

Take This First Step to Break Your Addiction

The original 12 steps were written many years ago for Alcoholics Anonymous. These alcoholics, after some period of sobriety, decided to write down the principles and steps they took to maintain their sobriety and to live a healthier life. These principles and steps have been used throughout the world to help millions of people with various addictions such as narcotic abuse, overeating, emotional problems, codependency and sexual addiction. If you study the history of Alcoholics Anonymous, you'll find a lot of prayer was involved. Let's walk through how impactful Step One truly is.

Step One: "We admitted we were powerless over our sexual addiction, and that our lives had become unmanageable."

We: I am so glad that the first word in the first step is "we." I would hate to think I was the only person who ever went through this. Addiction is an international as well as national problem. "We" means that we have similar experiences and we are alike. We grew up in the same family, though thousands of miles apart. We had the same kinds of abuses and neglects. "We" is a comforting word in this step. You can see that you are not alone and don't have to be alone. You can get better if you decide to get together. Without each other, we often fail to recover.

Admitted: This is a difficult word. Many of us have had difficult situations in our childhood that we have had to admit. Maybe we stole something or something happened to us, and we had to admit what we did. Do you remember those feelings of dread before you admitted some wrong you had done or another had done to you? In spite of that dread, we went ahead and admitted what we had done or what happened to us. After we admitted it, we felt less heavy or burdened, and as

if we could then move on. For the addict, admitting is one of the hardest things we will do in our recovery. Admitting is a very important aspect of recovery and only those who admit to addiction can move forward in recovery and life.

We Were Powerless: Again, I'm glad there is a "we" in there, and that I'm not the only one who is powerless. When we talk about power, we talk about control. Authority, strength or force can enable us to be over others. However, that is not what this word is. This word is "powerless." As we know, the suffix "less" means "without"—such as jobless. This is a tough reality for every addict. We are without any strength, power, control or force to influence our addiction. This is why we need each other and a recovery program.

Our Addiction: This is our unique way or combination of ways we have chosen to medicate our lives and became addictive. Our addiction may be chemicals such as alcohol, drugs, sugar or caffeine. Our addiction may be a process like gambling, working, or relationships. Regardless of our addictive behavioral choices, over time, we became addicted. These behaviors led us down a road of out of control behaviors from which we now desire recovery.

And that Our lives: Our lives can be many things. They can be our physical, emotional, intellectual or spiritual lives. If you look at all the parts of our lives, they wouldn't equal the totality of our lives. Our lives are the very core of us, the inner part of us that identifies us as being separate from others. This is what has been affected by our addiction. This is the part that feels disconnected, alone, confused and isolated when our needs are not being met. It is about this part of us we are going to admit something very important.

Had Become: These two words indicate to me that this has taken a while. It means that it took time, energy, process and choices. It didn't just happen. It took a while. and then eventually, it was made. Your life didn't become overwhelming

or devastated instantly, but over a period of time.

Unmanageable: When we think about manageable, we think about things being in order or serene. We can tell when we walk into a store whether the store is manageable or unmanageable. This word means unorganized and chaotic. If someone came from the outside and saw it, they would say “a mess!” Sometimes this is the way we feel, and our feelings can be valid. Many areas of our lives we have talked about have become unmanageable, unconnected, uncontrollable and unpredictable. No matter how hard we have tried to make them look good or perfect, they don’t and they are not. Our lives have become empty and hollow in many respects. Now, through Step One, if we can admit this unmanageability, we have a strong hope of recovery.

I encourage everyone to take Step One seriously because it is the foundation of the 12-Step program. It will cause you to have a good house of recovery to live in for the future. {eo}

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