

NextStepChristianRecovery

Instructor Packet

Next Step Christian Recovery

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NextStepChristianRecovery

Part I:

Introduction to Next Step Christian Recovery

Next Step Christian Recovery

Mission Statement

Next Step Christian Recovery is a Christ-centered Twelve Step program devoted to helping its members break the cycle of addiction in their lives. We work with anyone with any type of addiction.

We believe the Twelve Steps to be the practical application of the life-changing principles which are so clearly defined in the Scriptures. The primary tools of Next Step Christian Recovery include a Twelve Step Bible-based workbook as well as group meetings where sharing with others takes place.

The members of Next Step Christian Recovery help each other work through the problems of their past and support each other's efforts to change their thoughts, behaviors (and, ultimately, their hearts). Our goal is to grow closer to God each day and learn to trust Him, His Word and His Will for our lives. Redeeming, Reconciling and Restoring lives is God's purpose and ours.

Next Step Christian Recovery

The Origin of the Twelve Steps and recovery groups

On any given night, millions of individuals struggling with addiction come together in small groups scattered throughout the world in an effort to help each other break the cycle of addiction in their lives. Through the use of recovery meetings, where sharing with others with similar addictions takes place, and the Twelve Steps, many find the support they need. Next Step Christian Recovery is among these groups.

Unfortunately, many churches (or at least individuals within the church) have issues with the Twelve Steps or recovery type meetings – largely due to the use of terms or phrases like “Higher Power” and “a God of their own understanding.” The truth of the matter, though, is that the Twelve Steps are basically a modern-day application of the teachings of Jesus Christ. In addition, recovery groups are built upon a foundation of God. The origin of these groups can be traced back to a spiritual movement known as the Oxford Group. It would be beneficial to spend a few moments here exploring the foundation of this group as well as Alcoholics Anonymous – which came from the Oxford Group.

In 1908, a YMCA secretary named Frank Buchman had a spiritual transformation that changed his life. Previously, upon graduating from Muhlenberg College, he started a street-side church in Philadelphia (Church of the Good Shepherd) with a donation of seventeen dollars. The church flourished, and he started a hostel [an establishment that provides inexpensive food and lodging for a specific group of people, such as students, workers, or travelers] for young men which spread to other cities, and then he started a settlement house project. Frank had a violent argument with his trustee committee because they cut the budget and the food allotment. He resigned and went to Europe, ending up at a large religious convention in Keswick, England. It was at this convention that his spiritual transformation occurred upon him hearing a woman speaker talk simply about the cross of Christ. He felt the chasm separating him from Christ, and a feeling of a will to surrender. He went back to his house and wrote these words to each of his six trustees in Philadelphia: “My dear friend. I have nursed ill feelings against you. I am sorry. Will you forgive me? Sincerely, Frank.” Feeling an urge to share this experience, he went to nearby Oxford University and formed an evangelical group there among the student leaders and athletes.

The group eventually came to be known as the Oxford Group and, over the years, enjoyed wide popularity and success. As it spread, groups formed in England, Scotland, Holland, India, South Africa, China, Egypt, Switzerland, and North and

South America. They practiced absolute surrender, guidance by the Holy Spirit, sharing [and] bringing about true fellowship, [and] life changing faith and prayer. They aimed for absolute standards of Love, Purity, Honesty, and Unselfishness. Above all the group was a fellowship: “A First Century Christian Fellowship.” They carried the message aggressively to others. They met in churches, universities, and homes.

One early member at Oxford, Ken Twitchell, had attended Princeton University and had a brother in New York City who was a mainstay in the Calvary Episcopal Church. This becomes one of several amazing coincidences. In 1918 during his travels, Frank Buchman met a young YMCA worker, Sam Shoemaker, in China and converted him to the Oxford Group principles. Years later, Sam became the minister of that Calvary Church in New York, and that same church became the headquarters for the Oxford Group in the United States. (The name was changed in 1928 from “A First Century Christian Fellowship” to the “Oxford Group.”) The groups’ popularity peaked during this period. There were 10,000 people at one meeting at Stockbridge in the Berkshire Mountains. Business teams began to have their “house parties” in various cities.¹

As stated previously, from the foundation of the Oxford Group, Alcoholics Anonymous came into existence. Don Umphrey outlines the origin of Alcoholics Anonymous (and, by proxy, all recovery groups) and the Twelve Steps in *Journey to Recovery Through Christ: CASA’s 12-Step Study Bible*. He provides this explanation starting with the words of the Apostle Paul:

“Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?” (Romans 7:24). You may have asked yourself the same question. It does, after all, express the hopelessness and despair of countless men and women, including those who have been taken to their knees by addictions. In the sentence that follows his question, the biblical author Paul provided the solution. “Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Romans 7:25). A guide toward this solution for those attempting to overcome addictions may be found in the biblical basis of the 12 steps to recovery. They were formulated by the program of AA in the 1930s and have since been adopted by numerous groups addressing a wide variety of addictions that include self-defeating substances, behaviors and patterns of thinking.

One individual who undoubtedly identified with Paul’s cry of desperation was Bill Wilson. He was a high-rolling, heavy-drinking veteran of World War I, who made a fortune on Wall Street during the late 1920s. When the stock market crashed, he took solace in the bottle. Alcohol came to dominate his life and ruined it during the early 1930s. He tried every possible means to stop drinking but couldn’t. By 1934 he had resigned himself to dying drunk. Ebby Thacher, a friend from Bill’s school days and long-time drinking chum, called one day to say he would stop by for a visit. This surprised Bill because the last he’d heard, Ebby had been committed to a hospital for alcoholic insanity. Bill relished the idea of reliving old memories while doing some serious drinking with his friend. When Ebby arrived that day in November, 1934, Bill

¹ Silkworth.net. The Oxford Group connection. Retrieved December 26, 2015 from <http://www.silkworth.net>.

was surprised that he turned down his offer of a drink. “I’ve got religion,” Ebby reportedly told him. He went on to say that he hadn’t consumed a drink containing alcohol in two months. His secret: God had done for him what he could not do for himself. He got these ideas through his association with an organization known as the Oxford Group. Though Ebby’s message didn’t immediately stick, Bill came to believe that God could help him, too. Once he committed himself to this principle, he never drank again. Bill also associated himself with the Oxford Group, which had a mission for alcoholics at the Calvary Episcopal Church in New York.

In 1937 AA started splitting from the Oxford Group, and two years later that Oxford Group took on a political emphasis and became known as Moral Rearmament. The 12 steps were then written in 1938 based on the teaching of the Oxford Group and the influence of clergy to whom early AA members turned for feedback. Besides the biblical principles that guided the writing of the steps, the small-group approach used by the Oxford Group is still used today by Alcoholics Anonymous and the numerous other recovery groups that have sprung up since. As of 2014, there were 66,184 AA groups in the U.S. and Canada with a membership of 1,425,472; worldwide, the numbers included 115,358 groups and 2,138,421 members.²

As we can see, the Twelve Steps and recovery groups have grown over the decades to reach millions of individuals. Although used nowadays mainly by secular groups, these Twelve Steps find their roots in the Holy Bible. Again, some have called them “a modern-day application of the teachings of Jesus Christ.” They are used by millions of individuals involved with Alcoholics Anonymous, as well as by Narcotics Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous and countless other recovery groups (including Next Step Christian Recovery). The reason they work – when applied correctly – is because of their biblical foundation. Upon closer inspection, the concepts found in the Twelve Steps are things such as: humility, submission, confession, repentance, denial, honesty, forgiveness, conversion, perseverance, spiritual growth, etc. All of these concepts are ones that can clearly be found in the Bible and in the teachings of Jesus Christ. This type of ministry can be an amazing tool when utilized by church leaders to serve those within our churches and communities who are enslaved by addiction.

² Umphrey, Don. (2015) *Journey to recovery through Christ: CASA’s 12 step study bible*. (Dallas, Texas. Quarry Press), 6-7

Next Step Christian Recovery

Starting and maintaining a Next Step Christian Recovery group

One of the first steps in starting a recovery group is to elicit the help of church leaders – specifically elders, ministers and other prominent leaders. It is important to have the buy-in of these individuals as it can be difficult to change the misconceptions and judgments of the members of the congregation that are placed upon those who are enslaved by addiction. Having the support of the church leaders can go a long way in changing or removing the stigma that is so often attached to those in recovery.

The next step in starting a Christian recovery group at your church is to take one or more church members to act as “spark plugs,” people who want to start a group and are willing to exert some effort to get things going. If one or two are interested, it is beneficial to find out if there are others. Most likely candidates will be those who are already members of Twelve Step groups or people who have already sought help in other ways for particular addictions.

There are several ways of seeking out these individuals, including:

1. Networking,
2. seeking referrals from ministers or church counselors,
3. church announcements,
4. bulletin board posters,
5. an article in your church bulletin, and/or
6. social media

Once you have at least a few people who are interested, set up an organizational meeting to discuss a regular weekly meeting time, place (just about any small room in the church will suffice), and the date of your first meeting. You may also publicize the organizational meeting and the time and place where you will hold your regular meetings.

Then start meeting on a weekly basis. More than likely, some members of your group will already be members of Twelve Step groups, and they will be of great benefit in getting your group started. If your group is meeting peoples’ spiritual needs, your group will probably grow. In the early going,

however, the individuals who started the group will need to make a commitment to be in regular attendance at all of the meetings.

Following are some suggested guidelines for running your Next Step Christian Recovery group. It would be a good idea to discuss these at your organizational meeting and to reach some kind of consensus on some specific guidelines for the group at your church.

1. Everyone who attends your group must admit powerlessness over something in Step One. If people are really going to open up in your meetings, they don't want to do it in front of individuals who are onlookers or think they have no problems. (Not even ministers or other church leaders should be present unless they, too, admit powerlessness over something in Step One). These steps can best be utilized by individuals who identify with the powerlessness that is a key part of Step One and the insanity that is mentioned in Step Two.
2. Maintain anonymity, as do the Twelve Step groups. This idea will manifest itself in at least two ways:

First, the names of individuals who attend the group should be kept anonymous. For example, a member of the group should never disclose to anyone outside the group the identities of other group members. It would be okay, though, for an individual to break his or her own anonymity to someone outside the group.

Second, things said during the meetings are never discussed with non-group members – not even spouses. Group members follow a credo of: “What is said in the group, stays in the group.” To do otherwise would be to gossip and would make personal sharing within the group impossible.

3. Everyone will have a chance to talk at every meeting. A step study group does not consist of one person standing up in front of the group and talking about a step for an entire session. Rather, it includes everyone sharing. If you arrange the chairs for your group in a tight circle, or facing one another, it will lend itself toward greater sharing. If an individual doesn't feel like sharing during a particular meeting, that is fine. In this case the individual should introduce him or herself in the manner recommended in #5 below. Hopefully, this would be the exception rather than the rule, because spiritual growth within the group depends upon personal sharing.
4. Crosstalk should not be allowed. Typically, crosstalk refers to instances when members of the group are: speaking out of turn, interrupting someone while they are speaking, or giving advice to someone else at the meeting. As is the case in other recovery groups, members of Next Step Christian Recovery are strongly encouraged to speak only from their own experiences and to avoid giving direct advice or lecturing the group or a particular group member.

Experience has shown that the greatest progress occurs when each member of the group focuses on his or her own recovery. When we do so, and focus on our own thoughts, feelings and behaviors, we are taking responsibility for our own lives. It is important for us

to focus on ourselves, using first-person statements like I think, I feel, and I need as we share our own experience, strength and hope. There is no person in a group who is “the expert.” The group consists of individuals who admit brokenness in Step One and then strive for a closer walk with God.

5. Each person will introduce himself or herself the first time he or she speaks at a meeting by saying his or her name and what he or she is powerless over: Ex. “I’m Mary and I am powerless over drugs,” or “I am John and I’m powerless over jealousy.” This serves as a reminder of our personal powerlessness and our reliance upon God.
6. Meetings last approximately one hour. They always start on time and end on time. We live in a fast-paced society, and people have busy schedules. If meetings drag on, it will serve as a deterrent to attendance. While everyone has a chance to speak at every meeting, the one hour limit means that comments by individuals within the group don’t become long-winded monologues. If a person in the group rambles too long at the expense of others who won’t have a chance to speak, the individual should be reminded kindly to cut it short so that others may share.

Following are some questions that may arise...

Q. Should there be a meeting chairperson or facilitator?

A. Yes. Each meetings needs to have a chairperson or facilitator. The function of this role is to start and end the meeting on time and to call on people for their comments. The saying, “He who governs best is he who governs least,” serves as a good rule of thumb for the role of a chairperson in leading the group discussion. In this case it might be changed to “He who chairs best is he who talks least.” The purpose of the chairperson is to get people in the group talking and relating to one another.

You may have the same chairperson as you go through the steps together for the first time or you may have a different person volunteer to chair each week.

Q. How does the workbook used by Next Step Christian Recovery groups help us with our meetings?

A. The workbook was written to serve as the text for your Twelve Step study. It covers anywhere from 12-14 weeks. We would suggest going over the Welcome Packet the first week, providing for ample time to allow each group member to introduce themselves and briefly discuss what has brought them to the meeting. The second week you will cover the Introduction, then one step per week thereafter. We have found that it may be useful to cover Step #4 one week and then Moral Inventory that accompanies Step #4 the following week (you may consider combining Step #5 and Step #6 if you are hard-pressed to finish the curriculum over a specific timeframe). We would also suggest allowing time during the last week to discuss the Relapse Prevention Packet that is available on the Next Step Christian Recovery website at no charge.

You will get the most out of your time together if each person in the group has read and reflected on the material to be covered prior to coming to the group each week. The workbook is also an

extremely helpful tool for members to use on their own during the week for working through each step. The workbook's scripturally based fill-in-the-blanks, reflective questions, and worksheets walk individuals through each concept and provide in-depth, real-life application of each step.

Q. Do we disband after completing the step study?

A. If the group wishes to disband, it certainly may but there is no reason to stop meeting after going through the steps one time. You may start over again with Step #1 and have an ongoing step study group or you may choose to discuss any of a wide variety of topics that deal with addiction recovery (such as living one day at a time, resentments, pride, grace, anger, grief, jealousy, relationships, the list goes on). Breaking the year into quarters, you might go through the steps in quarters 1 and 3 and discuss topics during 2 and 4.

Q. Should members of Next Step Christian Recovery expect to work through the steps in the 13-week session?

A. By no means. The steps are really a lifelong process. Work on any particular step may take quite some time. For example, it may take several months or longer to successfully write out Step #4. Individuals who haven't advanced as far as a particular step will still have comments regarding the step. So an individual doesn't have to have "worked" a step in order to talk about it.

Q. How many people should a part of our Next Step Christian Recovery group?

A. You really need some kind of a "critical mass" in order to get a group started, perhaps seven or eight. With fewer than that, it seems to exert too much pressure on those present. With small numbers there may also be long periods of silence which might make some people feel uncomfortable. As your group grows to 14 to 15, you may find that some people won't have adequate time to talk. If this is the case, it is a good idea to break the group into two parts that meet in separate rooms.

Q. Should individuals who are members of Twelve Step groups be encouraged to quit attending those meetings once they have started our Next Step Christian Recovery group?

A. No. Their meetings will be very specific to their Step #1 problem. Further, from their meetings they will gain numerous spiritual concepts they will be able to share with your Christian recovery group. Individuals should attend the group or groups which best meet their spiritual needs.

Q. Do codependents also attend meetings with alcoholics and other addicts?

A: Ideally, it would be of greatest benefit if individuals who struggle with codependency had a meeting of their own, separate from individuals who are struggling with addiction. In the early stages of your Next Step Christian Recovery program it may not be possible to hold separate meetings. As the size of the group grows, though, it is important to consider adding a separate meeting for specifically for those who are codependent. This same concept may apply in groups where individuals struggling with sex addiction are in attendance. In such cases, it may be beneficial to hold separate meetings for men and women.

Q. How is a Next Step Christian Recovery group different from a Twelve Step group?

A. The exact definition of God is left up to each individual in most Twelve Step programs, and many individuals will refer to God as their “Higher Power.” Christians look to God as defined in the Bible and to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

A second difference is the nature of the problem. Twelve Step groups come together with the idea that everyone names the same problem in Step #1. In Next Step Christian Recovery groups, people can come together with different addictions. We work with anyone with any type of addiction.

Conclusion

What you have here should be enough to get you started. Undoubtedly, other questions will arise. As they do, you may rely on the experience of your members who also belong to other Twelve Step groups and, as in all things, you can trust in the power of prayer and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Next Step Christian Recovery

Who does Next Step Christian Recovery help?

As stated in the mission statement for Next Step Christian Recovery, we work with anyone with any type of addiction. Addiction is characterized by compulsive or repeated use of something – regardless of the consequences. Anything that looks good, feels good, or tastes good can become an addiction if not kept in moderation. While many individuals think about alcohol or drugs when they think about addiction, it is not isolated to these things. Addiction comes in many forms. Below is a list of some of the most common addictions:

- Alcohol or drugs
- Work, achievement, and success
- Money addictions, such as overspending, gambling, hoarding
- Control addictions, especially if they surface in personal, sexual, family, and business relationships
- Food addictions
- Sexual addictions
- Approval dependency (the need to please people)
- Rescuing patterns toward other persons
- Dependency on toxic relationships (relationships that are damaging and hurtful)
- Physical illness (hypochondria)
- Exercise and physical conditioning
- Cosmetics, clothes, cosmetic surgery, trying to look good on the outside
- Academic pursuits and excessive intellectualizing
- Religiosity or religious legalism (preoccupation with the form and the rules and regulations of religion, rather than benefiting from the real spiritual message)
- General perfectionism
- Cleaning and avoiding contamination and other obsessive-compulsive symptoms
- Organizing, structuring (the need always to have everything in its place)
- Materialism³

In a study done several years ago it was found that addiction affects approximately 23.2 million Americans – of whom only about 10 percent are receiving the treatment they need – and it

³ Hemfelt, Dr. Robert & Fowler, Dr. Richard (1990). *Serenity a companion for twelve step recovery*. Nashville. Thomas Nelson Publishers.

continues to be a growing epidemic within our society. It is not a respecter of persons nor is it isolated to alcohol and drugs; it comes in many forms. Most people, at some point in their lives, have at the very least been addicted to self. Again, anything that looks good, feels good, or tastes good can become an addiction if not kept in moderation.

This is not the way God intended for us to live. Jesus said, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." (John 10:10) The sad truth, though, is that many are not living life to its fullest. Instead, they are enslaved by addiction. Through Jesus Christ, the root of addiction can be removed and recovery, restoration and reconciliation can be found. This is where Next Step Christian Recovery comes in.

Next Step Christian Recovery

How does Next Step Christian Recovery help?

The primary tools of Next Step Christian Recovery include a Twelve Step Bible-based workbook as well as group meetings where sharing with others takes place. We believe the Twelve Steps to be the practical application of the life-changing principles which are so clearly defined in the Scriptures. We also believe, as was introduced by Alcoholics Anonymous, that by sharing our experience, strength and hope we may solve our common problems and help others to recover.

As a collective of men and women seeking to break the cycle of addiction and establish a closer walk with God, we can achieve results that we cannot otherwise achieve on our own. The members of Next Step Christian Recovery help each other work through the problems of their past and support each other's efforts to change their thoughts, behaviors (and, ultimately, their hearts). Our goal is to grow closer to God each day and learn to trust Him, His Word and His Will for our lives. Redeeming, Reconciling and Restoring lives is God's purpose and ours.

The workbook currently being used by Next Step Christian Recovery is entitled *12 Steps to a Closer Walk with God* (copies can be purchased at www.nextstepchristianrecovery.com). Its origin is explained below:

Since it was initially introduced in 1992, Dr. Don Umphrey's book on the biblical basis of the steps, *12 Steps to a Closer Walk with God: A Guide for Small Groups*, has been used as a text by Christian recovery groups throughout the United States, including James Ministries, Inc., known as the James Group. In discussions with Dr. Umphrey, Steve Steele, executive directive of the James Group, noted that while the 12-step book told about the steps, a workbook would actually help get people involved in the steps.

What about workbooks already available? One was not found that contained all the ingredients that were deemed to be important: 1) Based on the Bible; 2) Specifically aimed at addicted individuals; 3) Containing the premise that the steps take one from self-centered to God-centered.

After joining the James Group Ministries Board of Directors, Dr. Umphrey was challenged to write a workbook that would fulfill the above criteria and thus could be used by James Group participants and anyone else who believes the Bible is the inspired word of God.

As each chapter was written, it was used at the James Group Monday night meeting and at a Wednesday night class conducted at a church with no relation to the James Group. Both groups seemed to grow spiritually as a result of these sessions, in spite of the fact that the groups were different. The Monday night sessions consisted of addicted individuals, some of whom were either just starting their Christian walk or non-Christians. The Wednesday night class was made up mostly of mature Christians who did not profess to have any addiction.

Based on reactions to the preliminary material and suggestions from those worked through it, revisions were made and the first edition of the workbook went to press. A second edition of the workbook was further revised to account for changes in the 2011 New International Version of the Bible and to improve upon the earlier edition. Both Steve Steele and Chris Moore provided feedback for changes that were made in the second edition.

Next Step Christian Recovery

What does a Next Step Christian Recovery meeting look like?

This information is designed to help prospective facilitators gain some insight into how established Next Step Christian Recovery group meetings are conducted. It is not meant to be followed verbatim; it is only a guide.

Set-up

It is customary to provide, at the very least, coffee and/or water for the members of the group. Snacks or a light meal are also an option, as many of the members may be coming straight from work or have not otherwise had the opportunity to eat. This is at the discretion of the local leadership.

As for setting up the room itself, chairs are usually placed in a large square or circle so that the members can face each other. Tables are preferable, as they allow members to comfortably take notes as well as reference their workbooks and Bibles simultaneously.

Depending on the size of the group, and the amount of space available, you may also want to consider breaking into smaller groups (of approximately 10-12 individuals). Doing so helps to ensure that each member is given the opportunity to share.

Implementing the Program

One individual should act as the Facilitator and be responsible for leading the discussion as well as helping to keep the class focused on the curriculum. The Facilitator may also need to gently remind members of the rules (see handout for Class Rules). Some useful tips to implore for “disruptive” individuals may be:

- Refer to the Class Rules (it may be helpful to post these where they are clearly visible to everyone)
- Make eye contact with the disruptive individual
- Be silent and wait for disruption to end
- Confront the behavior (lovingly of course)
- Confront the individual privately outside the group to discuss the disruptions
- Subtly call attention to the behavior (ex. stand next to or behind the individual)

Starting the Meeting

It would be appropriate to start each meeting with a word of prayer. This could be led by the Facilitator or by one of the members of the group.

Following the opening prayer and any announcements that may need to be made (including, if you so choose, the reading of the Class Rules), the Facilitator can start the study by reading the two-page introduction for whichever Step the group is studying that week. As for the story that accompanies the Step, we would suggest asking for volunteers to read, as this will allow others to participate (and keeps the meeting from becoming a lecture).

In regard to the Step study itself, it will be up to the Facilitator to decide if the questions (and accompanying Bible readings) will be completed in their entirety or not. Due to time constraints, though, this will most likely not be possible. While it may be tempting to allow the group to determine how much is accomplished each week in the workbook, it is important to have some structure so that the Step study is completed in a reasonable amount of time (see Course Curriculum for a suggestion of how to structure the study).

Closing the Meeting

It would be appropriate to also end the meeting with a word of prayer. Again, this could be led by the Facilitator or by one of the members of the group.

Before dismissing the group, we would suggest encouraging the members to work on the next Step on their own throughout the upcoming week so that they will be prepared to share. It is also a good idea to ask for volunteers to help clean up. In fact, we would suggest having a “team” in place for set-up and tear-down. This gives the members of the group an active role in the program and gives them an opportunity to serve. It also helps to ensure the Facilitator or Leadership Team do not become overwhelmed or get stuck overseeing every aspect of the program.

Small Groups

Following the Step study it is beneficial to break into smaller groups (ex. men in one group, women in another) for additional discussion. This allows for a more intimate setting in which members of the group who are serious about their recovery and are willing to discuss the deeper issues that are going on in their lives can share. This type of setting also helps to foster closer bonds and accountability among members of the group. The same Class Rules apply in the small group setting.

Additional Comments

In closing, we want to point out that the Next Step Christian Recovery program is yours to orchestrate as you see fit and as the Holy Spirit directs. We feel it is helpful to have some continuity among groups, and also feel that it would be beneficial if all groups followed the same curriculum, but understand that each will be different – and that is perfectly acceptable.

God has called us to unity rather than uniformity. As long as the mission of Next Step Christian Recovery at your location is the same as ours – to help the members break the cycle of addiction in their lives as well as grow closer to God each day – then you have done your part.

Thank you for your desire to help others be redeemed, reconciled and restored to God and also to their loved ones. May God bless you in your endeavors!

Next Step Christian Recovery

Class Rules

1. We are dedicated to the principles of confidentiality and anonymity. What is said in group needs to remain in the group.
2. We recognize only one Savior in Next Step Christian Recovery and His name is Jesus Christ. No one else has the ability to fix or save another.
3. We will show respect to whoever is speaking and not talk over one another or carry on conversations that exclude others in the group.
4. We will keep our sharing focused on ourselves and our own growth and limit ourselves to 3-5 minutes in order to allow ample time for everyone to share.

Next Step Christian Recovery

Course Curriculum

Week 1:

- Introduction to Next Step Christian Recovery and presentation of the Welcome Packet
- Topics include: Different types of addiction, symptoms/coping mechanisms, behavior/thought patterns, root cause of addiction
- Objective: Understanding the purpose and mission of Next Step Christian Recovery and where we fit

Week 2:

- Discuss Introduction (from workbook)
- Topics include: Addiction, Pride
- Objective: Recognizing the bondage of addiction and our issue of pride

Week 3:

- Discuss Step #1
- Topics include: Denial, Powerlessness, Hopelessness
- Objective: Getting past denial of the problem and recognizing our powerlessness

Week 4:

- Discuss Step #2
- Topics include: Awakening, Hope, Sanity
- Objective: Awakening to see God as the Ultimate Power Source and the One who can restore hope and sanity

Week 5:

- Discuss Step #3
- Topics include: Willingness, Action
- Objective: Having a willingness to turn our minds, hearts and lives over to God

Week 6:

- Discuss Step #4
- Topics include: Honesty, Admission, Inventory
- Objective: Discovering the honesty to look at our lives and admitting what is there

Week 7:

- Discuss Step #4 – Moral Inventory Guide
- Topics include: Honesty, Admission, Inventory
- Objective: Continuing to look at our lives honestly and admitting what is there

Week 8:

- Discuss Step #5
- Topics include: Confession, Admission
- Objective: Stepping out on faith to openly and honestly speak to God and another person about our addictions, compulsions and negative behavior

Week 9:

- Discuss Step #6
- Topics include: Submission, Willingness
- Objective: Becoming willing to let go of our old self and former way of living

Week 10:

- Discuss Step #7
- Topics include: Ask, Humility, Conversion
- Objective: Asking God to begin the transformation process and reaching a point in our recovery process where a new beginning is found

Week 11:

- Discuss Step #8
- Topics include: Forgiveness, Grace, Amends
- Objective: Writing down the names of persons harmed, developing a willingness to do something about it, and actually going to such person to make wrongs right

Week 12:

- Discuss Step #9
- Topics include: Forgiveness, Grace, Amends
- Objective: Writing down the names of persons harmed, developing a willingness to do something about it, and actually going to such person to make wrongs right

Week 13:

- Discuss Step #10
- Topics include: Introspection, Ongoing Inventory
- Objective: Taking care of business daily through ongoing inventory and honest dealings with others

Week 14:

- Discuss Step #11
- Topics include: Prayer, Meditation, Personal Development/Continual Growth
- Objective: Getting set on a course of continual spiritual growth and personal development

Week 15:

- Discuss Step #12
- Topics include: Service, Sharing, Carrying the Message, Maintaining Freedom
- Objective: Sharing with others what has worked for us in our recovery

Week 16:

- Discuss Recovery Management Packet
- Topics include: Maintaining Freedom, Lifestyle Imbalance, Triggers
- Objective: Identify challenges and stressors, cravings and triggers, and solutions for effectively managing and overcoming these things and maintaining our recovery

NextStepChristianRecovery

Part 2:

Handouts & Supplemental Material

Next Step Christian Recovery

Twelve Steps

Step #1

We admitted we were powerless over _____, that our lives had become unmanageable.

“...we look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows. Like the blind we grope along the wall, feeling our way like blind men without eyes. At midday we stumble as if it were twilight; among the strong, we are like the dead.” Isaiah 59:9-10

Step #2

We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.”
Proverbs 1:7

Step #3

We made a decision to turn our wills and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil.” Proverbs 3:5-7

Step #4

We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

“(There are) those who are pure in their own eyes and yet are not cleansed of their filth...”
Proverbs 30:12

Step #5

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

“He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.” Proverbs 28:13

Step #6

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

“I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Praise be to you, O Lord; teach me your decrees.” Psalm 119:10-12

Step #7

We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

“My eyes are ever on the Lord, for only He will release my feet from the snare.” Psalm 25:15

Step #8

We made a list of all the persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

“When a man’s ways are pleasing to the Lord, He makes even his enemies live at peace with him.” Proverbs 16:7

Step #9

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

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.” Matthew 5:9

Step #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

Step #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.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.” Matthew 5:6

Step #12

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’” Isaiah 52:7

Next Step Christian Recovery

What is a sponsor / accountability partner?

- A sponsor is the primary accountability person and guide in your recovery (other than God, of course).
- A sponsor can be there to discuss issues in detail that are too personal or would take too much time in a meeting.
- A sponsor will lovingly and directly confront you any time needed.
- A sponsor will give you encouragement and, as you progress, will celebrate your successes with you.
- A sponsor is someone you can talk to, who will listen when you feel tempted, frightened, Hungry Angry Lonely Tired (H.A.L.T.) and in times of crisis.
- A sponsor will pray with you and seek the Lord's guidance with you.
- A sponsor, as a guide, will teach you the tools of recovery, how to use them and will show you the path for success using the twelve steps.
- A sponsor should be the same sex as you.

NextStepChristianRecovery

What are the qualities of a sponsor/accountability partner?

- Does their walk match their talk?
- Do they exhibit the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-26)?
- Do they have a growing relationship with Jesus Christ?
- Do they express the desire to help others in their recovery?
- Do they show compassion, care, and hope rather than pity?
- Are they a good listener?
- Are they strong enough to confront your denial or procrastination?
- Do they offer encouragement and helpful suggestions?
- Can they share their own current struggles with others?

***Commit to call your sponsor frequently.
If you wait to call until you NEED to – you won't call!!***

Codependency and Christian Living

As presented by Celebrate Recovery

On the surface, codependency messages may sound like Christian teaching:

- “Codependents always put others first before taking care of themselves.” (Aren’t Christians supposed to put others first?)
- “Codependents give themselves away.” (Shouldn’t Christians do the same?)
- “Codependents martyr themselves.” (Don’t Christians honor their martyrs?)

Those statements have a familiar ring, don’t they? Then how can we distinguish between codependency, which is unhealthy to codependents and their dependents, and mature faith, which is healthy?

Codependency says:

- I have little or no value
- Other people and situations have all the value
- I must please other people regardless of the cost to myself or my values
- I am to place myself in a position to be used by others without protest
- I must give myself away
- If I claim any rights for myself, I am selfish

Jesus taught the value of the individual. He said we are to love others equal to ourselves, not more than. A love of self forms the basis for loving others. The differences between a life of service and codependency take several forms.

- Motivation differs. Does the individual give his (or her) service and himself out of free choice or because he considers himself of no value? Does he seek to “please people?” Does he act out of guilt and fear? Does he act out of a need to be needed (which means he actually uses the other person to meet his own needs; the helpee becomes an object to help the helper achieve his goals).

- Service is to be an active choice. The person acts; codependents react.
- A codependent's behavior is addictive rather than balanced. Addictions control the person instead of the person being in charge of their own life.
- Codependents have a poor sense of boundaries; they help others inappropriately (when it creates dependency on the part of the other person rather than moving that person toward independence). They have trouble setting limits for themselves and allow others to invade their boundaries.

What is codependence?

- My feelings about who I am stem from being loved by you
- My good feelings about who I am stem from receiving approval from you
- Your struggle affects my serenity. My mental attention focuses on solving your problems or relieving your pain
- My mental attention is focused on pleasing you
- My self-esteem is bolstered by solving your problems
- My self-esteem is bolstered by relieving your pain
- My own hobbies and interests are put aside. My time is spent sharing your interests and hobbies
- Your clothing and personal appearance are dictated by my desire as I feel you are a reflection of me
- I am not aware of how I feel. I am aware of how you feel
- I am not aware of what I want. I ask what you want
- The dreams I have for my future are linked to you
- My fear of rejection determines what I say or do
- I use giving as a way of feeling safe in our relationship
- My social circle diminishes as I involve myself with you
- I put my values aside in order to connect with you
- I value your opinion and way of doing things more than my own
- The quality of my life is in direct relation to the quality of yours

A codependent's sense of worth is tied up in helping others; Christianity says that a person has worth simply because he (or she) is a human being created by God. One's self-worth is separate from the work one does or the service one renders.

Codependents have difficulty living balanced lives; they do for others at the neglect of their own well-being and health; Christian faith calls for balanced living and taking care of oneself.

Codependent helping is joyless; Christian service brings joy.

Codependents are driven by their inner compulsions; Christians are God-directed and can be free from compulsiveness, knowing that God brings the ultimate results.

Michigan Alcohol Screening Test (MAST)

This test is nationally recognized by alcoholism and drug dependence professionals. You may substitute the words "drug use" in place of "drinking."

1. Do you feel you are a normal drinker? ("normal" - drink as much or less than most other people)
Circle Answer: YES NO
2. Have you ever awakened the morning after some drinking the night before and found that you could not remember a part of the evening?
Circle Answer: YES NO
3. Does any near relative or close friend ever worry or complain about your drinking?
Circle Answer: YES NO
4. Can you stop drinking without difficulty after one or two drinks?
Circle Answer: YES NO
5. Do you ever feel guilty about your drinking?
Circle Answer: YES NO
6. Have you ever attended a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)?
Circle Answer: YES NO
7. Have you ever gotten into physical fights when drinking?
Circle Answer: YES NO
8. Has drinking ever created problems between you and a near relative or close friend?
Circle Answer: YES NO
9. Has any family member or close friend gone to anyone for help about your drinking?
Circle Answer: YES NO
10. Have you ever lost friends because of your drinking?
Circle Answer: YES NO
11. Have you ever gotten into trouble at work because of drinking?
Circle Answer: YES NO
12. Have you ever lost a job because of drinking?
Circle Answer: YES NO

13. Have you ever neglected your obligations, your family, or your work for two or more days in a row because you were drinking?

Circle Answer: YES NO

14. Do you drink before noon fairly often?

Circle Answer: YES NO

15. Have you ever been told you have liver trouble such as cirrhosis?

Circle Answer: YES NO

16. After heavy drinking have you ever had delirium tremens (D.T.'s), severe shaking, visual or auditory (hearing) hallucinations?

Circle Answer: YES NO

17. Have you ever gone to anyone for help about your drinking?

Circle Answer: YES NO

18. Have you ever been hospitalized because of drinking?

Circle Answer: YES NO

19. Has your drinking ever resulted in your being hospitalized in a psychiatric ward?

Circle Answer: YES NO

20. Have you ever gone to any doctor, social worker, clergyman or mental health clinic for help with any emotional problem in which drinking was part of the problem?

Circle Answer: YES NO

21. Have you been arrested more than once for driving under the influence of alcohol?

Circle Answer: YES NO

22. Have you ever been arrested, even for a few hours because of other behavior while drinking? (If Yes, how many times _____)

Circle Answer: YES NO

SCORING

Please score one point if you answered the following:

1. No

2. Yes

3. Yes

4. No

5 through 22: Yes

Add up the scores and compare to the following score card:

0 - 2 No apparent problem

3 - 5 Early or middle problem drinker

6 or more Problem drinker