



Recovery Ministry

Steps Five, Six, and Seven

iFOLLOW

Working with Jesus

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: Steps Five, Six, and Seven

This is the sixth in a series of eleven units on how to lead a 12 Step addiction recovery ministry.

Learning Objectives

1. Review the needs of the mentoring relationship as it relates to Steps 5, 6, and 7.
2. Learn specific skills and assignments to help the mentee move through these three interrelated Steps.
3. Remember H.O.W. the method works for these Steps.
4. Recheck the six attitudes and actions.
5. Learn the specific goals of Steps Five, Six, and Seven.

Content Outline

1. Introducing Steps Five, Six, and Seven
2. Recap H.O.W. for these three Steps
3. Backup assignments
4. Review the Six Attitudes and Actions
5. Short overview of each Step
6. Summary and Goals to move to Step Eight

Background Material for the Presenter

Most of the Steps take about four weeks to complete, but with Steps 5, 6 and 7, if a mentee is up to the challenge, he or she may be able to move through these three Steps together in a month to six weeks. It is still true that each mentee will move through the program at his or her own pace. It is up to you as the mentor to determine whether or not the mentee is ready to move to the next Step. The “Goals” section will help you decide on the mentee’s readiness to move on all the way to Step 8.

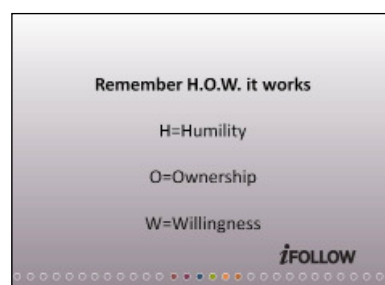
This unit introduces Steps 5, 6, and 7, which are taken together because they are inextricably interconnected. Being out in the open, ready to change, and facing our shortcoming with humility all go hand in hand.



The assignments are broken down into four week-long sections. 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-week breakdown is just a guideline. Since the Step 5 ceremony is long, draining, and extremely important, you must consider carefully whether to do it in the first week, as shown, with review work in the other three weeks, or whether to have more preparatory work in earlier weeks and move the ceremony to a later week. 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.

Remember 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. If we thought we'd found humility at Step 1, where we admitted our need, or at Step 3, where we finally fell on our knees before God, or certainly at Step 4, making that terrible first inventory, we learn here at the brink of Steps 5, 6 and 7 that true humility is the only thing that is going to catch us when we jump. But that's all right, because it's only found in God's arms, and that's where we're going to land.



O=Ownership—Acknowledging our problem is also primary to recovery. Owning our actions, attitudes, past and present, and accepting the fact that we are the only ones who can change who we are on the inside, is key to any lasting change. It was one thing to own them to ourselves, another to own them to God, harder yet to own them before our mentor. Now we have to own them before others, and who knows what their reaction will be? The reaction that counts is God's, and God is smiling on our sweat, tears, and efforts because only God knows where He's taking us from here.

W=Willingness—Willingness is the third key to the door of progressive victory over our 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. The road has been leading us here—right here—to the feet of God, where we will be both ready and *willing* to have these faults removed, no matter how that hurts. The scars of surgery done by a skilled surgeon are better by far than the scars our fear and fighting have given ourselves and others.

When these three keys come together in a mentee who is learning to see the hidden self clearly, s/he is showing you s/he is truly ready to take the next long leap toward full recovery.

Some Things to Watch For

Is the mentee open to correction? Does he or she welcome information that will help them grow despite how “bad” they look in light of the information.

They can express how the fresh insights, especially of Step 4, have affected them, causing a change in attitude or action and being (at the end of Step 4 and the beginning of this triple Step) “willing to be made willing” to let go of the old ways and learn new ones. 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 and can now accept personal responsibility for their actions and attitudes. We vote with our feet, and beginning these Steps shows there is more than intellectual assent. There is not only willingness, but actual movement out of the pit they’ve dug and holed up in for so long.

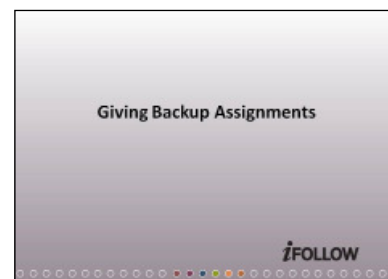


Giving Backup Assignments

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? This is a particularly delicate point in the program. Be sure the mentee is ready for the Step 5 ceremony before you plan it. 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; in this case, sometimes there is still some excusing or justifying of some of the faults inventoried. They must be willing to own and surrender them before they go through the ceremony.

Let them study lives like Peter and David, people who sinned, and sinned “big,” but surrendered fully both to forgiveness and to consequences. 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 will even do the work of “willing” within them to do His good pleasure. But the choice is still, always, theirs.

It is important not to rush the program, especially here. There is no time limit, and rushing can ruin all that has been done so far. 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 that depressing moral inventory, even the hard work of confession and repentance 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.

If necessary, you may go back to Handouts included in earlier units and repeat or adapt certain backup assignments.

Recheck the Six Attitudes and Actions

These six attitudes and actions are hard enough to initiate. They are much harder to maintain, in the drama and minutiae of daily life and with the enemy of our souls pulling out all the stops to make us fall back into old, unhealthy patterns. Mentor and mentee should sometimes return and recheck the Six Attitudes:

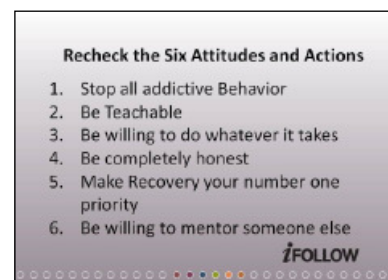
1. *Stop all addictive behavior.* And stay stopped.

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.* Again and again. 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.* Remember how the "rigorous honesty" of the 12 Steps created both terror and hope when you first came into the program. As you sit in meetings and hear others share openly about both successes and failures, as you have begun to talk about your failures, your temptations, and your sin, without being shamed or ostracized, has the hope begun to outweigh the terror?

5. *Make recovery your number one priority today and tomorrow.* 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. These three Steps may take more time than one month, but then, you're doing three at once, so you're making a big leap of progress. You're at the midway point! Congratulations!

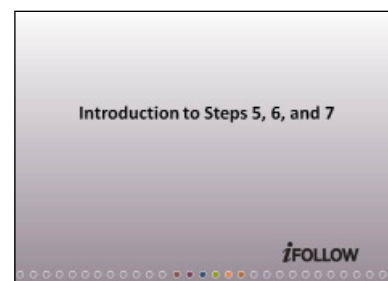
Keep making recovery work your number one priority. If there is ever a conflict between your recovery work and your jobs or your family or church activities, then for the next year, your recovery has first priority. If you are married, talk these things over with your spouse, for the time demands of the program and mentorship will affect him or her as well. Reflect on Jesus' words in Matthew 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. Not yet, but keep it on the horizon. It will give you hope. Yes, you will find serenity, and you will be able to lead another through this thorny path because you will know just how hard it is. 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.

Introduction to Steps Five, Six and Seven

Steps 5, 6, and 7 are taken together because they are inextricably interconnected. Being out in the open, ready to change, and facing our shortcoming with humility go hand in hand. There is a sense in which it could be postulated that the three H.O.W. keys of humility, ownership, and willingness are particularly related to these three Steps: ownership with Step 5, willingness with Step 6, and humility with Step 7.

The paradox of the 12 Step program (or, indeed, any work of healing) is that in order to go up, we must first go down. In order to find a life on the high ground, a clean, sober life lived in freedom and love, we must first plumb the depths of the truth—the pain, shame, and sin that have been the real foundation of our lives for so long. We must dig up and clearly, deliberately, and intentionally turn over to God every bit of that, trusting Him to take it away, dump it into the deepest cavern of the ocean, and fill us instead with His light, forgiveness, peace, love, and health. In Step 4, we have made that difficult "searching moral inventory." It's an appalling document. Now we will learn what to do with it.



Step Five

We admit to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Step 5 is the beginning of a new way of life. We take action to move from our shadowy past into the daylight of openness and rigorous honesty. We risk for the first time being known.

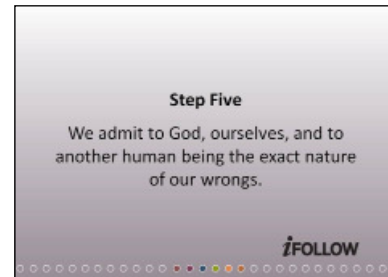
During the first four Steps, we have come to realize that God knows us already and there is nothing we can hide from Him. This may have been very frightening, depending on how we saw God, but we are trying to learn to trust Him.

However, the truth is that on this earth our view of God is very strongly shaped by our views of and relationships with others. If we have believed that God is distant and uncaring, it is because we have perceived people in our lives, especially some of those who had the responsibility for caring for us, to be distant and uncaring. If we have seen God as angry and punitive, it is because we have perceived people that way. If we want to learn to truly trust God, it will require us to learn to trust another who *trusts God*. From watching and being with that person (our mentor and others), we will grow into true trust, and this Step will help greatly with that growth process.

In these four Steps we have also begun the even harder work of knowing ourselves. We used to pretend all sorts of things, justifying every action, trying in every way to find comfort and pleasure and pretending we weren't hurting ourselves or others. Now we're starting to tell the truth to ourselves, and trying to learn to love ourselves enough to hold ourselves accountable and learn new ways of living.

Now we are going to take the risk (and it feels huge, even impossible to us) of letting another human being know us, too. Past experiences have taught us to flee from the very idea. *It's dangerous*, our inner self screams, to *let another know you! Run! Lock the door!* We must cling to what the few people we trust now are telling us: admitting our sin to another human being opens us to the possibility of relationship based on honesty. This is ownership indeed. "This," we are saying, "is the *real* me. I take full responsibility. But I am no longer going to take responsibility for your reactions to me. That is your choice."

Relationship based on disclosure, allowing the other person the opportunity to invest in us based on the facts, not the 'sales brochure' front we've been putting on, really can be a good thing, and if we can learn to be wise about whom we trust with what, it won't be so dangerous anymore.



Step Six

We are entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Steps 4 and 5 are extremely difficult and it is up to you as the mentor to help the mentee move from the inventory and 'coming out' phase into Steps 6 and 7.

There is more than one place in the program where a whole Step is given over to becoming willing or ready for something. We would like it to be as easy as: "OK, Lord, now I see that sin. Take it." But even to the paralyzed man on Solomon's porch, Jesus asked, "Do you *want* to be healed?" It sounds like a silly question, but if you're sick, nobody requires much of you. If you're healthy, on the other hand, there will be all kinds of responsibilities.

This is where the rubber hits the road. Are we willing? Are we really? Our defects have been working for us. Alcohol and drugs really do drown your sorrows ... for a while. Blaming others really does allow us to escape consequences sometimes. Drifting through life with no anchor has let us have a twisted kind of freedom. But when we hit bottom for the last and deepest time, we decided life in the sun was preferable. If we still believe that (and if we've been honestly working the Steps we believe it more now than we ever did when it was only an imagined fantasy), then we will take a deep breath, grab God's and our mentors' hands, and **step into the light**.



Step Seven

We humbly ask Him to remove our shortcomings

Humility is now two-sided. It was humbling to admit we couldn't control our lives, or even keep them from controlling us. It was humbling to come to meetings at all, let alone to come to God. It is humbling every day when we make our check-in call. For Step 7, humility isn't only about the recognition of our inabilities and disabilities. It's about trust.

It's about believing God *can* remove our shortcomings. It's believing that He *wants to*. It's believing that He *cares* enough to do so. And ultimately, it's trusting that life without them will be better, not worse, easier, not harder (though hard in different ways), that we will not be empty, but full in a way we never have been before.

Before you put on the "full armor of God," you have to take off your civilian clothes. Life will be different now.

Goals: In order to move on to Step Eight, the mentee must: (1) Completely surrender to God. (2) Ask God to make him or her into someone new. (3) Be ready to take action to



make amends. Pray for God's guidance in leading the mentee toward a deep, meaningful relationship with God.

Important note: When making lists of character defects and praying about them, be sure the mentee understands that we need to spend the most prayer time on what we *do* want, not on what we don't want. Concentrating on bad temper will only make bad temper worse. Once we've chosen a new character trait to hire and fired the old one, the new one needs all our support, care, encouragement, and prayer. If you find yourself praying for the old one again, it might have crept back to steal your time and attention again!

This document 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, especially at this midway point. 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.

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.

Recovery is all about the journey; our goal is progress, not perfection. As in the parable of the Good Samaritan, the fallen need a hand up, healing and a ride back to Recovery Town. Our goal is health, nothing more and certainly nothing less. Never forget that this person 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. 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, my God is the God of the Second Chance.

Handouts in this Package

1. Conducting the Step Five, Six and Seven Ceremony
2. Fire Your Character Defects
3. Sample Termination Letter
4. Step Five, Six and Seven Assignments Schedule



Additional Resources

- AA Services (2002). *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. New York City: AA World Services, Inc.
- AA Services (2001). *Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book Fourth Edition*. New York City: Works Publishing.
- Andrews University Department of Social Work (1997). *Helping Hurting Members*. Lincoln, NE: AdventSource.
- Cannon, Carol (1993). *Never Good Enough*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association.
- Gates, Hal (1995). *Regeneration Manual*. Silver Spring, MD: American Health and Temperance Association.
- Kearney, Joseph (2008). *A Christian 12 Step Recovery Program*. Orlando, FL: Recovered Through Christ, Inc.
- McQ., Joe (1990). *The Steps We Took*. Atlanta: August House Publishers, Inc.
- Miller, Keith (1992). *A Hunger for Healing: The Twelve Steps as a Classic Model for Christian Spiritual Growth*. New York City: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Miller, Keith (1992). *A Hunger for Healing Workbook*. New York City: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Shoemaker, Samuel; Pittman, Bill and B., Dick (1994). *Courage to Change: The Christian Roots of the 12-Step Movement*. Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell Company.
- 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 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.org

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 do you think it is important for these three steps to be taken together?
2. Why are they important enough to warrant their own major ceremony?
3. Read James 5:15 and discuss the merits and demerits of the various human conceptions of confession over the centuries. What does James mean, and why is it important to confess “to one other person” the exact nature of our faults?
4. What do we miss out on when we neglect this mandate?
5. (Perhaps in smaller groups or one to one): What changes are you going to make in your life?

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Questions

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Group Activity

Purpose: To practice “firing” unwanted character defects, and realize the important, practical impact this action can have on our lives.

Preparation: You will need seven tables or desks, or seven areas at larger tables, where pairs or groups can talk together without too much interference from other groups. Each person will need writing materials. On a board or flipchart write a simplified form of the questions in handout 2, covering only the basics, such as:

1. What job(s) have you been doing for me or how have you been valuable to me?
2. How much attention and energy have I been giving you?
3. Has it been worth it?
4. What has changed to make it not worth it?
5. What character trait would I like to hire in your place?

Write a separate list of what are commonly known as the “seven deadly sins”: pride, sloth, envy, gluttony, wrath, greed, and lust. If you wish, and have time, you may discuss why these seven have been historically chosen as deadly. Make a tent card of each sin and put it on one table.

Assignment: Ask each person to choose the table where a sin he or she would like to “fire” is. Since we all have more than one of these, in our lives, if there’s a large group at one, ask people to make a second choice if necessary so the group is divided reasonably evenly. Give them a few minutes to talk, and then ask them to write termination letters. They may work together or separately, talking or quiet. The letters can be funny, angry, sorrowful, or whatever, but they should all be serious about getting these things out of their lives.

Debrief: Let some people share their letters if they wish. Talk about the thoughts, attitudes, and emotions the exercise has raised. How would your life be different without this sin? What are you “hiring” in its place?

Note: The people in this particular seminar may or may not have gone through a 12 Step program. One of the things to discuss will be how it impacts today’s exercise if one simply writes this letter without the preliminary steps. Perhaps not all here are addicts, so they may not need the kind of in-depth preparation and mentoring addicts do; however, all of us sometimes have a tendency to just say, “Give it to Jesus,” and then wonder why that’s not effective over time. How can non-addicts take the insights and wisdom in the 12 Steps more seriously?

Time: Allow five minutes for people to get to tables, and 15-20 minutes to write the letters. Take 30 minutes or more for sharing and discussion afterwards, and allow extra time at the beginning if you want to discuss the seven deadly sins.

Handout 1—for the mentor

Conducting the Step 5-6-7 Ceremony

This ceremony takes place during a regular meeting of the mentor and mentee. It is long (anticipate five to six hours) and emotionally draining. Choose a place that is private, quiet and comfortable. It is up to the mentor to determine in which week it should fall. This unit presents it as week one, but that can be changed. All three Steps, five, six and seven, will be taken during this meeting, although actions will also be determined upon that will take place later. You will need a safe place to burn papers, and matches or lighters.

Step 5

1. Read aloud pages 72-75 in the *AA Big Book*.
2. Commit the time in prayer to God.
3. Review the mentee's inventory sheets.

Inventory Review Steps:

- A. Read the mentee's inventory aloud, allowing the mentee to comment where appropriate. You should be the one doing the reading and keeping the mentee on track.
- B. Pay attention to column four on the inventory sheets. The mentee should have checked every one of the four categories for each resentment, fear, harm, or sexual harm. (Do not explain this in advance, so the mentee will appreciate its full impact.)
- C. Make mental notes on any patterns you see. These will form the basis for the character defect work in Steps 6 and 7.
- D. Where harms have been done, mark an "A" (for Amends) in the margin, indicating that this needs to be noted on Step Eight. Review to whom amends need to be made and appropriate ways to make those amends.
- E. Look for lapses or "holes" in the list of harms, for example, financial harms, stealing, etc. Most of us have those in our lives, but are reluctant to own them.
- F. Mark a "P" in the margin for people the mentee has harmed, but who cannot be directly approached with an amend. These would include people whose names or addresses we no longer remember or know, as well as those to whom it would not be appropriate to make a direct amends; for example, the spouse of someone with

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whom we had been involved sexually. To approach the spouse directly, if they don't know of the offense, would be to cause harm to that marriage. The "P" means we put them on a prayer list, and begin praying for them as an indirect amends.

4. After reviewing the entire inventory, ask the mentee to take about an hour alone to reflect. During that time, the mentee should read in the *AA Big Book*, the paragraph at the bottom of page 75 through the top of page 76. He or she should reflect on anything left out, or whether there is anything blocking complete surrender to God.

5. When the mentee is ready, begin Steps Six and Seven.

Step 6:

1. Ask the mentee to join you. Discuss anything that came to mind that should be included in the inventory.
2. Create an amends list with the mentee. The mentee will begin to repair the damage caused by making direct or indirect amends with people who have been hurt by his or her actions.

Creating an amends list:

- A. On separate sheets, both you and the mentee write down the names of all of the people with an "A" or a "P" in front of their names.
- B. Make some brief notes on character defect patterns you saw, for discussion later. (You may choose to do one or more "termination letters" for a defect or defects at this time.)
- C. Ask the mentee to bring this list to the next mentoring meeting.

If the mentee is entirely ready to have God remove these defects of character, then find a private place outside (like a back yard).

Step 7: The Commitment Ceremony

During this activity, the mentee will turn character defects over to God, asking Him to replace them with new strengths. The idea is for the mentee to acknowledge the wrongs of the past and to focus on doing the work to move toward a positive future, centered on doing God's will.

1. Ask the mentee to kneel, turn to page 76 in the *AA Big Book*, and to read the prayer on the top of that page aloud.

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2. Ask the mentee to pray his or her own prayer, turning all character defects over to God, asking Him to replace them with new strengths.

3. After praying, ask the mentee to burn the inventory papers completely, symbolizing that a serious transaction has been completed with God.

4. Tell the mentee something like:

“He’s forgiven you for your sins, and you’ve given these old defects to God now. You’re asking Him to make you someone brand new. Although God has taken everything away that was blocking your relationship with Him, you can have it all back any time you want to run the show yourself. “

5. Wait in silence for the papers to burn completely.

6. Warn the mentee that the intense emotional work required by the Fourth through Seventh Steps will probably leave him or her feeling exhausted, “down,” drained, and/or irritable. Explain that this is common after such intense work. Encourage the mentee to get plenty of rest in the next couple of days and do something fun or enjoyable.

7. Explain to the mentee that s/he will be sharing this fifth Step experience at the next group meeting.

Conclusion: The Step 7 Prayer

My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me the strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen. (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 76) This may, of course, be stated in the words of the mentee.

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Handout 2—for the mentee

Write a Termination Letter to Fire Each Character Defect

The purpose of this exercise is to examine the relationship between individual character defects and compare their “job performance” with the new character found in Jesus. We are the boss of our character traits. We keep them on or re-write the job description, fire the old character traits and get a new character trait to employ in their place. Ultimately we are responsible for our character traits workforce.

So in Steps 6 and 7 we examine our character defects revealed in Step 4 and 5 coming to grips with the work our defects have done for us. Beside the cost of wages, that we give our character defects in the form of time, energy and emotional attention, there are the hidden costs all employers must be aware of. The hidden costs of insurance, vacation and the impact the employee will have as it interacts with other employees. So as we review our character defects job performance we ask ourselves:

1. What has this character defect done for me?
2. Has this character defect given me what I wanted from it? Has it gotten me what it promised to get me when I asked it to help me?
3. Am I getting good value for the wages I pay this character defect? Is the benefit I get from this character defect worth the time and energy I give it?
4. If this character defect was a person standing in front of me, asking for a raise, would they get it? Would I give it more time and attention?
5. What are the hidden costs I incur because of this character defect?
6. Does this character defect leave a mess in the lunchroom? Do I have to clean up after it often?
7. Am I proud to be associated with this character defect? Am I comfortable being seen in public with this character defect?
8. Since I do a lot of work at home, does this character defect get along with my family? Is the defect someone that my family likes and gets along with? If not, does the work my defect performs for me outweigh the cost my family pays?

When we are able to look honestly at our character defects, we see what they cost us in all areas of our lives. With this righteous indignation in our hearts we sit down and write a letter describing why we hired our character defect in the first place, what it “did” for us and what it cost us.

Then we introduce it to the new character trait we have hired to replace it, giving ex-

amples from our lives of what our new character trait employee does for us and why the old character defect's services will no longer be needed.

Have fun, tell your character defects off, and have security throw them out of your office. Then get back to work with the rest of your questionable character employees. Let them know their days are numbered. And don't forget to do a frequent office walk through to see if they have sneaked back in to cause problems with the other workers. Remember they have the office keys.

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Handout 3—for the mentee

Sample Termination Letter

The following letter is a sample letter to Worry. It is a suggestion of content, not format.

Dear Worry,

I know we have been the best of companions for the last fifty or so years but I am writing this letter to you because I feel it is important to recap our relationship, point out some issues and reach some important understandings.

Over the past year, I have been examining my life and the way I have dealt with personal concerns in all facets of my living. You, of course have been the influencer who has been guiding me through and presenting all my future concerns. Below I am listing three prime examples of past issues and results that have come from our partnership. You will also see the ways I have come to work with issues now as a result of a new way to work with a very dear friend named Jesus Christ.

<p>You and I concentrated on hiding my secret life constantly in all areas of my activities, associations, and personal interactions; you kept me on alert all the time and kept nagging me to not forget all I was doing. You always seemed to be reminding me of all the things I did wrong and why I was so stupid. You even had a great memory of all the things I have done wrong. You were like a tape recorder playing things back to me constantly. You always remind me of my guilt. You always made me nervous and often I felt ill just being reminded all the time about my shortcomings and negative actions. Often I felt you didn't really care about me but wanted to keep me under your control.</p>	<p>Now, Jesus has pardoned me from this wrong doing completely and my mind is fresh and clear without even caring about my past life. He has prepared a carefree understanding of my past life and even placed new friends in my life who have also benefited from His powerful relationship. My friends are so excited about Jesus that they have come beside me to work on issues together under His leadership. Jesus has removed my guilt and shame while restoring my excitement in doing the right things and embracing the TRUTH about all things I do and pursue.</p>
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<p>You have made me always think about things not here yet. You always tried to push back into my life to work against me on issues not associated with a secret life (because that area of my life is gone). I wonder why it is that you just don't get it about bugging me all the time about things I am not even sure I can control. You get under my skin with your tape playing all the time telling me to project plans and ideas into the future when I am not even there in time yet. Why is it that I have to be so concerned about the future? It drives me nuts and has even caused me to see doctors about the concerns you have helped me to have in my mind. Are you really a friend or an undercover spy of the enemy? You always keep my mind working and feeling on edge.</p>	<p>I am now asking Jesus to guide me here too because His way has been so successful in calming my mind issues with the secret life that has now disappeared. Jesus tells me in His word that He will go before me and carry all my concerns before they even become reality in my life. He will also never leave me even in time of trouble when real concerns are presented before me. He has asked me to leave my concerns to Him and He will go before me. It sure makes things a lot easier when He carries the load for me. When I continue to honor Him I have experienced new peace and become free of troubled thinking. When I work with Jesus my mind and heart become relaxed. He allows me to understand the things I cannot change and gives me the courage to change the things I can. Jesus has even provided the wisdom to know the difference between the things I can change and the things I can't and shouldn't have to be concerned about. Jesus' way of dealing with change is freeing to my soul; I feel brand new with His help</p>
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<p>You have guided me to be discontented with many jobs, things I own, and even my relationships throughout the years. You have made me think too much about what I may have missed or what I am about to miss out on if I don't act quickly or plan harder. You even suggest to me to work in different ways or much harder than others to get more out of life. You have pushed me to try being the best all the time and now I feel tired of performing at the highest levels. Your way has made me feel resentful about being pushed to achieve above others or myself. I don't like this feeling and it has made me feel lots of stress over the years especially over work issues.</p>	<p>For the very first time in my life I am eager to find contentment in what Jesus wants me to do for a living. He has provided a single thought pattern for my spouse and me together on our marriage and future life together. We don't often argue and are almost totally in concert on all our life goals. Jesus has shown us that the quality of our relationship and those with others is the most important area of our lives. I am looking forward to what Jesus wants for me to do in a job in the near future. I am eager to see what He wants us to do facing possible semi-retirement or down sizing our home. He may not even want us to do that yet and that's just fine with us as long as we know that is His plan and not ours. We are trying to make sure we consult Jesus on all our moves. Jesus takes the tension out of decisions and the human performance issues are gone. I don't feel alone any longer with decisions and discontentment is becoming an emotion of the past.</p>
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I think you probably get the message here from the examples I have cited. It is obvious to me that we don't need to work together any longer. In fact, as resentment goes, I am even under the impression that resentment is a good description of the way I feel towards your influence on my mental health these past years but I am not even going to let that hurt me because Jesus has requested even the resentment be turned over to Him. I have turned it all over to Him and now I am laughing at the way I used to work with you. I am the free one and you can forget visiting me any longer; in fact, the electricity to your tape recorder has been turned off and replaced by the greatest power source in the universe. If you dare to come back into my life I am sure your circuits will be blown due to the greater amperage Jesus provides.

Beware of His power,
Jay "plugged into Jesus" C

Handout 4

12 Step Assignments Schedule—Steps 5, 6 & 7

Completed	Week 1
Step 5:	
	Read aloud pages 72-75 (second paragraph) in the <i>Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous</i>
	Commit time in prayer to God
	Review the inventory sheets
	After reviewing the entire inventory, take about an hour alone to reflect. During that time read in the <i>Big Book</i> the paragraph at the bottom of page 75 and the first two paragraphs of page 76
	Reflect on anything left out of the inventory or whether there is anything blocking complete surrender to God
Steps 6 and 7:	
	Discuss with your mentor anything that came to mind that should be included in the inventory
	Create with your mentor a list of amends to make
	Conduct the commitment ceremony
	Plan to share your Step 5 experience at the next group meeting
	Read the sections on Steps 6 and 7 in <i>The Steps We Took</i>
	Write five insights from the reading above
	Read the sections on Steps 6 and 7 in <i>12 Steps and 12 Traditions</i>
	Write five insights from the reading above
	Read the sections on Steps 6 and 7 in <i>Hunger for Healing</i>
	Write five insights from the reading above

Completed	Week 2
	Review insights from the previous week's assignments
	Monthly review of Boundaries with your mentor
	Complete an exhaustive word study from the Bible on the words "hard-hearted" and "stiff-necked" (KJV)

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Completed	Week 3
	Create a thorough list of character defects, put them on a card and pray about them each day
	Write a termination letter to fire each character defect
	List the most significant character defects on the index card, then look up appropriate Scripture verses to go with each character defect
	Look at the behavior patterns identified in Step 5 and work with mentor to create action assignments aimed at changing those defects

Completed	Week 4
	Discuss what you are doing about the character defects you have identified

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