

CODATEEN STEP STUDY GUIDE

The following is a suggested step review, ideas, and questions for CoDAteen members. It is the beginning of our learning to trust CoDAteen as a whole and encourage us to share on these issues individually, in CoDAteen meetings and with trusted adult hosts/sponsors.

STEP ONE

We admitted we were powerless over others – that our lives had become unmanageable.

In Step One we acknowledge that our lives have become full of chaos and drama. We may be exhausted from our attempt to control the people and situations that surround us. Now we are asked to admit our powerlessness over others and the unmanageability in our lives.

In Step One, we identify our past and present experiences, feelings, and behaviors. We may ask ourselves:

- What do I want?
- What do I think?
- What do I feel?
-

Some things we may have learned include:

- Do not talk about your problems or how you feel.
- Feelings should not be expressed.
- Be strong and keep your problems to yourself.
- Work hard, be good, seek perfection.
- Do as I say not as I do.

Step One Questions:

1. In what ways am I powerless?
2. Have I admitted that I am powerless?
3. What does powerless mean to me?
4. In what ways is my life unmanageable?
5. How do I deny my own thoughts, feelings, and needs?
6. Who taught me to never talk about upsetting experiences or my true feelings?
7. How did I know I must never share the family secrets and why?
8. When do I feel shame or guilt about my behavior or others?
9. How do I try to control others' actions and behaviors?
10. When do I feel responsible for others around me?
11. How do I cover up or make excuses for other's behavior?
12. Do I avoid others to feel safe?
13. When, where, and how did I learn to deny my own thoughts, feelings, and needs for the sake of others?
14. Do I let others control me or do things that I do not want to do?

15. Do I think that others are better than me?
16. Do I think that I am better than others?

Step One Prayer

In this moment, I do not have to control anyone, including myself. If I feel uncomfortable with what another person is doing or not doing, I can remind myself that I am powerless over this person and I am powerless over my compulsion to act in inappropriate ways.

STEP TWO

Came to Believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

In the beginning, we came to believe by attending meetings and listening. We heard others talk about a relationship with a Higher Power. With the support and help of others, we learned that our old behaviors were not helping us anymore. We learned that a power greater than ourselves can help us.

Although, some of us may have had images of a punishing or absent Higher Power, in recovery we can discover a kind and loving Higher Power that loves us exactly as we are.

Step Two Questions:

1. Do I have an image of a power greater than myself?
2. How do I describe my Higher Power?
3. Am I ready and willing to believe that a Higher Power can help me?
4. What, if anything, prevents me from believing in a power greater than myself?
5. What does "came to believe" mean to me?
6. What do sanity and insanity mean to me?
7. Am I ready and willing to trust in a Higher Power?
- 8.

Step Two Prayer

In this moment, I can believe that I am never alone; I can experience the sense of freedom that having a Higher Power offers me and I can grow in my faith and trust.

STEP THREE

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood God.

We are now asked to trust in a Higher Power of our own understanding. We reach for a new strength to help us. We are asked to let go of our self-will that tells us we must control everything. When our old willful behaviors come back, we learn that we can always return to Step Three. We can turn our will back over and trust that our Higher Power will take care of us. We also release others to their own Higher Power.

The following are some tools available to us in working Step Three. We can learn to "Let Go and Let God", so that our Higher Power can work in our lives.

- Be still, accept our feelings, and not have to do something to make the feelings go away.
- Ask our Higher Power for help, recognize that we do not have to do it alone.
- Make a phone call to our sponsor or to other CoDAteen members in recovery.
- Go back to Step One (admit we are powerless), Step Two (believe a loving Higher Power can help), and Step Three (accept that our Higher Power has a plan for us greater than any we could imagine and let go).
- Use the Serenity Prayer, or another favorite prayer, or write your own prayer
- Meditate regularly.
- Read daily meditations.
- Repeat the affirmation “I am capable of changing with my Higher Power’s help.”
- Ask the question, “am I ready to let go and let God?”
- Acknowledge that we can turn things over to the care of our Higher Power, again and again.

(Excerpt adapted from The Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions Workbook of Co-Dependents Anonymous, Third Edition)

Step Three Questions and Suggested Activities:

1. What does “made a decision” mean to me?
2. How do I know when I need to let go?
3. How do I let go?
4. Am I willing to trust in a loving Higher Power?
5. You can write about or draw a picture of a Higher Power of your own understanding.

Step Three Prayer

In this moment, I can choose my own Higher Power. I can set aside all my old beliefs about myself and be who I am. In my recovery, faith in my Higher Power also becomes a faith in myself.

STEP FOUR

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

A searching and fearless inventory helps us spot old behaviors and attitudes. We all have a good side, and we all have faults. What do we like about ourselves? What would we like to change? This process is one of the most loving actions we can do for ourselves. It is not a time to overly criticize or hurt ourselves. It is a time to look at the truth of what is happening in our lives.

We learn about ourselves by making a list of our strengths and our weaknesses. We include behaviors or habits that no longer help us, as well as things that we like about ourselves. Step Four is an exciting journey of self-discovery.

As we go through this process, strong or uncomfortable feelings may come up. We are not alone. We can share about our feelings in CoDAteen meetings, with our sponsor, trusted CoDAteen members and our Higher Power. We may also use daily positive affirmations.

Step Four Questions:

Using the suggested questions below, you may list examples and write down feelings that come up for you next to each example.

1. How can I use Steps One, Two and Three to help me work Step Four?
2. Why do I deserve the best of everything life has to offer?
3. What are my best qualities?
4. What are my talents and what accomplishments am I most proud of?
5. What are things that I would like to change about myself?
6. How did I learn that I was not good enough or that I was better than others?
7. What negative messages do I think about myself? Where did I learn them?
8. Do I feel good about myself most of the time? Yes/No/Unsure
9. When do I not feel good about myself?
10. Do I care about my appearance? If not, why not?
11. Do I take proper care of my health by eating right foods and getting enough exercise and rest?
12. Do I take responsibility for my own behaviors?
13. How have I felt responsible for others around me? *(There is a big difference between taking responsibility for our own lives and feeling responsible for someone else's moods and behavior.)*
14. Do I allow others to control me by going along so they will like me?
15. Do I try to control others by trying to change their mind or making them do something that they do not want to do?
16. Do I do things for others that I do not want to do?
17. Do I avoid others to feel safe?
18. What experiences led me to feel shame or guilt about my behavior or others?

Step Four Prayer

In this moment, I am willing to see myself as I truly am: a growing, unfolding, spiritual being. I separate who I am from what I have done, knowing that the real me is emerging—loving, joyful, and whole.

STEP FIVE

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

In Step Four, we became more aware of ourselves and our journey of self-discovery. In Step Five, as we share with our Higher Power, ourselves, and another person what we have learned in Step Four, we learn where we want to change and come to accept ourselves in a loving and compassionate way. Having the courage to share with others in the presence of our Higher Power is a powerful way to recover and change.

Following are some gifts of completing a Fifth Step:

Spirits are lifted when we share our truths.

We experience freedom when we let go of our long-held secrets.

We realize we are not alone, and we feel comfort.

We accept the past and present and build trust.

*(Adapted from Step Five in *The Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions Workbook of Co-Dependents Anonymous, Third Edition*)*

Step Five Questions

1. Is it hard for me to work Step Five and why?
2. How do I trust another person with the information contained in my 5th step?
3. How can I let go of my fears of being judged or shamed when sharing my fifth step?
4. How can I be honest about my actions, feelings, and behaviors?
5. How can I accept the consequences of my actions?

Step Five Prayer

In this moment, I will praise myself for doing what was most difficult for me. I will rest in the accepting presence of my Higher Power. I have been courageous in opening myself up and my heart to a fellow human being.

STEP SIX

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

We have been courageous up to this point. We become aware that our patterns of behavior were survival tools and had emerged to protect us. We are learning that these behaviors are no longer of use to us and can be harmful in our life. With our Higher Power's help, we can now identify and make a list of the habits and behaviors that no longer serve us. We are getting ready to let them go.

This step can involve journaling and writing a personal prayer and positive affirmations to use with Step Seven.

Step Six Questions:

1. How does my trust in my Higher Power help me become ready?

2. What does “defects of character” mean to me?
3. Is it difficult for me to think about letting go of my old behaviors?
4. Why is Step Six a crucial bridge between Step Five and Step Seven?

Step Six Prayer

In this moment, I am ready to be free of my “defects of character” and turn them over to my Higher Power. Each new Step I take in my recovery, no matter how small it may appear, helps me be the best person that I can be.

STEP SEVEN

Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.

We are strengthened to allow change and we trust in our Higher Power to work this miraculous process within us. We open our hearts even more deeply to a relationship with our Higher Power.

We remember that it is a journey of self-discovery and learning to love ourselves. It is not to be used to beat ourselves up. We continue to work Steps One, Two and Three by turning our self-will over to our Higher Power. We release our shame and fear and know that we are loved and accepted.

The following are some examples of shortcomings or old behaviors/ survival tools that no longer help us in our life:

- procrastination
- needing to do something about what we are feeling
- belief that we are in control
- fear of letting go and trusting
- fear of what others may think or feel about us
- fearful of others’ anger
- dishonesty
- not speaking our truth
- not taking care of our own needs
- not being nice to ourselves or others
- hurting ourselves verbally or physically
- not protecting our boundaries
- our need to be right
- our need to do it ourselves, without any help
- our inability to ask for help
- our desire for others to do it our way
- perfectionism
- addictions
- guilt
- resentments
- isolation
- shame
- belief that we must act on our feelings rather than sitting with them

- not staying in the present

Step Seven Questions and Activities:

1. How can I be more accepting of myself and others?
2. How can I let go of my self-will as I work Step Seven?
3. Does the affirmation “Higher Power knows everything about me and loves me as I am” help me in this Step?
4. Use the prayers and positive affirmations written in your Step Six work or write new ones. Positive affirmations are nurturing statements we make to ourselves. As we grow, we learn to take the negative messages we have been telling ourselves and turn them into positive self-affirming growing statements.

Making Choices in Recovery has lists of positive affirmations and prayers that are useful for working Steps Six and Seven.

Step Seven Prayer

In this moment, I ask my Higher Power to remove my old patterns of behavior relieving me of worry, fear, or shame. In this moment, I trust the emptiness I may feel in my heart is being filled with my Higher Power’s unconditional love for me and those in my life.

STEP EIGHT

Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

We make a list of the people affected by our behaviors and actions, remembering to put our own name at the top of the list. Often it is easy to see how we have harmed others but not how we harm ourselves. As we write our list of those we have harmed, we remind ourselves that our Higher Power is with us, loves us unconditionally, and already knows everything about us.

The following may be ways we have harmed ourselves or others:

- holding resentments
- fearing to get close to other people
- manipulating others by trying to change their mind or telling them what to do
- needing to be right
- cheating, lying, and stealing
- obsessing or worrying
- blaming others
- emotionally abusing ourselves or others, for example, putting ourselves or others down, yelling, or calling names, making fun of others, threatening to hurt others
- physically abusing ourselves or others, (for example, cutting, hitting, slapping, punching)

- neglecting our responsibilities, (for example, not doing homework, being late or skipping school, not keeping up with our personal hygiene or appearance
- abusing alcohol, smoking, or mind-altering drugs
- obsessively using social media and gaming

Step Eight Questions:

1. How do I manage fear as I work this step?
2. What does “become willing to make amends” mean to me?
3. How do I become willing?
4. How did my dishonesty harm others or myself?
5. Whom have I harmed because of my resentments and my need to control?
6. Whom have I harmed by feeling less than or better than others?
7. How can I forgive myself?

Step Eight Prayer

In this moment, I see the impossible become not only possible, but real.

As I forgive myself, I am able to forgive others, opening the way for a true and lasting change in my behavior. Thank you, Higher Power.

STEP NINE

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

As we prepare to make our amends, one way of caring for ourselves is to plan how we wish to deliver them. We can then share our list or plan with our sponsor or another trustworthy person. We can find a meaningful way to make direct amends that are safe and will not risk our well-being. *(Adapted from The Twelve Steps and Traditions Workbook of Co-Dependents Anonymous, Third Edition, Step Nine)*

Step Nine states that we make amends “wherever possible.” However, this may not always be possible or safe to do so. As a substitute, we may write these amends in a journal and we may choose to share them with our CoDAteen sponsor or other trusted person. We can choose to make living amends by practicing healthy and loving behaviors for ourselves and others in our daily life.

Some ways we can make living amends to ourselves or others:

- saying “no” to take care of ourselves
- expressing a differing opinion and letting go of our fears of what others may think
- listening to others and letting go of our belief that everyone needs to be the same and feel the same.
- allowing others to live their lives in their own way
- living our lives differently because we are in recovery

Step Nine Questions:

1. What are amends?
2. What do I believe is the purpose of making amends?
3. How do I make amends to myself?
4. Is complete forgiveness necessary?
5. How do I take care of myself when making amends?
6. What else can I do if I cannot make direct amends?

Step Nine Prayer

In this moment, I trust my Higher Power to guide me in making sincere and honest amends. I experience my gratitude for CoDAteen and Co-Dependents Anonymous and the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in my recovery. As I grow in my relationships with my Higher Power, myself, and others, I know that I am precious and free.

STEP TEN

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

Working Step Ten helps us look at our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors more clearly. As a result, we come to understand what our part is and what we are responsible for on a daily basis.

We review our day and connect with our Higher Power. We make a list or keep a journal of feelings, resentments, anger, fears, always remembering to love and be kind to ourselves. "Progress, not perfection." Some members find making a daily gratitude list helpful. We continue to practice our daily positive affirmations.

Step Ten Questions:

1. How did I honor my feelings today?
2. Am I practicing gratitude?
3. Am I taking care of myself today?
4. Am I eating healthy?
5. Am I exercising, and getting enough rest?
6. Am I completing my schoolwork, home chores, and other tasks in a timely way?
7. Am I taking time to have fun?
8. Am I being kind to myself and others?
9. Did I communicate in a healthy way today?
10. What prevents me from admitting my wrongs?
11. Do I have any resentments?
12. How does this step assist me in letting go and living in the present?

Step Ten Prayer

In this moment, I live my life in a new way. As I continue to open my heart and mind, little by little, one day at a time, I reveal my true self, mend my relationships, and touch my Higher Power.

STEP ELEVEN

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.

We open ourselves to the nourishing light and love that spending time with our Higher Power provides. Our everyday lives can reflect the peace and serenity we gain through practicing prayer and meditation daily. CoDAteen members often find that prayer is a way of talking to our Higher Power and meditation is a way of listening to our Higher Power.

The Serenity Prayer is a gentle and loving reminder that helps us "In this moment" or "One day at a time." Knowing what we can and cannot change is the key to sanity which goes with healthy and loving boundaries.

Step Eleven Questions:

1. Do I use Step Eleven when I have a problem?
2. How do I know when I am in my self-will?
3. What is prayer?
4. How do I go about learning to pray?
5. What is meditation?
6. What are ways that I can practice meditation?
7. How do I know what is my will and what is my Higher Power's will?
8. How is my experience different because of working Step Eleven?

Step Eleven Prayer

In this moment, I quiet my thoughts and open my mind and heart to Higher Power's guidance for me. In this moment, I feel the gentle peace and serenity that comes from trusting in my loving Higher Power.

STEP TWELVE

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

A spiritual awakening is finding our own path to our Higher Power. We demonstrate our spiritual awakening through living the CoDAteen program. Practicing recovery is the best way to carry the message. We put our program into action by regularly attending meetings and giving service.

We have been given four elements to use for guidance and support on our spiritual path:

Higher Power
CoDAteen Twelve Steps
CoDAteen Twelve Traditions
CoDAteen Fellowship

Step Twelve Questions:

1. Have I had a spiritual awakening because of working these Steps?
2. How do I know if I have had a spiritual awakening?
3. What is my experience in carrying the message?
4. What tools do I have today because of the Steps?
5. How does my spiritual awakening affect my life?
6. What might separate me from my spiritual awakening or my Higher Power?

Step Twelve Prayer

In this moment, I thank my Higher Power for my spiritual awakening. In this moment, I choose to live a new way in all areas of my life. I know that through my actions I can share the gifts of love and understanding that I have received from my Higher Power. I am at peace.