsible for your emotions, finances, and health? Who are you holding responsible for the state of your relationships?

Mind clear and consistent?

WHO are you holding responsible for your emotions, finances or health?

WHO are you holding responsible for the state of your relationships?

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STEP 1, Exercise 7

“...We admitted we were powerless over others – than our lives had becomes unmanageable...”

7. What are you doing in your life that you feel resentful about? What do you feel you have to do but don't want to do? In what areas of your life do you feel you have no choices, no options? Who or what is trapping you? Who do you most want to say something to? Why can't you say it?

What you are doing you feel resentful about?

WHAT do you HAVE to do you don't' want to do?

WHERE do you have no options, no choices?

WHO or WHAT is trapping you?

WHO do you most want to say something to?

WHY can't you say it?

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STEP 1, Exercise 8

“...We admitted we were powerless over others – than our lives had becomes unmanageable...”

8. What is the particular incident that propelled you to begin attending a 12 Step group? If attending for a while, what is the issue that has been plaguing you most recently? Who or what are you most worried about? When was the last time you did something loving and nurturing for yourself? Is there someone in your life that you feel is causing you misery? Do you feel that if she or she behaved differently, would you be happy?

WHAT incident propelled you to a 12 Step Group? - WHAT issue has been plaguing you?

WHO or WHAT are you most worried about?

Last time you did something nurturing/loving for self?

Is there SOMEONE causing you misery? If she/he behaved different, would you be happy?

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STEP 2, Exercise 1

“...Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity...”

1. What are the activities that bring you hope and help you believe things are OK and will be OK? Going to meetings? Talking with recovering people? Reading recovery literature? Name those who have helped you to believe the most in your future.

What activities bring you hope?

What helps you believe things will be OK?

Name those who have helped you most.

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STEP 2, Exercise 2

“...Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity...”

2. How have your ideas changed about what it means to be restored to sanity? You're your expectations about recovery changed? What do you expect from recovery now that is different from what you expected when you first began recovering?

Changes in your ideas about being restored to sanity?

Have your expectations about recovery changed?

What do you expect from recovery now that is different from what you expected when you first began recovering?

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STEP 2, Exercise 3

“...Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity...”

3. For now, how do you define a Power greater than yourself? Do you believe that power cares about you?

Define a Power Greater than Yourself.

Do you believe that Power cares about you? How do you know?

What is a reasonable plan of self-care for you to help you continue to believe that recovery can, and will, work for you? Look again at your ideas in question 1 above.

What should you include in a Self-care plan to help you believe in recovery?

What brings you hope? What helps you believe things will be OK?

Name those who have helped you.

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STEP 2, Exercise 4

“...Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity...”

4. What has been done for others in recovery that you would like to happen for yourself? Do you believe that is possible?

What done for others would you like to happen for you?

Do you believe this is possible? How? Why?

Make a list of areas in your life where you would like to be restored. Your goals will be more effective if they center around restoring your own life rather than someone else's.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

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STEP 3, Exercise 1

“...Made a decision to turn our will & our lives over to the care of God as we understood God...”

1. To remember this step, write an affirmation such as “I have turned my life and my will over to the care of God today. All is well”.

Write your affirmation(s)

Write your affirmation(s)

Write your affirmation(s)

If you knew.....

...that all was well and on schedule in your life today, how would you feel?

...that things were being managed by a Power greater than yourself in a way that would work out in your best interests, how would you act differently?

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STEP 3, Exercise 2

“...Made a decision to turn our will & our lives over to the care of God as we understood God...”

2. If you knew that you had no power to control events, outcomes, or a particular person, how would you behave differently? What would you say or do? What would you stop saying or doing? What would you do differently for yourself in order to enjoy your own life now, to live in the present moment?

How would you behave differently?

What would you do or say?

What would you stop doing or saying?

What would you do differently for yourself in order to enjoy your own life now, to live in the present moment?

What would you do today with your life?

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STEP 3, Exercise 3

“...Made a decision to turn our will & our lives over to the care of God as we understood God...”

3. If you weren't allowing a particular circumstance to control you, or if you weren't trying to control that circumstance – if you just let it be and accepted it as okay for the present moment how would you feel? If you weren't fighting with or resisting this circumstance what would you be doing? How would you be feeling?

If you just let it be how would you feel?

If you weren't fighting it what would you be doing?

How would you be feeling?

Taking this Step often puts you in touch with yourself. Listen to yourself. Write about what you feel, want, need, and think. Then pick up the phone and share who you are with someone safe, someone you trust. Talk in a way that reflects self-responsibility, not victimization. Don't ask them to rescue you. Ask them to listen and accept you as you are.

What do you feel?

What do you want?

What do you need?

What do you think?

Make notes here about what you want to say:

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STEP 3, Exercise 4

“...Made a decision to turn our will & our lives over to the care of God as we understood God...”

4. What is the most loving, most nurturing thing available to you right now you can use to take care of yourself and enjoy life? What will you do with it.

Most loving and nurturing thing(s)

What will you do with it?

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STEP 4 – Exercise 1

“...Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves...”

Old beliefs do you carry from your past.

What dysfunction(s) did you grow up in and around in your family origin?

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STEP 4 – Exercise 2

“...Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves...”

What old feelings do you still carry from your family of origin?

What do you most wish to let go of that you carry from your family of origin?

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STEP 4 – Exercise 3

“...Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves...”

Caretaking, controlling, repressing feelings, not dealing with feelings appropriately, manipulation, self-neglect, not taking responsibility for ourselves, worrying, constantly criticizing ourselves and our efforts, feeling that we can't do "it" well enough (whatever it is), not liking and loving ourselves, not allowing others to like and love us, not nurturing ourselves or allowing ourselves to receive the nurturing, we want and need, using denial as a coping tool, feeling victimized, allowing ourselves to be victimized, not setting boundaries, not trusting our feelings and instincts, not trusting God, not trusting life and recovery, feeling unsafe, lack of intimacy and fulfillment in relationships, earned and unearned guilt, having sex with people when we don't really want to, engaging in sexual behaviors we aren't comfortable with in order to please another, obsessing, being dependent on others, communicating poorly, dishonesty (emotionally or otherwise), not saying no when we mean no, not saying what we want and need, repressing our needs and wants, not feeling like we have a life of our own, low self-worth, believing we deserve little from people and life, perfectionism, unreasonable expectations of others, staying stuck or trapped in relationships, not owning our power with people, becoming rigid and inflexible, getting stuck in misery and negative thinking, not allow ourselves to have fun, unnecessarily depriving ourselves, expecting others to be responsible for us, martyrdom, unclear or unrealistic thinking, lack of spontaneity, fear of or inability to tackle and solve problems, negative beliefs about ourselves

Your strongest Codependent behaviors and characteristics:

Other Codependent behaviors and characteristics:

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STEP 4 – Exercise 4

“...Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves...”

People you most often fall into your Codependent behaviors and characteristics with:

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STEP 4, Exercise 5

“...Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves...”

Set a reasonable goal for doing this step and write your goal down. You don't have to be exact, but think in terms of when you might be able to get it done.

When do you think you can be through this step?

Make a list of the things that stand in your way.

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STEP 4, Exercise 6

“...Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves...”

Do you feel blocked in any area of you life? Do you think it might be helpful to do a Fourth Step on that area?

Where are you blocked in your life?

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STEP 4, Exercise 7

“...Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves...”

How have you harmed yourself in the past? Make a list.

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STEP 5 – Exercise 1

“Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”

1. Have you taken a formal Fifth Step? What was the impact of that on your life and your feelings about yourself?

Have you taken 5th Step yet? How did it feel? If not, why haven't you?

What was the impact?

What have you admitted to yourself?

Are you in the habit of sharing yourself – who you are – with other people? When as the last time you called someone because you needed to talk about something? Do you talk to people about what you're going through when you going through it, or do you want until you've resolved the incident yourself, then report it after the fact?

When was the last time you reached out to another person to talk about something you were going through? What was it? How did it go?

Do you talk to others while you're going through something or afterwards? Why?

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STEP 5 – Exercise 2

“Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”

2. Is there someone in your life now that you need to talk to? Is there something going on – a feeling, need, or an issue – that you don’t want to talk about, but need to? Is there someone you’re avoiding because you have something difficult to say?

Someone you need to talk to?

What are the feeling(s), need(s) or issue(s) you don’t want to talk about?

Is there someone you’re avoiding because you have something difficult to say? Who? What?

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STEP 5 – Exercise 3

“Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”

3. In the past week, have you treated yourself or another person badly? You may want to choose someone safe and trusted and tell that person what you have done, then tell God.

You do not have to share it with the group, but if there is something admit it to yourself by writing it down here.

Who did you mistreat?

What were the circumstances?

What do you regret doing or saying?

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STEP 5 – Exercise 4

“Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”

Each morning for the next week, when you wake up, take a moment to notice what you’re feeling. Often, we’re at our most vulnerable in those quiet moments before we begin the activity of the day. Check in with yourself emotionally. Take a moment to tell your Higher Power what you’re feeling. Tell yourself. Within the next four hours, sooner if possible, tell someone else what you were feeling. You don’t have to make a “feelings group’ out of it; just disclose honestly what you were feeling. Do this activity once more during the way – either at the end of the workday, after supper, or during quiet in the evening.

Day 1 Morning
Day 1 Evening
Day 2 Morning
Day 2 Evening
Day 3 Morning
Day 3 Evening
Day 4 Morning
Day 4 Evening
Day 5 Morning
Day 5 Evening
Day 6 Morning
Day 6 Evening
Day 7 Morning
Day 7 Evening

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STEP 6 – Exercise 1

“Were entirely ready to have God/Higher Power remove all these defects of character”

1. What are the hard-to-handle beliefs, behaviors, feelings, wants, or needs that you’re struggling with right now? You may want to begin affirming that you are becoming ready to let go of these issues.

What beliefs, behaviors, feelings, wants, needs and issues you’d like to let go of?

1.

2.

3.

4.

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19.

20.

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STEP 6 – Exercise 2

“Were entirely ready to have God/Higher Power remove all these defects of character”

2. How would it make your life different if you believed that you could just relax and let this process called recovery happen?

How would it make your life different?

What ways would it change what you do and how you live your life?

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STEP 6 – Exercise 3

“Were entirely ready to have God/Higher Power remove all these defects of character”

3. Make a list of everything you would like changed about yourself. Include on it the things you would like to stop doing, things you would like to start doing, any family-of-origin work you'd like to accomplish, things you'd like to get and have. Put everything you can think of on the list, everything you'd like to be a part of your future.

What would you like to change about yourself?

What would you like to stop doing?

What would you like to start doing?

Family of origin work you want to do?

Things you'd like to get and have.

Put this list away and let go of every thing on it.

Do you believe it's safe to trust God and this process called recovery?

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STEP 7 – Exercise 1

“Humbly asked God (Higher Power) to remove our shortcomings”

1. What are your fears about becoming changed. Write about them. Or talk about them with another person. How have you already seen yourself changed? How much of this did you actually have to do? How much were you empowered to do? Reflect on the gradual, natural nature of change in your life.

What are your fears about becoming changed?

Have you already seen yourself changed? How?

How much did you actually have to do?

How much were you empowered to do?

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STEP 7 – Exercise 2

“Humbly asked God (Higher Power) to remove our shortcomings”

2. Writing letters is a favorite tool. Write a letter to God, as you understand god. In that letter, talk about what bothers you and what you would like to see changed about you. Ask your Higher Power to help you change those things in yourself and your life that need changing. Do a creative visualization about yourself. Visualize in your mind yourself as you would like to become. See yourself doing and being all that you would like to do and be. Then let it go. Come back to now. Affirm that who you are is good. Affirm self-acceptance and self love for yourself in the present moment.

Dear God/Higher Power,

What did you visualize yourself doing and being?

Write an affirmation that who you are is good.

Write an affirmation of self-acceptance and self love for yourself in the present.

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STEP 8 – Exercise 1

“...Made a list of all persons we have harmed, & became willing to make amends to them all...”

1. Have you started your list yet? If you have not, what is stopping you?

You thoughts that are getting in your way:

What are you afraid of:

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STEP 8 – Exercise 2

“...Made a list of all persons we have harmed, & became willing to make amends to them all...”

2. Have you made a mental list of the people you believe you have harmed?

Who have you harmed?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

16.

17.

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19.

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21.

22.

23.

24.

25.

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STEP 8 – Exercise 3

“...Made a list of all persons we have harmed, & became willing to make amends to them all...”

3. Would you like peace and healing in your relationships, even in those you don't wish to maintain?
What are the barriers to healing that are still within you?

Would you like peace and healing in ALL relationships? Expectations.

Barriers within you:

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STEP 8 – Exercise 4

“...Made a list of all persons we have harmed, & became willing to make amends to them all...”

4. What are the relationships past and present, that bother you most?

Relationships that bother you most:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

16.

17.

18.

19.

20.

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STEP 9 – Exercise 1

“...Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others...”

1. Have you made direct amends to other people yet? How did this feel?

What direct amends have you made?

How did it feel?

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STEP 9 – Exercise 2

“...Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others...”

2. If you are ready, set some amends goals. For instance, name the people to whom you would like to make amends. Set a reasonable deadline and a goal for apologizing, wherever that is appropriate. Be as specific or as general as you want. You may want to make your goal “to become aware of the people I owe apologies to, then make those amends.” Or you may have a list of name and incidents and want to set a deadline for talking to these people.

Who do you want to make amends to?

1.

Deadline

2.

Deadline

3.

Deadline

4.

Deadline

5.

Deadline

6.

Deadline

7.

Deadline

8.

Deadline

Other amends goals:

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STEP 9 – Exercise 3

“...Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others...”

3. What is the relationship that is bothering you the most right now? What do you need to do to take care of yourself in that relationship? What would you say if you were free to be entirely honest with that person about your behaviors, your feelings, and what you wanted or needed? How have you discounted yourself or not owned your power in that relationship? How have you discounted or devalued the other person?

Relationship that bothers you most?

What do you need to do to take care of yourself in that relationship?

What would you say if you were entirely honest about what you needed and wanted?

How have you discounted yourself or devalued the other person? How?

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STEP 9 – Exercise 4

“...Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others...”

4. What is the biggest guilt you have right now? Using the steps as a formula, how can you deal with that, so you can be done with the guilt?

Biggest Guilt?

What can you do to be done with that guilt?

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STEP 9 – Exercise 5

“...Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others...”

5. For any amends you have made, write a self-forgiveness affirmation that helps you let go of guilt. A sample affirmation might read: *I love and accept myself. I have taken responsibility for my behavior with _____, and I am not free to let the past go.* We can also write a similar affirmation about forgiving others: *I have dealt with my feelings toward _____, and I have forgiven him or her. I have let go of my feelings toward him or her, and I allow peace and love to settle into our relationship.*

Affirmation

Affirmation

Affirmation

Affirmation

Affirmation

Affirmation

Affirmation

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STEP 9 – Exercise 6

“...Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others...”

6. Explore the concepts of your inner child. Draw a picture with your non-dominant hand to allow the inner child to express itself. You can also write a letter with your non-dominant hand. Ask the child what it is really feeling, fearing, wanting, needing, or worrying about.

Non-dominant hand picture or letter



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STEP 9 – Exercise 7

“...Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others...”

7. As you continue to explore the concepts of your inner child. Draw a picture with your DOMINANT hand showing how you would like the problem to be resolved or how you would like to be feeling. Write a letter to that child supporting, comforting, and protecting the child. In your picture and letter, assure the child within that all will be well.

Dominant hand picture

Dominant hand letter

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STEP 10 – Exercise 1

“...Continued to take personal inventory and when were wrong, promptly admitted it...”

1. How do you continue your process of self-awareness and inventorying? Did you spend time each morning or evening reviewing your day? Or do you allow your insights to happen naturally, as you go through life and recovery? Do you combine tactics? What works best for you?

How do you continue your process?

Did you spend time morning/evening reviewing day? Explain.

Do you insights happen naturally? Tactics? What works best?

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STEP 10 – Exercise 2

“...Continued to take personal inventory and when were wrong, promptly admitted it...”

2. When was the last time you caught yourself doing something you didn't feel good about? Did you take care of the issue promptly?

When? What happened?

Did you take care of the issue?

What do you plan to do try to do differently in the future?

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STEP 10 – Exercise 3

“...Continued to take personal inventory and when were wrong, promptly admitted it...”

2. Either daily or weekly, force yourself to find one thing in your life and one idea about yourself that is good. Affirm that good until it sinks in and feels real. Strive to find one thing that you like about someone who is important to you, then take the risk of telling them.

What do you like about yourself?

Write an affirmation about it.

What do you like about someone important to you?

Write what you would like to say to that person.

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STEP 10 – Exercise 4

“...Continued to take personal inventory and when were wrong, promptly admitted it...”

4. Watch for ways that fear, anger, and resentment arise in your life. Watch for beliefs underlying these feelings. Watch for ways that your anger toward yourself influences your anger and behavior toward others.

Fears?

Anger?

Resentments?

How do these effect how you treat yourself? Others?

What is the affirmation you and your inner child most need in your life today? Do you need to tell yourself that all is well, that you can slow down and take your time? Do you need to promise yourself that you will protect and take care of yourself in a particular relationship? What is the fear or idea that is bothers you most today about yourself and your life? Are you facing a stressful or fear-producing circumstance? Are you feeling inadequate about something? Create a loving, nurturing affirmation that helps you and your inner child know that your life will be fine.

Affirmation

Affirmation

Affirmation

Affirmation

Affirmation

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STEP 11 – Exercise 1

“...Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God (Higher Power) as we understand God (our Higher Power), praying only for knowledge of God’s (our Higher power’s) will for us and the power to carry that out...”

1. Have you begun the discipline of prayer in your life? What does that consist of? What are your feelings and fears about praying, about talking to God (your Higher Power)? What time of day works best for prayer? Do you have a favorite place?

Have you begun the discipline of prayer? Why or why not?

What does that (prayer) consist of?

Feelings and fears about praying

What time of day works best? Where works best?

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STEP 11 – Exercise 2

“...Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God (Higher Power) as we understand God (our Higher Power), praying only for knowledge of God’s (our Higher power’s) will for us and the power to carry that out...”

2-3. How do you meditate? Do you like meditation books? Which are your favorites? When is the best time for reading a meditation? Do you like recordings? What other activities help you relax and get in touch with yourself?

How do you meditate?

Favorite meditation books

Best time for meditation reading. Why?

Recordings? (audio or video)

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STEP 11 – Exercise 3

“...Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God (Higher Power) as we understand God (our Higher Power), praying only for knowledge of God’s (our Higher power’s) will for us and the power to carry that out...”

Have you experimented with any other forms of meditation?

Other forms of meditation you have tried:

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STEP 11 – Exercise 4

“...Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God (Higher Power) as we understand God (our Higher Power), praying only for knowledge of God’s (our Higher power’s) will for us and the power to carry that out...”

Other activities that help you get quiet, centered and peaceful/

Activities that help you relax and get in touch with yourself.

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STEP 12 – Exercise 1

“...Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other codependents and to practice these principles in all our affairs...”

1. Describe your experiences in carrying the message to others. Describe an effort that backfired or didn't work. Describe one that you believed was successful.

Experiences in carrying the message to others

An effort that backfired or didn't work

One you believed was successful

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STEP 12 – Exercise 2

“...Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other codependents and to practice these principles in all our affairs...”

2. How have you begun to teak recovery principles to areas of your life other than your primary relationships? In what areas would you like to experience healing and more growth and change? You may want to turn these into written goals.

Recovery principles used other than in your primary relationships

What areas would like healing? Growth? Change?

Written goals.

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STEP 12 – Exercise 3

“...Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other codependents and to practice these principles in all our affairs...”

3. How has your relationship with yourself changed since you began recovery? How do you treat yourself differently now? How does feel when you treat yourself well and in a nurturing, loving manner?

How has your relationship with yourself changed?

Do you treat yourself differently now? How?

How does it feel when you treat yourself well?

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STEP 12 – Exercise 4

“...Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other codependents and to practice these principles in all our affairs...”

4. Describe your experiences trying to share or explain your recovery to family members. Get feedback from someone else in recovery, someone you trust, about these experiences.

Describe experiences sharing your recovery with family

Feedback from someone else in recovery about your experiences. What did you share? What feedback did you get?

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STEP 12 – Exercise 5-6

“...Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other codependents and to practice these principles in all our affairs...”

5-6. How have you grown spiritually since you began recovery? How would you describe your spiritual awakening? How you awakened to the beauty and joy of yourself?

Have you grown spiritually? Describe process. (Slow, fast, stop and start, etc)

How would you describe your spiritual awakening?

Have you awakened to the beauty and joy of yourself? Explain how. Where do you still want to grow spiritually?