



Recovery Ministry

Introduction

Working with Jesus

iFOLLOW

The iFollow Discipleship Series

About the iFollow Discipleship Series Pastor's Edition

Categories

The iFollow Discipleship Series is designed to be used in congregations to assist people in their pursuit of God. This assumes that individuals are in unique places in their journey and there is no perfect set of lessons that everyone must complete to become a disciple—in fact discipleship is an eternal journey. Therefore the iFollow curriculum is a menu of milestones that an individual, small group, or even an entire church can choose from. The lessons can be placed in three general categories: **Meeting with Jesus** (does not assume a commitment to Jesus Christ); **Walking with Jesus** (assumes an acceptance of Jesus Christ); and **Working with Jesus** (assumes a desire to serve Jesus Christ).

Components

Each lesson has a presenter's manuscript which can be read word for word, but will be stronger if the presenter puts it in his/her own words and uses personal illustrations. The graphic slides can be played directly from the Pastor's DVD or customized and played from a computer. There are also several group activities and discussion questions to choose from as well as printable student handouts.

Usage

The lessons are designed to be used in small groups, pastor's Bible classes, prayer meetings, seminars, retreats, training sessions, discussion groups, and some lessons may be appropriate sermon outlines.

Credits

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Recovery Ministry Introduction

This is the first of eleven units on how to conduct a 12 Step addiction recovery ministry.

Learning Objectives

1. How to begin a 12 Step recovery program
2. How to be an effective mentor
3. How to use mentoring to guide someone through the rigors of the 12 Step programs
4. What to do in case of relapse
5. Some considerations in running group meetings

Content Outline

1. Godly mentoring
2. Maintaining the integrity of the program
 - A. Mentoring standards
 - B. Warnings and program termination
3. Moving through the 12 Steps
4. Using the H. O. W. method
5. Giving backup assignments
6. Six attitudes and actions that indicate true readiness for serious 12 Step work
7. In case of relapse
 - A. The hard questions
 - B. Time out
 - C. The Plan
 - D. Continued relapses
8. Group administration considerations

Background Material for the Presenter

Anyone leading a recovery ministry must be a recovering addict with solid sobriety while continuing to work rigorously at the 12 Steps as a model for those being led. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9:27, "But I buffet my body and make it my slave lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified." The leader must not be above strict accountability, and needs to have a mentor;



someone who can help point out blind spots, and keep him or her on the right track in recovery and in relationship with God. That mentor, by the way, needs to be a recovering addict also. Otherwise, it's like a golfer trying to train a football player. You have to have been there to know how to lead another through that landscape.

Mentors can provide the model of a solid relationship with the Lord, health in marriage, and insight as a counselor and coach. It is also very important that mentors be the same gender as their mentees.

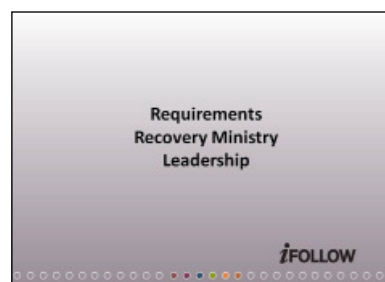
The mentoring program is tough, without apology. It's similar in tone to the kind of discipleship that Jesus offered. "The foxes of the field have holes," He said, "and the birds of the air have nests. But my disciples will have nowhere to lay their heads." He laid down the toughest challenges He could think of to prospective recruits like the rich young ruler in Luke 10, and they turned away in droves. He wasn't worried about His numbers or His ratings. He wanted to know if those who chose to follow Him were serious.

It has been learned that whenever we are tempted to make the mentoring experience easier, it is almost always because we are trying to be liked by the mentee. This is not about making friends and having warm fellowship. It's about doing some of the hardest, but most loving, things anyone can do with another human being: tell the truth, especially the unwanted truth; model vulnerability by leading with our weakness; and perhaps even "fire" the mentee from the mentoring program because he or she's not living up to commitments. These actions all take guts, a close relationship with the Lord, and access to others older and wiser in the program to advise and support you. If at some point your mentee doesn't hate you, you're probably not doing your job. Let's face it, addicts don't like rules, they don't like discipline and they don't like being told "no." All those functions are central to a mentor's job description.

Mentees who previously had been fired are now some of the strongest mentors. They rose to the challenge, re-entered the program and finally made it through. They say being fired was the best thing that ever happened to them.

Humility Seasoned with Grace

To balance the necessary toughness in the relationship with a mentee, the mentor needs a large dose of humility, seasoned with grace. This is not the kind of grace that tells the mentee it's OK to lower the standards of the program, for we have found there is only one way this particular program works, and that's 100%. Rather, it's the kind of grace that



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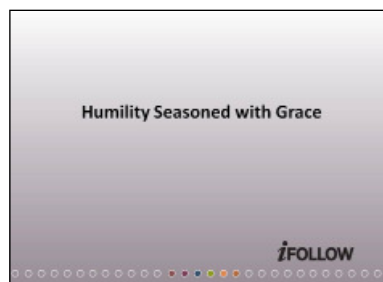
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recognizes the ground is level at the foot of the cross; the kind of grace that teaches by sharing mistakes the mentor has made.

That spirit is captured so well by Paul in Galatians 6:1, “Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.”

Remember that this person before me is the Lord’s, not “mine;” that I don’t know in my own wisdom what is best; that even when I disagree with this individual or am disappointed in his or her work, I must not judge, or view this one as “bad” or inferior. And if the standards of the program require me to fire the mentee, or if I discover s/he has relapsed, I ask God for the grace to see this one through His infinitely patient eyes, as a person in process, who I pray will make it through to the end. Because, above all, our God is the God of the Second Chance.



Maintaining the Integrity of the Program

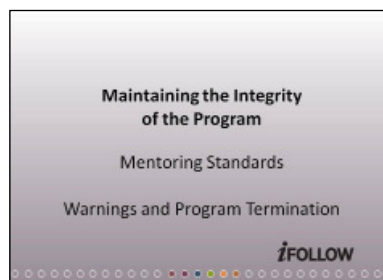
Throughout the program, make it clear that the mentee is engaged in a very challenging and demanding program; the first three weeks are an especially important time to make this point. Make it clear that the process is not for everyone—it is necessary to be ready to do the hard work it takes to truly recover. As a mentor, you must maintain the integrity of the program by firmly applying the standards that make the program successful.

Mentoring Standards—The mentee must: (1) Call every day to check in, without exception. (2) Complete all assigned reading every week. (3) Complete all written assignments every week.

Warnings and Program Termination—If a mentee fails to meet one of the above standards you must give the following warning: “There’s only one way this program works, and that’s 100%. Our experience in working with others tells us that if we can’t do 100% now, we won’t be willing to do some of the very hard things later. Less than 100% is just wasting both my time and yours.”

If a mentee fails a second time, you must repeat the warning and add that this is the last chance before being released from the mentoring program.

If a mentee fails a third time, you must release him or her from the mentoring program. Encourage continued meeting attendance. Encourage this person to pray for the next few weeks about being willing to do whatever it takes, and to let you or one of the other mentors know when s/he feels ready.



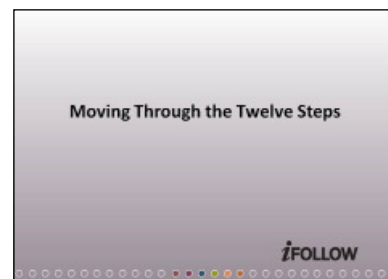
At this point the mentee's name is released back into the "pool" of potential mentees. Should this individual decide to try again, s/he will not be assigned the same mentor and will begin the program from scratch.

Keeping standards high is the key to creating a strong program of recovery. Addicts are experts at finding "wobble room." It is an addict's survival instinct honed to perfection over a lifetime of evading difficult or uncomfortable situations, "shading" the truth and dodging direct questions. If there is a way to avoid looking at ourselves honestly and reporting what we find to another we will find it or if necessary, invent it. The key to keeping standards high is to accept no excuses. There is no excuse for missing a daily check-in phone call. There is no excuse for incomplete homework assignments. If recovery is a priority, there is no need for excuses. It is a matter of life and death. We find ways to get enough oxygen, food and what ever else we have perceived as necessary to our survival. Our recovery program needs to be put in the same category as breathing. It is that important.

Moving Through the Twelve Steps

Each Step takes about four weeks to complete. It takes nine to 12 months to work through the entire program. But each mentee will move through the program at his or her own pace. A mentee may move more quickly or slowly through the Steps depending on the level of commitment and honesty, the amount of time dedicated to homework, number of outside commitments, etc. It is up to you as the mentor to determine whether or not the mentee is ready to move to the next Step. Each Step has a "Goals" section to help you decide on the mentee's readiness to move on.

The assignments are broken down into four sections, each designed to be completed in a week. You can give fewer assignments during that week if the mentee needs more time, or give more assignments if the mentee is effectively completing the work with the appropriate level of commitment and emotion. The four weekly segments are a guideline you can adjust. Using the H.O.W. method will help you to determine a mentee's state of mind and readiness to take the next Step in recovery.



H.O.W. it works

H = Humility—Humility is foundational to recovery. Admitting our need is the only way we can receive help from God for our problems.

O = Ownership—Acknowledging our problem is also primary to recovery. Owning our

actions and attitudes, past and present, and accepting the fact that we are the only ones who can change who we are on the inside, is the key to any lasting change.

W = Willingness—Willingness is the third key to progressive victory over addiction. Willingness is our response to the challenge to face any obstacle; complete any task set before us; to do whatever it takes to achieve freedom from addiction.

When these three keys come together in a mentee's program it means they have confessed their need to take the next Step, convincing you they have assimilated the key points of the current Step as laid out in the introduction to each Step.

Some things to watch for:

They are open to correction. They welcome information that will help them grow, despite how “bad” they look in light of the information.

They are able to express how the fresh insights have affected them, causing a change in attitude or action. Being able to repeat the key concepts of the Step work they are doing is irrelevant if there is no evidence of a change in spirit or action.

They have faced the facts about their problem as much as humanly possible. Accepting personal responsibility for their actions and attitudes. Some obvious indications of “deferred responsibility” include:

“I found myself doing ...” They feel they “had no control” over themselves. It “just happened.”

“I did that, but they did ...” This indicates they are unwilling to accept personal responsibility, without reservation.

If the mentee cannot share more than “head knowledge” of how this Step has challenged him or her to change, and you have seen no evidence of any change, he or she is not ready yet. We vote with our feet. It is not enough to give intellectual assent to the fact that we need to change. If there is no matching action, there is no willingness to move out of the hole we have dug for ourselves.

Giving Backup Assignments

What if you have given your mentee the primary assignments and still don't perceive your mentee is ready to proceed to the next Step? Pray for wisdom. God knows exactly what they need, and He will tell you what you need to do. Be creative. After God, you probably have the best picture of the mentee's current state of mind (isn't that a scary thought?).



Look for areas and issues the mentee seems to be avoiding. That probably means they are unwilling or unable to surrender there.

Recovery leaders have found in these cases a steady diet of Bible study on the perceived problem, either word or character studies, will reveal the problem. By sending them to God, they tap into the Source they need in order to see the problem themselves. God dispenses His wisdom freely. If they are willing, God can provide them with humility, and ownership. He does stuff like that.

It is important not to rush the program. There is no time limit. God works with us and through us right where we are. We shouldn't try to move on until He is done with us. Continue to pray for wisdom and ask questions. If you continue to reflect the truth to them, they will be drawn to it like a moth to a candle. Faced with the bankruptcy of our souls, even the hard work of recovery looks good.

In any assignments you give, whether primary or backup, the emphasis should remain on honesty and action. The mentee should not sermonize, quote the readings back to you or, analyze the finer points of recovery as a third person narrative. The mentor should see honest reflection—"what this means to me"—in all the writing the mentee does. After all, you can read the books, too. The mentor should look for what the mentee got from the assignment, and what they intend to do about it.

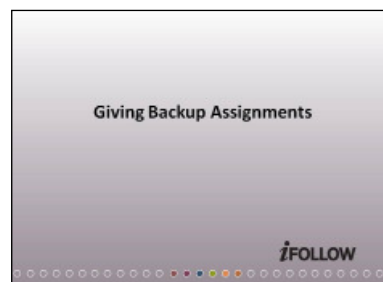
Handouts 1 and 2 can be used as sources of backup assignments.

Handout 1, "Why Sobriety is a Big Deal," is designed to be a resource for the mentor. Portions of these pages are to be copied and given to the mentee—the individual the mentor is working with. The individual working the Steps should not work ahead. The pace of progress is at the mentor's discretion. The intent of weekly assignments is to move through the process in a thorough manner, not missing any detail. Moving too quickly through the assignments puts one at risk of missing something which may lead to relapse.

Handout 2, "Addicts and Reality," contains insights and Bible help on correcting an addict's unhealthy view of him or herself and reality.

In addition to the various assignments, a daily (without fail) phone calling schedule must be set up and a weekly meeting time to go over homework and give new assignments.

An addict truly seeking recovery is entering quite a long process (which with Step 12 never truly ends). It usually begins with attending group meetings for some time, absorbing teaching and acceptance in a safe place. It may continue in parallel with professional counseling sessions. An addict may try to begin work with Steps, then "fall off the wagon," several times before really being ready to *do* the work. When the addict finally



“hits bottom” then he or she is in an ideal place to start over, doing some deep heart work going through the 12 Steps of the recovery program.

Six Attitudes and Actions

The addict must prayerfully consider the following requirements. All six of these actions and attitudes are crucial to a successful recovery.

1. *Stop all addictive behavior.*

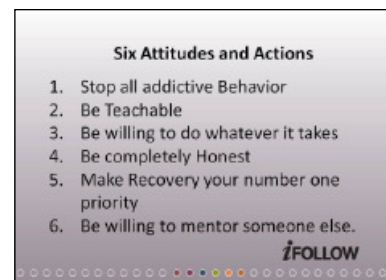
2. *Be teachable.* As the 12 Step slogan goes, “Ya gotta wanna.” As Hebrews 13:17 says: “Be responsive to your pastoral leaders. Listen to their counsel. They are alert to the condition of your lives and work under the strict supervision of God. Contribute to the joy of their leadership, not its drudgery. Why would you want to make things harder for them?” (The Message)

3. *Be willing to do whatever it takes.* Nothing changes if nothing changes. God will indeed change you. But first you have to decide if you are willing to pay the price.

4. *Be completely honest.* The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous says there is only one kind of person who will be unable to recover using the 12 Steps. “Those who do not recover are ... men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves. ...

They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty.” (Chapter 5, “How It Works”) The “rigorous honesty” of the 12 Steps generate both terror and hope when you first come into the program. Terror is felt because most persons have never before been completely honest with anyone. But as you sit in meetings and hear others share openly about both successes and failures, you also begin to feel hope for the first time. Here is a group where it is safe to talk about your failures, your temptations, and your sin, without being shamed or ostracized.

5. *Make recovery your number one priority.* If you want long-term sobriety and freedom from the pain that has driven you all your life, you will need to let God thoroughly change you from the inside out. You will need to learn a whole new way of living. That process takes time. It simply won't work to try to squeeze your recovery in on top of everything else and hope for the best. The mentoring commitment involves attending the weekly group meetings and the mentoring meeting, as well as daily phone calls to an accountability partner, and reading and writing assignments that can average about an hour a day. The formal program may take nine to twelve months initially to work through the 12 Steps. Expect that phase to be followed by an active, though less demanding phase of mentoring others. It is wise not to make any major changes in your life circumstances for the next 12 months in order to have maximum time and energy for your recovery work.



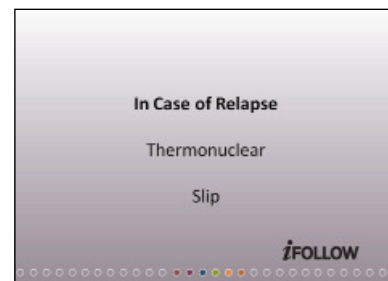
Make recovery work your number one priority. If there is ever a conflict between your recovery work and your jobs or your family or church activities, then for the next year, your recovery has first priority. Reflect on Jesus' words about what it means to be His disciple: "For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, but who ever loses his life for my sake shall find it." (Matthew 16:25) Your very life is at stake.

6. *Be willing to mentor someone else.* A common trait addicts share is deep self-centeredness. Once you've done the work of getting your heart in order. Mentoring another helps keep the focus off yourself and puts you in active service to others. And you "re-work" the Steps for yourself as you guide another through them. If you are married, talk these things over with your spouse, for the time demands of the program and mentorship will affect him or her as well.

In Case of Relapse

Determine what happened. Experienced addicts in recovery say there are two kinds of relapses. The "Thermonuclear, I don't care plunge" and the "slip." These two situations are similar in effect, but miles apart in intention.

The thermonuclear relapse is a "planned relapse." This is a premeditated, willful disregard for the program and for sobriety. There has been a pattern of behavior leading to relapse and efforts to hide this behavior. You must first ask the mentee the hard questions: (1) Why didn't you call? (2) What was going through your mind? What were you hoping to gain? Did it work? Did you get the relief/solution you were seeking? (3) What did you learn from this experience and what are you going to do with your new-found wisdom?



Encourage the mentee to take a time out. Usually somewhere between two weeks and a month is enough time. Ask the mentee to pray and seriously reflect on the reasons he or she needs the program. If he or she decides to come back, he or she should begin at Step 1 again. The reason is that he or she has missed some part of the Steps or has not "given himself over to this simple program" completely.

The second kind of relapse is the "slip" which comes "out of the blue." The mentee is working diligently, exhibiting a teachable attitude and a willingness to own and work on their recovery. Then suddenly they slip. The exercises usually point to the problem area. For example, a relapse might be triggered by financial pressures that were not surren-

dered in Step 3. The slip is usually the result of either a lapse in working a rigorous program, unsundered attempts at control that have not surfaced yet, or a sudden increase in stress that is not grounded. There is a false belief behind this kind of relapse. Often the false belief sounds something like, “I am doing OK. This isn't so bad.”

In this kind of relapse, you must also ask the hard questions: (1) Why didn't you call? (2) What was going through your mind? What were you hoping to gain? Did it work? Did you get the relief/solution you were seeking? (3) What did you learn from this experience and what are you going to do with your new-found wisdom?

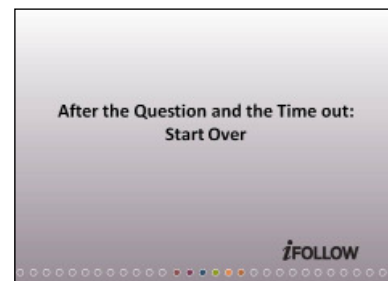
In every case of relapse the mentee is asked to start over. The reason behind this request is that somewhere in the 12 Step process they missed something. It is not meant as a punitive measure, but a tool to review their recovery program looking for weakness and false beliefs. Be sure to present it as such. Addicts are used to being punished and denigrated. The mentee is probably already berating him/herself and can easily see the assignment to start over as punishment if it is not presented carefully and lovingly.

After the Questions and the Time Out—Start Over

1. Start over. This can be a review of the steps in a “fast track” format in a “slip” situation or a complete rework of the Steps in a “thermonuclear” event. It is up to you to determine the best course for your mentee. Judge the needs based not on what is said, but what on what s/he is willing to do and the honesty s/he has exhibited. This is a suggested assignment as a precursor to beginning again. It is located in a handout as well, so you can give a copy to the mentee.

Essay: “Why I relapsed.”

Get the Facts: Write a narrative explaining the situation leading up to the relapse. This should include emotional stress, marital stress, and work stress, anything that is happening in the background that would cause a breakdown in the process of recovery. Other questions to answer are:



When did I stop working my program? When did I stop making calls? Why? Was I afraid of something or someone?

What triggered me?

Why did I stop trusting God?

Where did my boundaries break down?

Where did I avoid, or circumvent my boundaries? What loopholes did I find in my boundaries?

Find the Lie: Picture a “snake-oil” salesman telling you he “has just what you need to feel better”. He promises you that his cure will fix your problems, settle your anxiety, and mend your troubled relationships, all for free. He tells you, “No one needs to know. It will work this time. It won’t hurt anyone. It’s no big deal.”

Tell the Truth: Now go back over the lies the snake-oil salesman told you, and ask yourself, what is the truth? Are your problems solved? Are your relationships better? Do you feel better about yourself? Then ask yourself, “What did this really cost me?” Usually the price is very high, plus interest.

2. Review Steps 1 and 2. Look for beliefs that have surfaced since starting the program, such as: I thought I was in control now. I didn’t think I needed to work as hard. Look for areas that they still can’t trust God to provide for them in. Find out why they think God can’t provide for them there. Review the mentee’s boundaries. Look for loopholes that need to be closed.

3. Review Step 3 and repeat the surrender ceremony. Surrender the issues and triggers that caused the relapse.

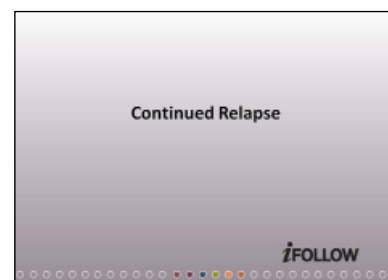
4. Steps 4 and 5 covering the resentments or triggers leading to the slip.

5. Complete the 12 Steps.

Continued Relapse

What happens if a mentee in the mentoring program begins to have a pattern of falling even after starting over once, twice or more? Remember the definition of insanity; doing the same thing over and over, each time expecting a different result. The key here is what is causing the pattern of relapses? Look for the patterns. For example, relapses often happen around wedding anniversaries. Was travel involved? What changed in the environment that was missed in the “Boundaries” worksheet? Find the pattern and develop a solution for it.

The first question is, What kind of relapse was it? Use your judgment, if the mentee is relapsing weekly, end the mentoring relationship. It is simply an indication that he or she has not hit bottom yet and is not ready to seriously pursue the 12 Steps. Experienced mentors report that this happens most often with those who have few or no consequences associated with relapse. They are unwilling to make the sacrifices necessary to work toward recovery.



Other questions that will guide your decision: (1) Was the relapse admitted or discovered? (2) If the relapse was admitted, how quickly did the mentee tell you about it? Was

it admitted in minutes or weeks? In any case, you are not doing this person a service by carrying them; you can't want them to be sober more than they do.

Recovery is all about the journey. The goal is progress, not perfection. A relapse is action taken by desperate individuals seeking relief from problems and situations beyond their control, based on false beliefs and lies, using tools that don't work. Addicts are insane. They are incapable of rational thought regarding their addiction. Speak the truth in love. Tough love, but love none the less. As in the parable of the Good Samaritan, the fallen need a hand up, healing and a ride back to Recovery Town. They do not need pious words of reproach. They have been beat up enough, probably by themselves. Our goal is health, nothing more and certainly nothing less.

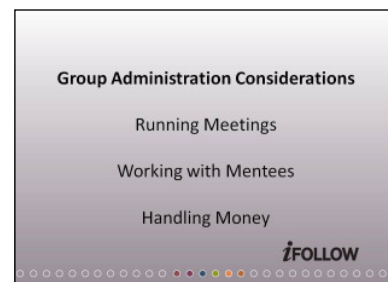
Group Administration Considerations

A steering committee or council of mentors should be formed to make administrative decisions regarding your 12 Step group or ministry. All the members must be individuals who have completed the formal 12 Step process and are doing well with sobriety. This group should meet about once a month. Decisions are to be made by consensus. There is no hierarchy in the 12 Step approach.

Running Meetings—While there should be no hierarchy, there are opportunities for servant leadership. Committee members should be assigned to the following roles: (1) Guiding new-comers to the group who want to begin the formal 12-Step process. (2) Coordinating the praise music, Scripture and other readings, mentees sharing Step 1 stories, Step 5 experiences, etc. (3) Coordinating snacks and beverages. (4) Scheduling mentors to teach at each of the weekly meetings. (5) Keeping minutes of the steering committee or council of mentors.

Working with Mentees—Once a newcomer has completed all pre-qualifying conditions (for example daily phone calls to a mentor for a month, attending four consecutive meetings, reading three addiction recovery books and turning in ten insights gained while reading each book) the council of mentors prayerfully determines if the individual is actually ready for mentoring and then assigns a mentor to the person.

Here are some criteria to use when deciding who mentors whom. They are listed in a suggested order of importance: (1) Which mentor has most recently completed the formal Step 12 work? (2) Who has not had a mentee for the longest time? (3) Who is ready for another mentee? It is possible for one mentor to have more than one mentee should circumstances require it.



The monthly meetings of the council of mentors is an appropriate place to update all mentors on the status of the individual mentor/mentee partnerships, as well as addressing issues that arise from time to time (relapse, lying to mentor, etc.).

Handling Money—The meetings should be free to all who need them, but snacks and things to drink cost money, as well as any teaching materials, worksheets, etc. For these and other expenses it would be wise to have a group bank account with two or three mentors as signatures on it.

Other Business—These pages describe a framework to build on. The monthly meetings of the council of mentors are an opportunity for the mentors to make the decisions that actually shape our your 12 Step group or ministry will be developed.

Handouts in this Package

1. Why Sobriety is a Big Deal
2. Addicts and Reality
3. Relapse – Now What? (mentee edition)
4. Step Assignments Schedule
5. Catalog of Addictions
6. Regeneration Ministries Chart



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- Williams, Don (2004). *12 Steps with Jesus*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books.

Websites

- Adventist Regeneration Ministries is an official ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church sponsoring 12 Step groups in local churches, schools and community service centers: www.adventistregenerationministries.org
- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) is the original organization that started the use of the 12 Steps and continues to be the most effective program in getting people off alcohol addiction. The AA materials are available at: anonpress.org
- Alcoholics Victorious is a national network of groups that use the 12 Steps in the framework of Evangelical Christian theology: www.alcoholicsvictorious.org

Bridge to Recovery is a private, supporting ministry of Seventh-day Adventists recognized by the Health Ministries Department of the North American Division and a member of ASI: www.bridgetorecovery.com

Christian Recovery International is a website listing many national networks of Christian 12 Step groups, recovery ministries and resource organizations around the world helping the Christian community become a safe place for people recovering from addiction, abuse or trauma: www.christianrecovery.com

National Association for Christian Recovery is a non-denominational parachurch organization connecting 12 Step groups and other recovery ministries in local churches across the U.S.: www.nacronline.com

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Discussion Questions

1. Why is it important to have a mentoring program in place before beginning a 12 Step recovery program?
2. What are some ways to protect both the mentor and the mentee from the idea that the mentor is somehow superior or better, or that the mentee is defective or more sinful?
3. How can we be sure to keep toughness loving while we're keeping love tough?
4. Discuss the H. O. W. method and think of ways it could be applicable to other sinful or broken areas of our lives besides addiction.
5. In pairs, go through the Six Attitudes and Actions and honestly discuss together how many of them you can respond to with a clear positive.

Group Activity

Purpose: To help the non-addicts present to understand, at least in part, what it feels like to be an addict, which is an important process before trying to set up a recovery ministry.

Preparation: Find someone who has attended 12 Step meetings and ask them to help you make this experience authentic in whatever ways he or she thinks of to do so. Put up a poster of the 12 Steps. Perhaps find a 12 Step devotional book—there are many available, often in libraries—and choose a devotional to read and discuss.

Assignment: Lead the meeting as if it were a 12 Step meeting. Begin by having each one say, “Hello, my name is _____ and I am _____.” Many attendees of this seminar may well be recovering addicts or alcoholics. They will say “an alcoholic” or “an addict,” as they know they are forgiven and always in recovery, but never perfectly recovered or no longer an addict or alcoholic. For the rest, they can say either “I am a sinner,” or, if they are brave, “I am a procrastinator ... a complainer ... a screamer ... an overeater ... a workaholic, etc.” You may have your assistant above share as he or she would in a 12 Step meeting, or read a devotional or one of the steps. The group may find itself delving more deeply than expected, and realizing that we are all sinners in need of Higher Power. Then and only then will they be ready to work with a recovery ministry in their churches.

Time: This will take an hour to 90 minutes. Save the last 20 minutes or so to discuss what was learned by those who are not addicts.

Handout 1

Why Sobriety is a Big Deal

Please answer the following questions. Write several paragraphs on each question. The purpose here is to help you think deeply and honestly about these issues.

1. Why is sobriety a big deal for you? Why do you want to be sober? Why now? What are you willing to do now that you haven't been before?
2. Why is sobriety hard to achieve and maintain?
3. What are your expectations for recovery?
4. What are the expectations others have for your recovery? How do you think these expectations will affect your recovery?
5. Why do you think this program will work when other attempts to quit this behavior have failed?
6. Are you willing to submit to the recovery process? What do you think this means?
7. What benefits of sobriety are you expecting? What benefits are you hoping for?
8. Were there times in your past when you thought you had hit bottom, and made a solemn commitment to never act out again, only to fall back into your addiction? Describe those incidents, and what you felt inside each time.
9. Have you hit bottom now? If not, what is holding you back? If so, what circumstances or consequences finally made you ready? Be specific and detailed.
10. List the behaviors that have been part of your addiction, along with the age at which you began that behavior.
11. In the past week, describe situations where you thought, "I can handle this situation on my own," or "I can get away with this and no one will know."

Handout 2

Addicts and Reality

Addiction is a sickness of perception, of how we view the world.

“Rigorous honesty” is the key to recovery.

“How It Works”: “Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program, usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves. There are such unfortunates... They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty. Their chances are less than average. There are those, too, who suffer from grave emotional and mental disorders, but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest” (*Big Book*, p. 55).

Honesty and recovery: Biblical insights.

Write your thoughts on how the following passages reflect on rigorous honesty.

- Psalm 51:6
- Ephesians 4:17-32

Please answer the following questions. Write several paragraphs on each question. The purpose here is to help you think deeply and honestly about these issues.

1. Write your thoughts on “How It Works”?
2. What is rigorous honesty?
3. Why is “rigorous honesty” the key to recovery?
4. Why is a mentor crucial to my recovery?

Handout 3

Relapse ... Now What? Mentee Edition

Essay: “Why I relapsed.”

Get the Facts: Write a narrative explaining the situation leading up to the relapse. This should include emotional stress, marital stress, and work stress, anything that is happening in the background that would cause a breakdown in the process of recovery. Other questions to answer are:

1. When did I stop working my program? When did I stop making calls? Why?
2. What triggered me?
3. Why did I stop trusting God?
4. Where did my boundaries break down?
5. Where did I avoid, or circumvent my boundaries? What loopholes did I find in my boundaries?

Try to identify the physical manifestations that are occurring during the approach to acting out. Some people get a flushed feeling in the face, tunnel vision, and a knot in the stomach. All are easily identifiable and a sure sign you are about to do something you are going to regret.

Find the Lie: Picture a “snake-oil” salesman telling you he “has just what you need to feel better.” He promises you that his cure will fix your problems, settle your anxiety, and mend your troubled relationships. All for free. He tells you that, “No one needs to know. It will work this time. It won’t hurt anyone. It’s no big deal.”

Note: It is very important to list the thoughts going through your head. For example, “No one needs to know.” Or, “It’s not *really* a relapse, it doesn’t count.” This is so the next time you begin to hear these thoughts passing through your mind you will be able to recognize them for what they really are.

Tell the Truth: Now go back over the lies the snake-oil salesman told you, and ask yourself, “What is the truth?” Are your problems solved? Are your relationships better? Do you feel better about yourself emotionally? Then ask yourself, “What did this really cost me?” Usually the price is very high, plus interest ... Recovery is all about the

journey. Remember- progress, not perfection. A relapse is action taken by a desperate individual seeking relief from problems and situations beyond our control, based on false beliefs and lies, using tools that don't work. Our goal is health, nothing more and certainly nothing less.

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Handout 4

12 Step Assignments Schedule—Before Step 1

Completed	Assignments
	Screening appointment
	Write answers to the questions in “Why Sobriety is a Big Deal”
	Answer the questions in “Addicts & Reality”
	Read the Forward and Chapters 1 and 2 in <i>Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous</i>
	Write five insights from the reading above

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Handout 5

Catalog of Addictions

Addictive agents are those persons, places or things (choices) on which we form an excessive dependency, consequently causing our lives to become unmanageable. A “moment of truth” from a Divine Power greater than ourselves leads to rigorous honesty, open-mindedness and willingness to change.

The catalog of addictive agents includes:

1. Alcohol or drugs
2. Work, achievement and success
3. Money addictions, such as overspending, gambling, hoarding
4. Control addictions, especially if they surface in personal, sexual, family and business relationships
5. Food addictions
6. Sexual addictions
7. Approval dependency (the need to please people)
8. Rescuing patterns toward other persons
9. Dependency on toxic relationships (relationships that are damaging and hurtful)
10. Physical illness (hypochondria)
11. Exercise and physical conditioning
12. Cosmetics, clothes, cosmetic surgery, trying to look good on the outside
13. Academic pursuits and excessive intellectualizing
14. Religiosity or religious legalism (preoccupation with the form and the rules and regulations of religion, rather than benefitting from the real spiritual message)
15. General perfectionism
16. Cleaning and avoiding contamination and other obsessive-compulsive symptoms
17. Organizing, structuring (the need to always have everything in its place)
18. Materialism

Source: Fowler, R. and Hemfelt, R. (1990). *Serenity: A Companion for 12 Step Recovery*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc.

Handout 6

Comparisons of the 12 Steps

The 12 Steps	The Bible	Steps to Christ	Christian Principles
1. We admitted that we were powerless over our addictions, that our lives had become unmanageable.	<i>I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but cannot carry it out. (Romans 7:18)</i>	Chapter entitled, "The Sinner's Need of Christ"	<i>Surrender (Parallels Steps 1-3)</i> <i>These steps bring the addict to a relationship with their Higher Power by recognizing that he or she is unable to continue an unmanageable life, but that there is hope in surrender.</i>
2. We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.	<i>So do not fear, for I am with you, do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (Isaiah 41:10)</i>	Chapter entitled, "Repentance"	
3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.	<i>Then He said to them all, "If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." (Luke 9:23)</i>	Chapter entitled, "Confession"	
4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.	<i>Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord. (Lamentations 3:40)</i>	Chapter entitled, "Confession"	

<p>5. We admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.</p>	<p>Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. (James 5:16)</p>	<p>Chapter entitled "Confession"</p>	<p>Confession and Repentance (Parallels Steps 4-7)</p> <p>By self-examination, the addict recognizes where they have harmed themselves and others. They acknowledge their own defects of character, making them real. Then they decide to turn these specific problems over to their Higher Power and ask God to take control to remove them.</p>
<p>6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.</p>	<p>If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land. (Isaiah 1:19)</p>	<p>Chapter entitled, "Consecration"</p>	
<p>7. We humbly asked Him to remove all our shortcomings.</p>	<p>Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He shall lift you up. (James 4:10)</p>	<p>Chapter entitled, "Faith and Acceptance"</p>	
<p>8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.</p>	<p>Leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother, then come and offer your gift. (Matthew 5:23)</p>	<p>Chapter entitled, "The Test of Discipleship"</p>	<p>Reconciliation and Restoration (Parallel to Steps 8-9)</p> <p>In these steps, the addict begins to relate honestly and appropriately to others and to rebuild the human relationships which have been broken by addiction.</p>
<p>9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.</p>	<p>Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. (Luke 6:38)</p>	<p>Chapter entitled, "Growing Up into Christ"</p>	

<p><i>10. We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.</i></p>	<p><i>For by the grace given to me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. (Romans 12:3)</i></p>	<p><i>Chapter entitled, "The Work and Life"</i></p>	<p><i>Continual Growth (Parallel to Steps 10-11)</i></p> <p><i>By a daily program of applying the 12 Steps, emotional balance is maintained, a crucial requirement for maintaining sobriety. As this "one day at a time" program is lived, power is drawn from feeding the spiritual self through improving conscious contact with God.</i></p>
<p><i>11. We sought, through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.</i></p>	<p><i>May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer. (Psalm 19:14)</i></p>	<p><i>The Chapters entitled, "A Knowledge of God" and "The Privilege of Prayer" and "What to Do with Doubt"</i></p>	
<p><i>12. Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.</i></p>	<p><i>Brothers, if someone is caught in sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. (Galatians 6:1)</i></p>	<p><i>Chapter entitled, "Rejoicing in the Lord"</i></p>	<p><i>Sharing and Serving (Parallel to Step 12)</i></p> <p><i>As a result of the spiritual awakening occurring in Steps 1-11, the addict seeks to share what has been learned with others.</i></p>