



Recovery Ministry

Step Nine: Making the Past Right

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: Step Nine Making the Past Right

This is the eighth 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 Step Nine.
2. Learn specific skills and assignments to help the mentee work through this Step.
3. Remember H.O.W. the method works for Step Nine.
4. Recheck the six attitudes and actions.
5. Learn the specific goals of Step Nine.

Content Outline

1. Introducing Step Nine
2. Recap H.O.W. for Step Nine
3. Backup assignments
4. Review the Six Attitudes and Actions
5. Step Nine Summary and Goals

Background Material for the Presenter

Each Step takes about four weeks to complete. The entire 12 Steps require nine to 12 months. But each mentee will move at his or her pace. A mentee might 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 goals to help you decide on the mentee's readiness to move on.

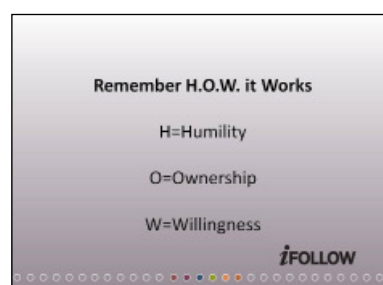
This unit introduces Step Nine. The assignments are broken down into four week-long sections. You can give fewer assignments during that week if the mentee needs more time, or give more assignments if the mentee is



effectively completing the work with the appropriate level of commitment and emotion—the four-week breakdown is just a guideline. 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. Humility has been growing inside our hearts throughout the first seven Steps, as we have admitted our problems, taken them to God, and now taken a close look at what we’ve really done, and why. Step Nine takes this humility outside ourselves and puts shoes on it. We have to go directly to those people we can, humbly look them in the eye, admit our faults and hurtful actions, and do our best to make amends. This humility can be tricky. Head-hanging shame and self-deprecation is not humility. It is an attempt to protect the self from the other’s possible anger or vindictiveness. On the other hand, it’s possible to be proud of our supposed humbleness, which is also not true humility. Only in the light and strength of God can we accomplish this (or any) Step.



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. This is the center of the Step Nine attempt to make amends. The other person, no matter what contributions they or their attitudes and actions made to our attitudes and actions, is never to blame for what we did.

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, and Step Nine is an unmistakable test of whether we are really willing or not. It cannot be faked. Passing this test will bring a new rush of freedom as we realize (that is, truly, honestly realize for ourselves, by experience) that, no matter what the other person’s response is, we have been willing to make amends and have made the free choice to do so, leaving the other person their own freedom to respond in whatever way they choose.

When these three keys work together in a mentee who is willing to do the hard work of attempting to make amends, the long, hard road to recovery just got a little shorter.

Some Things to Watch For

Is your mentee open to correction? Does he or she welcome information that will help him or her grow, despite how “bad” they look in light of the information? Is he or she willing to practice making amends with you and be coached on more effective ways of expressing themselves? Their understanding of these new insights is now showing clearly in new actions, attitudes, and choices. They can express them, but more importantly, they are showing them in new ways of living.

They can now be truly said to have faced the facts about their problems as much as humanly possible, and can accept personal responsibility for their actions and attitudes, with no excuses.

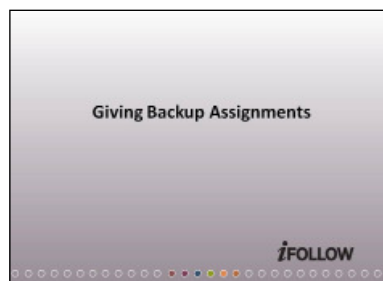


Giving Backup Assignments

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. Steps Five, Six, and Seven, as we've pointed out in previous units, are very difficult and draining. Step Eight is the first part of becoming willing, but they may not be ready for personally going to people yet. 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.

We 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. Take the time to be sure they have completely surrendered their character defects to God and are ready to have them removed. Watch for signs God is relieving their fears of facing up honestly to the people they have hurt.



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 the 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:

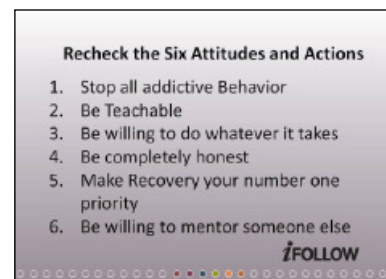
1. *Stop all addictive behavior.* And stay stopped.

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.* Including telling the truth if you feel you are rushing faster than you are ready to go. 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, listen for those who are ahead of you sharing their growing ability to tell the truth to themselves and others. What new strength and serenity can you see in them? Do you think the hard effort they are making is worth it to them? What will it take for you to move through the places where they are moving now?

5. *Make recovery your number one priority today and tomorrow.* As you remain committed to attending weekly group meetings and your mentoring meeting, making daily phone calls, and doing all your reading and writing assignments, you are now nearing the goal of that elusive twelfth Step, which you are beginning to suspect is never truly complete. Are you and your family starting to reap results? Are you feeling the newfound life Jesus spoke of in Matthew? "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) You are Jesus’ disciple now, just as truly as Peter or James. You have been since Step One, but especially since Step Three. He will walk with you through the rest, and this ninth Step will change your life in ways you can hardly believe yet.

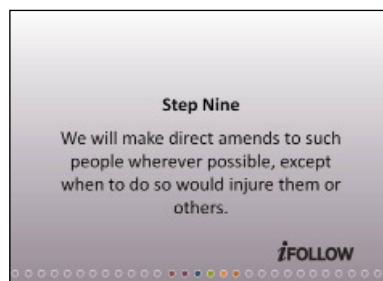
6. *Be willing to mentor someone else.* It’s coming closer. Are you starting to see it as possible? You are finding serenity, and you will be able to lead another through this thorny path because you know just how hard it is.

A common trait addicts share is deep self-centeredness. Your self-centeredness already has big dents in it. Going directly to people and attempting to make amends will knock it off its feet. 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.

Step Nine

We will make direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Step Nine challenges us to put our actions where our mouth is. Making amends is about removing relationship blockage. Making direct amends is about setting the record straight, removing secrets and rejoining society as a member with your dues paid in full. Making direct amends removes fear. Amends have nothing to do with legitimate transactions like bills, contracts and promises. They have everything to do with commitments we have failed to honor. Making direct amends restores us with those we have harmed. Our harms take many forms, but almost all of our harms come from the depth of our need and our desire to avoid pain and/or gain pleasure. They come from our selfish desire to be in control of our lives. Out of our self-will, we play the part of God, seeking to have life our way, and have someone else pay the bill. Seeking our own comfort, we have demanded that someone else pay our way. Making amends cleans up our past wrongs of setting other people and the truth ahead of our pride.



Goals: In order to move on to Step Ten, the mentee must: (1) Have completed all of the most significant and most difficult direct amends. (2) Have written a plan, including a timetable, for finishing the remaining amends, including financial amends.

Be sure to also discuss with the mentee that not everyone may accept their overtures or attempts to make amends. This is not their responsibility. Just as the mentee is learning to live in a new kind of freedom—the freedom to own up to their actions, offer reconciliation, and learn to make better choices—so the other person also has freedom to choose their

response. Attempts to gain full reconciliation by trying to manipulate the other person or “guilt them” into accepting the new relationship, or reheating old resentment because this person will not reconcile; all of these reactions will undo all the hard work the mentee has done. Once they have humbly done the best they can to make amends, they are absolved of other actions or further guilt if the other person does not respond. Their only responsibility then is to continue to pray for the other person and be open to the possibility that they may later recognize that the old addict they once knew is truly a new person, and may someday wish to complete the reconciliation, making it a two-way forgiveness.

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. 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. The Value of Indirect Amends
2. Amends Statement #1
3. Amends Statement #2
4. Step Nine Assignments Schedule



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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 is it so hard to own up freely to faults, ask forgiveness, and try to make amends?
2. Why does God require this of us?
3. Share a time when someone made amends to you. How did you feel before? How did you feel after? What happened to your relationship?
4. The author of this unit made the following statement: “Making direct amends removes fear.” Do you agree or disagree? Why?
5. Why is it so important to allow the other person the freedom to decide how to respond to our overtures? What are some ways to make sure we don’t fall back into old resentments if they do not accept our attempts to make amends?

Group Activity

Purpose: To help us think more clearly about making amends by getting outside our own sins and seeing them from another person's perspective.

Preparation: Each person needs a Bible. You may ask them in advance to bring their Bibles to the meeting, and if they have concordances, to bring them, too. You need enough space for the group to be divided into pairs. Uneven numbered teams will be more difficult, but an extra person could make a threesome. Each pair also needs a concordance. Pens and paper may be helpful.

Assignment: Each person is to find a story in the Bible in which someone (a named person) acted hurtfully toward another. Each pair should choose two different characters. They may make notes on just what the person did, who they hurt, and how. What amends do they think the person should have made? Then each person is to take on the role of their chosen character and attempt to make amends to their teammate, who will take on the role of the person harmed. Then trade. Each person will have a chance to be one who sinned and one sinned against. Try to really feel the way you think your character would have felt, both as sinner and as victim.

Time: Allow five minutes to get into pairs and find a fairly private place in the room. Then allow ten minutes to find a character and make a few notes. The role plays should take about five minutes for each person. Let them know when to switch. Allow twenty minutes for discussion of feelings that arose and how they might apply what they've learned. Is it easier to see why someone else should make amends, and how they should do it? Why or why not?

Handout 1—for the mentor

The Value of Indirect Amends

If we can't make direct amends for whatever reason, then why do we need to be willing to do so? What is gained?

Key Teaching Point: Indirect amends are made in two instances: (1) When the mentee does not know how to contact the person wronged. (2) When it is not appropriate to contact the person wronged. For example, when to do so would injure the wronged person or others.

Read: Ezekiel 33:15 and Matthew 5:24-26

Discussion Items

1. The mentee must be willing to make amends to these people. In the case of people with whom contact has been lost, the commitment should be that s/he will make direct amends if s/he ever crosses paths with them.
2. The reason for making indirect amends is because of the effect in us. They are an act of obedience before God to the spirit of the principle of restitution.
3. As addicts, we've sought to avoid the natural consequences of our actions. Making indirect amends enables us to learn the lessons we've missed even when we aren't able to contact the person we harmed.

Handout 2—For the mentee

Amends Statement #1

For a spouse or adult children who are aware of and were in the home during your acting-out behaviors, whether they witnessed them or not.

Prior to the amends appointment, make sure small children are arranged for, and go someplace where you can be alone with your spouse and undisturbed. If this session involves the initial disclosure of your addictive behavior, or if you will be sharing a significant amount of new information about your addiction, your spouse will need a support system in the hours immediately following the session. Without telling why, try to find out if your spouse's best friend or sibling is free during this time. Your spouse may want to be with someone he or she feels is safe, who can provide comfort and a listening ear. Try to remain sensitive to his or her needs around this painful time.

At the Appointment

"I asked for this time alone with you because I need to make amends to you for some of my past actions. I've been guilty of carrying out a pattern of addictive sin and misbehavior for the last _____ years of our marriage. I've been working on my own personal recovery for the past several months. I've come to see that in order to live a sane life, and to restore my relationship with God, I need to live in a more loving and ethical way. There have been many times in the past when I haven't acted ethically or in a loving way, and I know I've hurt you and others. I'm now in the process of going back to those I've hurt and attempting to make it right.

"Specifically, I've hurt you and our marriage by: (List all the ways you are aware of)

"Is there anything else that I owe you amends for? I want to clear up the wrongs of the past as much as I'm able. (Wait)

"As part of my amends to you, you can expect the following actions from me: (State what you are going to do differently in the future. For example: "I have lied to you in the past. You can expect me to be rigorously honest with you. I will not keep secrets from you.")

"In all those actions I was selfish, inconsiderate, dishonest, self-seeking and afraid. I'm truly sorry for the deep hurt I caused you. If there's anything I can do to make things right, please tell me. (Wait)

"Thank you for giving me this opportunity to make amends."

Handout 3

Amends Statement #2

For other people besides family members

Step 1: Calling for an Appointment

“(Name), I’m calling to see if I can get together with you briefly. I need to make amends to you for some past actions. Do you have time next ___ at ___? It won’t take long.”

Step 2: At the Appointment

“As I mentioned, I need to make amends to you. Because of some issues in my own life, I’ve been working in a character development program for the last several months. I’ve come to see that in order to live a sane life I need to live in a more loving and ethical way. There have been times in the past when I haven’t acted ethically or in a loving way, and I’ve hurt people. To the extent that I’m able, I’m now going back to the people I’ve hurt and trying to make it right.

“I know I hurt you by

“Is there anything else I owe you amends for? I want to clear up the wrongs of the past as much as I am able.” (Wait)

“As part of my amends to you, you can expect the following actions from me: (State what you are going to do differently in the future. For example: “I have lied to you in the past. You can expect me to be rigorously honest with you. I will not keep secrets from you.”)

“In all those actions I was selfish, inconsiderate, dishonest, self-seeking and afraid. I’d like to make it right with you if I can. I’m not sure what else I can do to make it right, but if you have any thoughts for me I’d be open to hearing them.” (Wait)

“Thank you for giving me this opportunity to make amends.”

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HANDOUT

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Handout 4

12 Step Assignments Schedule—Step 9

Completed	Week 1
	Monthly review of Boundaries with your mentor
	Discuss with your mentor the differences between traditional apologies and the 12-Step tradition of making amends
	Read the section on Step 9 in <i>12 Steps and 12 Traditions</i>
	Write five insights from the reading above
	Read the section on Step 9 in <i>Hunger for Healing</i>
	Write five insights from the reading above

Completed	Week 2
	Review insights from previous week's assignments
	Write out each of the amends to be made
	Set up as many direct amends as possible, and begin taking care of them immediately
	Put together a repayment plan for all outstanding financial debts, including spousal or child support

Completed	Week 3
	Discuss indirect amends with your mentor
	Review the list of people to whom indirect amends are owed
	List these people on a card and pray for them daily for the next two weeks. Pray for God's healing and blessing in their lives.
	Determine indirect financial amends

Completed	Week 4
	Review amends that have been made
	Review additional amends that need to be made and determine when they will happen
	Complete plans for direct or indirect amends that need to be made, including financial amends