



## LEARNING MORE ABOUT RECOVERY

Personal Workbook



### INTRODUCTION

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Everyone has issues, and we're all addicted to something. But you're willing to learn. That step can change your life!

Recovery has helped tens of millions of people move on from harmful habits. It's also helped them live life better and find peace, joy, and purpose.

One step at a time.



## GETTING STARTED

This workbook is part of an Online Toolkit that will teach you about the exciting world of recovery and show how it can help you and people you know. Access that toolkit at [LifeImprovementSteps.com/Recovery](https://LifeImprovementSteps.com/Recovery), and we hope you enjoy that journey of transformation.

You may be hurting and feeling trapped and alone in your struggles. Life doesn't have to be that way! You can use this workbook on its own, but we highly suggest you use the Online Toolkit to go through the material and then answer the associated questions here. Just take these 3 steps ...

- 1. Start** - Take the Quick Assessment to get started and help you determine some of the areas where this toolkit will be helpful to you.
- 2. Learn** - Go through the 5 lessons. Watch the short video and listen to the podcast or read the article (same content as the podcast but note the links to other articles to go deeper.) Click the blue bar to see the key points that are also in this workbook.
- 3. Plan** - At the end, create a plan for some steps you can take. Pick small, achievable things you can do to help you make progress in the right direction. You can change your life in incredible ways—by taking the next right steps one day at a time.

GET  
STARTED



## QUICK ASSESSMENT

1. From 1-to-10 (10 as High), how familiar are you with a recovery lifestyle?  
How much do you know about recovery meetings?

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2. From 1-to-10, how much do you understand about the physical, emotional,  
and spiritual characteristics of addiction?

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3. If the progression into addiction often happens in a series of recognizable steps and this  
process can be reversed to lead us toward recovery instead, what opportunity does that  
present to prevent addiction and the pain it brings with it?

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4. Do you suffer from stigma some people have about addiction, and do you think  
supporting stigma is harmful to others?

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5. If you knew life after alcohol would be much happier and more content than it is now,  
would you do something about it?

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# THE LIFESTYLE OF RECOVERY

## LEARNING THAT RECOVERY IS A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE AND A GREAT WAY TO LIVE

Recovery meetings are normally useful and helpful as well as encouraging. Much of what is said offers wisdom for living life well, because recovery is about much more than addiction - it is a lifestyle!

Many life lessons are captured in the principles of recovery. You can transform your life and find more peace, joy, and purpose if you give them a try. These concepts are relevant and useful for anyone at any time.

Recovery meetings are safe and comfortable. No one is called on, and anyone can sit quietly and observe. People are real and caring. They share their experiences in an open and vulnerable way, and this is an excellent way to learn.

Anyone can use the principles of recovery as a valuable tool kit to live life better, and you don't have to wait until you hit bottom to turn things around. You can start improving your life any time and avoid the pain your habits cause now.

If someone close to you is struggling, these principles can help them take positive steps too. And for both of you, the rest of your lives can start getting better, one day and one step at a time.

### **Determining your next right steps:**

1. Do you have a habit that's hard to stop even though it has negative consequences (addiction)?

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2. Write down positive things that could come about if you began living a recovery lifestyle.

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3. What is one step you could take to learn more about the world of recovery?

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LESSON 1



## WHAT IS ADDICTION

### ACCEPTING THAT WE'RE ALL ADDICTED TO SOMETHING, BUT WE CAN GET BETTER

Are we all addicted to something? To some degree, yes. Therefore, it's worthwhile learning more about addiction and recovery so we know what we can do about it.

Emotionally, addiction is a condition when a person engages in an activity that may feel pleasurable, but the continued act becomes compulsive and interferes with ordinary life responsibilities. The good news is: addiction is treatable.

Spiritually, an idol is anything we turn to instead of God to deal with the ups and downs in life. We choose to place our focus on these idols, sometimes without being aware we are doing so. Too often, our idols become our addictions.

Addiction and compulsive behavior do not just affect "other people." They are part of all of our lives, one way or the other, and the first step forward is to accept that fact. Because we are all addicted to something, but we can get better.

Our condition is treatable if we choose the right life improvement steps to take. We all have issues, which means we can all benefit from the proven principles of recovery.

#### **Determining your next right steps:**

1. What is something you do that feels pleasurable for a while but later affects your life negatively?

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2. Think of as many things as you can that could help you deal with life in a more healthy manner.

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3. What is one life improvement step you will commit to take every day for at least a month?

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# THE BEHAVIORS OF ADDICTION AND RECOVERY

## USING THE NATURAL PROGRESSION OF BEHAVIORS TO MOVE IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

There is often a predictable progression into addiction that moves forward in a series of steps: Our *Thoughts* lead to *Considerations* which become *Attitudes* that turn into *Actions* and then *Addiction*. The good news is that we can reverse this progression in behaviors so they lead us toward recovery instead:

**Addiction** – In the midst of our powerlessness, we accept that our life is no longer manageable and is out of control. We Surrender to God and begin to make wise choices again.

**Actions** – A gradual increase in self-awareness helps us humbly face up to our issues and mistakes as we begin to take gradual steps down a road of positive Transformation.

**Attitudes** – We choose forgiveness and Empathy in our dealings with others and work to build positive relationships.

**Considerations** – Taking intentional steps of Progress, we build good habits and spiritual disciplines into daily routines.

**Thoughts** – As a result of our positive behaviors and God's grace, we replace our absorption with ourselves with thankfulness that leads us to perform acts of Service for others.

### **Determining your next right steps:**

1. Which of those progressive behaviors can you identify as being part of how your habits have formed in the past?

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2. Pick a habit you would like to improve and capture how you can use each of those behaviors to help you change.

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3. What is the next right step you are willing to take to build more positive behaviors into your life?

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# DEALING WITH THE STIGMA OF ADDICTION

## BREAKING THROUGH THE DANGEROUS, INACCURATE STIGMA OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Society attaches a stigma to many groups, including those struggling with addiction. Many of us are affected by this negative branding one way or the other: we are a victim of it, or we perpetuate it.

There are tens of millions of people struggling with addiction in our country, and 90% of them will never seek help. The social and personal stigma of addiction is a big part of that problem.

This stigma makes it harder for people to acknowledge their problem, seek help, or maintain their recovery. Therefore, many of them suffer in isolation for years, and some die from the disease.

If this stigma affects you, know that these things are true: you are not broken, you can recover, and you are not alone. You don't have to be a prisoner of your shame. You can get better like millions of others.

If you unfairly place that stigma on others, you should strive to see those who are struggling as regular people. Listen to them while withholding judgment, and treat them with dignity and respect.

### **Determining your next right steps:**

1. Is there an area of your life in which you feel that a stigma is being applied, either real or perceived?

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2. Think of an area in which you, perhaps even unconsciously, place a stigma on some group of people.

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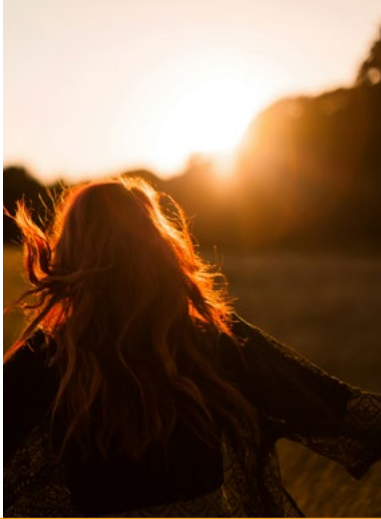
3. For any issue where you are avoiding getting help, what is a step you can take to reach out to someone?

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LESSON 5

# LIFE AFTER ALCOHOL

## REALIZING LIFE IS NOW DIFFERENT CALMER, HAPPIER, BETTER THAN EVER BEFORE

If you are an alcoholic, you don't have to hit bottom to stop. You can courageously face the personal, emotional, and spiritual consequences you are creating, even if not yet catastrophic, and use them as a catalyst to change your life.

It is an awesome discovery for some that we can live life without the crutch of a substance to solve our problems for us. We can be real, and we can live life that way. We can be honest and sincere—with others, God, ourselves—all the time.

We can learn to find peace by letting go of the anxieties that so easily plague us. While enjoying deeper relationships and talking with friends about things that matter, we can find significance and purpose in serving others.

For me, life after alcohol took a little getting used to. But the advantages of my new way of living grew, and grew, and grew. Now, I gratefully enjoy those wonderful benefits every day of my life.

That was my journey, and things happen for a reason. God was graceful enough to use recovery to transform me, and that led to the ministry which will make up the next phase of my life. Life is better now in countless ways.

### **Determining your next right steps:**

1. Whether it's freedom from alcohol or something else, what are your dreams for a more positive future?

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2. Create a list of as many things as you can think of that would be benefits of changing your drinking habits.

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3. Are you willing to take the next right step and avoid drinking for just one day? And then do it again tomorrow?

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PLAN



## CREATE A PLAN

1. What steps will you take to keep learning about addiction and how prevention and recovery can improve your life?

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2. What is one harmful habit you have developed where there has been a gradual progression in a negative direction?

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3. What small steps could you take to help you break that habit or keep it from coming back so you can enjoy life more?

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4. Will you commit to go to at least three recovery meetings to confirm they are safe, warm, helpful, and even enjoyable?

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5. Write down your dreams about a new, positive future with less shame, fewer troubles, and more peace, joy, and purpose.

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About 1 in 7 people struggle with addiction, and 90% of them do not get help.

This workbook is part of the STEPS Online Toolkit for “Learning More About Recovery” which shares useful information about dealing successfully with addiction and the benefits of recovery. You can reach that toolkit at the link shown below.

A potentially life-changing thing you can do is to share this workbook and the Online Toolkit with people you know. Send them to someone who is hurting or share them with all your friends. Many of them are struggling, but they’re just not talking about it.

Wherever people are on their journey, this is helpful and interesting knowledge to know. For some, it can be transformational.



[LifeImprovementSteps.com/Recovery](https://LifeImprovementSteps.com/Recovery)