



## 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. They cannot develop a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty. There are those, too, who suffer from serious emotional and mental disorders, but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest.

Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now. If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it – then you are ready to take certain steps.

At some of these we balked. We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not. With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the very start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely.

Remember that we deal with sexual impurity – cunning, baffling, powerful! Without help it is too much for us. But there is One who has all power – that One is God. May you find God now!

Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at a turning point. We asked God's protection and care with complete abandon. Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery:

- 1. We admitted we were powerless over our addictions and compulsive behaviors, that our lives had become unmanageable.**  
*"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 I cannot carry it out."* (Romans 7:18)
- 2. We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.**  
*"For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose."* (Philippians 2:13)
- 3. We made a decision to turn our lives and our wills over to the care of God, as we understood God.**  
*"Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you."* (1 Peter 5:6-7)
- 4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.**  
*"Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the LORD."* (Lamentations 3:40)
- 5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**  
*"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."* (James 5:16)
- 6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.**  
*"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up."* (James 4:10)
- 7. We humbly ask Him to remove all our shortcomings.**  
*"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."* (1 John 1:9)



- 8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.**  
*“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:32)*
- 9. We made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.**  
*“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” (Romans 12:10, 18)*
- 10. We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.**  
*“So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall!” (1 Corinthians 10:12)*
- 11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.**  
*“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – His good, pleasing, and perfect will.” (Romans 12:2)*
- 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we try to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.**  
*“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, <sup>4</sup>who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.” (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)*

Many of us exclaimed, “What an order! I can’t go through with it!” Do not be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not perfect, as Christ. The point is that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.

Our personal adventures before and after make clear three pertinent ideas:

- a. That we violated the sexual boundaries laid out in scripture by God for every man and could not manage that part our lives.
- b. That no human power could change us and restore us to sexual purity.
- c. That God could and would if God were sought.