



Recovery Ministry

Step Two: There's hope out there, and I want it

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 Two

There's hope out there, and I want it

This is the third of eleven units on running a 12 Step addiction recovery ministry.

Learning Objectives

1. Review the needs of the mentoring relationship as it relates to Step Two.
2. Learn specific skills and assignments to help the mentee move from a successful first Step on to the next.
3. Remember H. O. W. the method works for Step Two.
4. Recheck the six attitudes and actions.
5. Learn the specific goals of Step Two.

Content Outline

- A. Introducing Step Two
- B. Recap H. O. W. for Step Two
- C. Backup assignments
- D. Review the Six Attitudes and Actions
- E. Step Two Summary and Goals

Background Material for Presenter

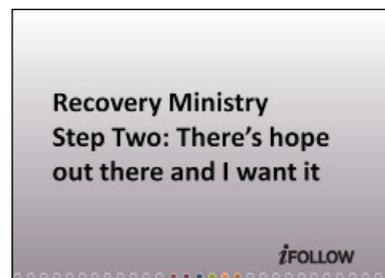
Each Step takes about 4 weeks to complete or about 9 to 12 months for the entire process. But each mentee will move through the 12 Steps at their own pace. A mentee may move more quickly or slowly through the Steps depending on the level of commitment and honesty, the amount of time dedicated to homework, number of outside commitments, etc. It is up to you as the mentor

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to determine whether or not the mentee is ready to move to the next Step. Each Step has a “Goals” section to help you decide on the mentee’s readiness to move on.

This unit introduces Step Two. 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. This may begin to be slightly more difficult as we find ourselves beginning to succeed. “This isn’t so hard!” we may think. Caution! Pride still leads to the same falls it always did. Humility is the only safe path.



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. At Step Two, if we have already believed in a powerful God, it may be tempting to blame God for not saving us sooner from our choices, or blaming God for making us this way. The fact is, God was always there. We made our own choices, and now we’re making new ones. And God is still there. If belief in God as a Higher Power is new to us, this can be a difficult Step to negotiate. Mentors must be careful not to push their own belief systems onto mentees.

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. We begin to realize there really is help there for us, and we can learn to access it.

When these three keys stay together in the mentee’s new life, they have made serious and important strides on the long, hard road to recovery.

Some things to watch for are:

They are still open to correction. They welcome information that will help them grow despite how “bad” they look in light of the information. They are at least willing to explore the idea of a Higher Power that can help them. If they were already believers, they are open to exploring how their ideas about God may have been just as unhealthy as their

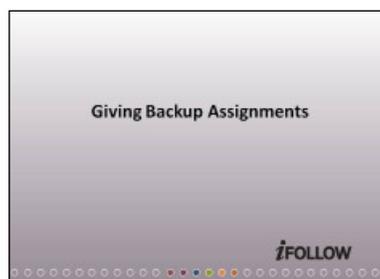
ideas about themselves, their addictions, and reality in general.

They are making progress in being able to express how new, fresh insights have affected them, causing a change in attitude or action. 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 are still facing newly uncovered facts about their problem as much as humanly possible. As they learn more about God and how God works, they are resisting the temptation to blame Him for their choices or for the consequences.

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. This is a particularly tricky Step for some. 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, especially at this Step. If admitting we have a problem we can't control is foundational, coming to the place where we can accept God's help with it is equally so. None of our attempts, even with each other's help, will truly heal us until we allow the Master Healer in. 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. Show as clearly as you can the incredible healing and serenity God gives you.

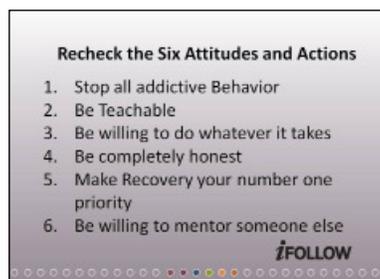
In any assignments you give, whether primary or backup, the emphasis should remain on honesty and action. The mentee should not sermonize, quote the readings back to you or, analyze the finer points of recovery as a third person narrative. The mentor should see honest reflection—"what this means to me"—in 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 first unit 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.* Which is even worse than you thought it would be! And also even more of a relief. . .

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? Is the terror receding, fading away like last year’s leaves?

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. No matter how much better you feel now, you must remain committed to attending the weekly group meet-

ings 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. This second Step will take a month or longer, and there are ten more to follow. It is wise not to make any major changes in your life circumstances for the next 12 months in order to have maximum time and energy for your recovery work. Make 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. And all those other responsibilities and commitments will be *infinitely* improved and blessed when the newly healthy you is able to keep them all!

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.

Step Two

We are coming to believe that a Power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity.

Step Two asks us to look to God for help. Many of us wouldn't know God if He introduced himself on the street, despite years of regular church attendance. We continue our trip away from our addictive behaviors and attempts to meet our own needs, towards the care of God. In Step 2 we find that not only can God restore us to sanity, but He will restore us to sanity if we ask him to.

Goals: In order to move on to Step Three, the mentee must:

- have hope that God can save him
- truly want a spiritual way of life



If the mentee has been in therapy for this addiction, it's important to point out that the 12 Steps is complementary to therapy, but it approaches recovery from a completely different angle. This is essentially a spiritual program. God is at the heart of the transformation process. Although we may do some exercises that help us understand ourselves emotionally, this program is all about connecting with God as we've never connected with Him before. If the mentee understands that, and wants that, then s/he is ready for Step Three. If not, there's no need to go further. This is a crucially important Step, and skimping on it is guaranteed to cause trouble.

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. God Who?
2. Step Two Assignments Schedule

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Additional Resources

- AA Services, (2002). *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. AA World Services, Inc.
- AA Services (2001) Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition-("Big Book") . NY; Works publishing.
- Kearney, Joseph (2008). *A Christian 12 Step Recovery Program*
- McQ., Joe (1990). *The Steps We Took*. August House Publishers, Inc.
- Miller, J. Keith (1992). *A Hunger for Healing: The Twelve Steps as a Classic Model for Christian Spiritual Growth*. HarperCollins Publishers.
- Miller (1992), *A Hunger for Healing Workbook*. HarperCollins Publishers.
- Shoemaker, Samuel M., Bill Pittman, and Dick B. (1994). *Courage to Change: The Christian Roots of the 12-Step Movement*
- Williams, Don (2004). *12 Steps with Jesus*

Websites

www.alcoholicsvictorious.org

www.christianrecovery.com

www.christian12Step.org

www.iactsm.com International Association of Christian Twelve Step Ministries

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Discussion Questions

1. Share how you came to have faith in God, what some early struggles were, what some struggles are now. Were you raised as a Christian? Did you come to faith late in life? Were you raised as a church attender, but not really a Christian?
2. How does the problem of addiction both grow out of and add to the dilemmas of faith?
3. If you are a recovering addict and have been in recovery for a long time, have there been times when you slipped back into old ways of thinking about God? What have you/can you done/do to help prevent this, or at least to catch it and turn it around?
4. What are some ways that Christians who don't understand addiction sometimes harm the cause of helping addicts learn to trust God?
5. What are some ways Christians who don't understand addiction can help the cause of helping addicts learn to trust God?

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Group Exercise

Purpose: To see more clearly our preconceived and learned ideas about God and how we perpetuate them.

Preparation: You need three large tables, each supplied with large sheets of paper (such as tablecloth paper), and lots of markers in many colors. Make three large tent card labels and put one on each table. One tent card says “Punitive and Punishing.” The second says “Absent and Unreal.” The third says “Accepting and Loving.”

Assignment: Divide the group arbitrarily into three groups and send one to each table. Give them five minutes to quickly write on the paper all the words, phrases, and actions they can think of *from their personal experience* that pointed to a God like the one labeled on that table. Encourage them to find ways to make what they write express what they mean visually as well as just by what it says. They could also draw pictures, make slashes or lightning, or illustrate in any way they wish.

For instance, at the “Punitive and Punishing” table, people might write in large, hard, angry letters things such as: *HITTING, BAD GIRL!, YOU MADE GOD UNHAPPY, GOD IS GOING TO GET YOU, YELLING, STUPID!*, etc. At the “Absent and Unreal” table, people might write, perhaps in pale colors or small letters or near the margins and corners, *WHO CARES?, GOD IS DEAD, GO AWAY, CHILDREN SHOULD BE SEEN AND NOT HEARD*, etc. At the “Accepting and Loving” table, people might write *JESUS LOVES ME, I'M PROUD OF YOU!, PRAYER, SINGING, HUGS*, etc.

After five minutes, have the tables switch, and after five more, switch again, so that everyone gets a chance at every table. Remind them that everything they record needs to be from their personal experience.

Hang the papers up where they can be seen and ask for five minutes of silence. (This will seem very long – don't cut it short.) During this five minutes, those who wish may go to stand beside the poster that *felt* most true to them *this week*.

Time: Several minutes for setting things up and supplying the tables (in advance); then 15 minutes for each group to get to each table; 20-30 minutes debriefing. Total time: less than one hour.

Debrief: Take 20 minutes – 30 if things are getting emotional – to discuss feelings and reactions. Were the things we wrote things others said or did to us? Were they things we said and did to others or ourselves? How do we want to change? Finally, let the group tear up, crumple, burn (outside) and otherwise destroy the two false posters and the false gods they represent. End with a prayer, gathered together by the “Loving and Accepting” poster, in the arms of the one True God it represents.

Handout 1: God Who?

Read this essay, then select five words from the chart below.

As we see the utter failure of our addiction to bring us happiness in Step 1, we are told the ONLY one who can help us is God. Many of us are desperate enough to say, “Oh, Okay.” We are not exactly thrilled to hear that God is our only way of escape from our addiction.

We have found without exception that as addicts our perception of God is based on something other than God. Our perception of God is as warped as our sense of what a healthy relationship is. Our perception of God is not the reality of who God is. In order to “come to believe that a power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity” we need to believe that in restoring us to sanity we won’t be destroyed.

Many of us wouldn’t know God if he introduced himself on the street, despite years of regular church attendance. We continue our trip away from our addictive behaviors and attempts to meet our own needs, towards the care of God. In step 2 we find that not only can God restore us to sanity, but he will restore us to sanity if we ask him to. We come to see that He WANTS to restore us to sanity. That He wants to be near us, as we are, not as we try to convince others we are. He is willing and able to save us from our addiction right where we are at now. If we find that our god is not ready, willing and able to restore us to sanity, we don’t have the right God. Ask Him to reveal himself to you, He can do that too.

Circle 5 words that describe who God is in your experience.

NOTE: Don’t quote who someone else says God is, or what your Sunday School or Sabbath School teacher said. Select the words based on how you act towards God, how you treat Him, what you think when you pray, if you still pray. Select the words based on how you approach God.

Trustworthy	Unapproachable	Forgiving
Too busy for me	Capricious	Judgmental
Indifferent	Distant	Spoilsport
Compassionate	Fake	Interested in me
Gone	Caring	Cruel
Mean	Forgetful	Strict
Nice	Impossible to please	Capable

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Copy the words you circled to this page.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Is there a pattern to the words you selected? Do they fall into one of the following columns? To which of the following do they most closely relate? Circle 5 words that describe who God is in your experience.

PUNITIVE OR PUNISHING	ACCEPTING and LOVING	ABSENT or UNREAL
Mean	Trustworthy	Gone
Cruel	Compassionate	Fake
Spoilsport	Nice	Distant
Judgmental	Caring	Unapproachable
Strict	Interested in me	Forgetful
Impossible to please	Capable	Indifferent
Capricious	Forgiving	Too busy for me

Most of us believe that God is punitive and punishing, or non-existent. Most tragic of all is the belief that God is absent or uncaring.

If all the words you selected are in the middle column, you are not an addict. Addiction is our attempt to meet our own needs because no one else could or would. Therefore if we have an addiction, we have trust problems. After all why would I have to meet my needs if God was approachable, not waiting to smash me for my sin? Why would I have to meet my needs if God cared about me at all?

The big question is: are we willing to take God's word about His character? Are we willing to discard the beliefs we have used to justify our addictive, self-destructive behavior?

Ask yourself: if God is who He says He is, and that trusting Him would restore you to sanity, is it worth taking the risk to be free from your addiction?

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Handout 2

12 Step Assignments Schedule—Step 2

Completed	Week 1
	Read <i>Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous</i> , Chapter 4
	Write five insights from the reading above

Completed	Week 2
	Review insights from previous week’s assignments
	Complete the “God Who?” test
	Read the section on Step 2 in <i>12 Steps and 12 Traditions</i>
	Write five insights from the reading above
	Read the section on Step 2 in <i>The Steps We Took</i>
	Write five insights from the reading above
	Write an essay: “How a Biblical character’s physical face-to-face encounter with God changed them”

Completed	Week 3
	Review insights from previous week’s assignments
	Review answers to “God Who?” test
	<i>Hunger for Healing</i> Step 2, write five insights
	Write at least one paragraph on each of the following questions: Who do you think God is? Who would you like God to be?

Completed	Week 4
	Review insights from previous week’s assignments

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HANDOUT

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