

# Tri County Recovery

Tuesday Night Step Study Group



## Step 09

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# Step 9 - Week 1

Moderator:

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

In taking the Ninth Step, we act on the knowledge that what we do really matters—that our actions have consequences in the world, for good or ill. The damage we did in our addiction is cleared away not only by honestly admitting what we have done, but by committing to setting things right. Reaching out to others to acknowledge and heal the wrongs of the past brings us freedom and serenity in the present. We call this process making direct amends. In Step Nine we make our best effort to contact the people we have harmed, admit the wrongs we have done them, express our remorse, and offer some kind of reparation. Most importantly, we change how we behave today. We do our utmost not to repeat the behavior that caused harm in the past, and we communicate this resolve to those we've hurt.

Volunteer Reader

Many of us find ourselves worrying about the reactions of those to whom we make amends, hesitating to proceed with this step because of our fear. We can rely on our Higher Power to be with us throughout this process and to grant us the courage we need to move forward. Our part is to make the amends, without taking responsibility for the reactions of others. Some of the people we approach may accept our

amends with understanding and forgiveness, and others may not. The response of any particular person, positive or negative, is not a measure of how well we make our amends. The success of our amends depends only on how honestly and thoroughly we make them.

Moderator:

The Ninth Step can be a project of some magnitude. We work this step only when we have a strong foundation built on the preceding steps. Rather than be overwhelmed by the number of people on our Eighth Step list, or all of the harm we've done over the years, we simply make amends to one person at a time. Each person and situation has much to teach us. We can take our time, patiently dealing with the challenges we are ready for, and trusting that we will become ready for others in the future.

Volunteer Reader

Throughout this process, we are mindful of our motives in making amends. Effective amends are as selfless and sincere as we can make them, with no hidden agendas. We want to be sure we are not using the amends process as an excuse to re-engage with people who prefer not to have contact with us. We also guard against using Step Nine as an opportunity to defend our past behaviors or to burden others with detailed confessions in order to relieve ourselves of our own guilt. In all cases, we check to see whether we are acting out of selfishness, simply in order to feel better, or from a desire to be liked and admired for having changed our ways.

I will read the prayer and would all who care to, join me in

saying Amen at the end of the prayer.

## Week One: Ninth Step Prayer

Higher Power,  
I pray for the right attitude to make my  
amends,  
Being ever mindful not to harm others in  
the process.  
I ask for Your guidance in making indirect  
amends.

**Amen**

**Return back to main script "Sharing section of the main script" for the conclusion of the meeting.**

## Step 9 - Week 2

Moderator:

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

Volunteer Reader

We need to exercise good judgment here. We seek the counsel of our sponsor and other members who have experience working this step. Rather than rushing into premature amends, we take the time to get clear about exactly what we are making amends for and what harm we

think we caused in each situation. We also take time to clarify our emotions before we proceed. An attitude of humility and sincere regret for the harms we have done will carry us far. For each amends, we also decide whether it is appropriate to make contact with that person, how much we reveal to the person, and whether we put ourselves at risk when we make amends.

Moderator:

If we have good reason to believe that we will do someone harm by making contact, then we refrain. Sometimes we might ask through a third party if contact for an amends would be appropriate. If the answer is no, we need to show our respect and stay away. If we contact a person we have abused, it may need to be through someone that person knows or under the supervision of a professional who can make the interaction safe. When it comes to those we have harmed through sexual abuse or illegal behavior, we should be very cautious about harming them again, not even offering to make amends unless we're certain they would welcome it.

Volunteer Reader

We are careful about how much we reveal in our amends. To those we have harmed in the past that are not close to us today, we need not explain that we are sex addicts. Revealing our disease is less important than taking responsibility for the harm we did, and may actually distract us from focusing on our amends. We also use judgment about how specific we are when making the amends. Going into great detail about our sexual behavior, for instance, might do more harm than good. Instead, we

can share the general pattern of our hurtful behavior, taking our cue from the person to whom we are making amends if more detail would be helpful. We are fearless, however, in revealing those consequences of our behavior that directly affect the other person, such as if we have exposed him or her to a sexually transmitted disease. Throughout this process, we carefully examine our motives, always balancing the willingness to take full responsibility for our wrongs with care and concern for the wellbeing of those we have harmed.

Moderator:

We usually don't need to put ourselves at grave personal risk when making amends. Some of us committed serious offenses in our sex addiction. Admitting to them can have dire consequences for us, as well as for our loved ones. Before we take action, we look at those we may harm in the process, including ourselves. On the other hand, we don't want to leave room for rationalizations. We consult with our sponsor, and perhaps an outside professional, before attempting to make amends that could have legal consequences. Ultimately, after praying to our Higher Power for strength and guidance, we come to our own decision regarding such amends.

Volunteer Reader

When setting things right, we consider what would be appropriate in each case. If we took money or property, we do our best to replace it. If our behavior has caused psychological harm, to our children or others, we can offer to pay for therapy. If we were distant and neglectful, we can make ourselves available and emotionally present. Many

situations are more complex than this, requiring prayer, careful thought, and consultation with our sponsor. It is often helpful to ask the people we harmed what they think we should do to help make things right. We bear in mind that we can't always fully repair the harm we've done; nothing can change the past. This does not keep us from doing our best to set things right in the present. Many of us have seen great healing occur in ourselves and our relationships from even seemingly inadequate acts of reparation.

Moderator:

## **Week Two - Ninth Step Prayer**

I will read the prayer and would all who care to, join me in saying Amen at the end of the prayer.

Where I have done wrong,  
help me do right  
I have done enough harm,  
and I ask your help, so that I may do no  
more

**Amen**

Return back to main script "Sharing section of the main script" for the conclusion of the meeting.

Moderator:

## Step 9 - Week 3

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

If we cannot make our amends directly, we can still take meaningful actions. We may, for instance, donate time or money to an appropriate charity or institution. It may be best to make our donations anonymously, in the spirit of our newfound humility.

### Volunteer Reader

In the case of those people who are deceased, we can still write letters to them, containing everything we would have said to them if they were alive, and then read these letters to our sponsor. We can remember such people in our prayers and allow their memory to motivate us in our new way of life. In all cases where we cannot, for whatever reason, make direct amends, we grieve our losses and then use our experience to make better choices in the future.

### Moderator:

Despite our best efforts and intentions in working this step, regaining the trust of those we have harmed is usually not a quick or easy matter. In our addiction, many of us apologized over and over to our loved ones, only to repeatedly harm them again. Our apologies will be seen as sincere only when it becomes evident that we now live differently. Often it takes longer for the people hurt by our behavior to trust us again than it takes for us to make



significant progress in our recovery. In some cases, trust may never be restored. We can only make amends to the best of our ability, and leave the rest in God's hands.

Volunteer Reader

In the long run, the most effective amends we can make to others and to ourselves is in our commitment to recovery. Some call this making "living amends." We find we can redress the wrongs of the past by not hurting those we have harmed, or anyone else, in the same way again. As we complete our Ninth Step, we know we have done everything in our power to clean up the wreckage of our past and move forward with our slates clean.

Moderator:

By continuing to stay abstinent and work the SAA program, we commit to maintaining this new freedom from the consequences of our acting out. We become accountable for our behavior. Our relationships improve, both with those we have harmed in the past and with new people in our lives. We see that we are becoming better people, and we begin to experience a new sense of self-worth. We feel free to live in the present and enjoy our lives, no longer having to carry a load of despair, resentment, and fear.

Volunteer Reader

Working Step Nine brings us many gifts: true empathy for those we have harmed, compassion, self-respect, and respect for the humanity of others. God willing, we may experience the forgiveness of those we have harmed. If we have been diligent in our amends, we will certainly grow in

self-forgiveness too. As a result of accepting responsibility for the harm we have done, even to those who may have hurt us, we glimpse new possibilities for loving and forgiving others.

Moderator:

Our faith in our Higher Power increases when we realize that we've squarely faced the wrongs in our past, made amends for them, and received the gift of a better future. The process that began in the Fourth Step, and culminated in the Ninth, now becomes a part of our lives, a daily stance, a practice that will keep us sexually sober and spiritually connected. We will now take Step Ten.

Moderator:

## **Week 3: Ninth Step Prayer**

I will read the prayer and would all who care to, join me in saying Amen at the end of the prayer.

God.

I've been selfish,

help me be selfless come what may,

help me bear it as I have in past harmed  
completely,

help me to finish this, completely

**Amen**

Return back to main script "Sharing section of the main script" for the conclusion of the meeting.

# Week 4/5

At the discretion of the moderator the format for week 4 will vary.

The format may be a speaker meeting, a discussion meeting with discussions on the Step or, discussion on items in general. If this is a discussion meeting on Step 9, go to the next page, otherwise refer to the Week 4-5 supplemental bulletin. Sometimes there will be a reading from a pamphlet.

The pamphlet Making Amends and why it is so important attached at bottom.

## Week 4/5 Step Reading

moderator

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

## What Is the Purpose of This Step?

- How Do You Complete This Step?
- What Are Some Myths About This Step?
  - Keep an open mind: Set yourself up for success. Be open to the idea of looking outside yourself for help

and support, and you'll be able to better conceive of the idea of recovery.

**Maintain humility:** Accept that you can't conquer your addiction alone.

- What Are Some Myths About This Step?

If Step related discussion questions format selected start here

## Step 9 Discussion Questions

Moderator - pick a few questions for people to reflect on.

1. What amends do you think that you have already made? These can include apologies already made, helpful tasks for those that you have hurt, changed attitudes and so forth.
2. After you had your first encounter with making amends, how did you feel about it? How did the other person respond? What have you learned from this? What would you do differently next time?
3. What amends do you have the most difficulty making? What do you need to do to be able to make these amends?
4. How has making amends affected your relationship with others?
5. How are you dealing with the feedback from others after making amends? How are you feeling? How are you dealing with the desire to defend yourself?
6. How are you dealing with the feedback from others

after making amends? How are you feeling? How are you dealing with the desire to defend yourself?

7. What other amends did you discover that you needed to make after starting the process of making amends.

## **Non Step related Discussion Questions**

1. Often times, a person's relation with drugs, alcohol, acting out and other compulsive behaviours will change over time. For example, you might've initially acted out only a few times a month as a fun way to relax, but, eventually they became everyday necessity. How has your relationship with acting out behaviours changed from early on to now. Do you still act out for the same reasons or have those reasons changed.
2. The rituals and activities that surround acting out can be difficult to give up. For example, a smoker might enjoy the ritual of having a cigarette - not just the nicotine. Similarly, a sex addict might have difficulty saying goodbye to their strip club buddies, dancers or mistresses. What are some rituals or activities that you associate with acting out, and how do you feel about giving them up. Do you think you can achieve sobriety without changing your lifestyle.
3. Some people say that addiction is a disease, and others think it's a choice. What do you think and why? How do you believe counseling, support groups or other treatments could help a person who struggles with addiction.

Moderator:

## Week 4/5: Ninth Step Prayer

I will read the prayer and would all who care to, join me in saying Amen at the end of the prayer.

I have been willful and hurtful;  
please grant me humility and humanity  
lord,  
help me be better  
better for you

**Amen**

Return back to main script "Sharing section of the main script" for the conclusion of the meeting.

## Making Amends in Recovery Pamphlet

Why it is so Important

Tiny URL <https://tinyurl.com/tcr-102> [1]

Working step 8 and 9 puts you in touch with your own humanity again. You begin to feel empathy and compassion for the people you have hurt as the result of your addiction. It makes you more mindful of your place in the world. When you were in the midst of your addiction, you likely caused people harm. You downward spiraled and took casualties with you. People you loved were hurt. You

made a mess out of your life your problems spilled over onto the lives of people you care about the most. Some of the common behaviors of addiction that hurt others include:

- A lack of control to stay away from the substance. This can mean that you may steal, cheat, and lie to anyone to get the substance. You're less social and abandon commitments. You ignore your relationships and stop working on them. You ignore risk factors, which can put people in your life in jeopardy of being harmed. You become uninterested in your hobbies and activities. You miss important obligations like work. This can cause you to lose your job. \* If you have a family and you lose your house, you are affecting everyone. Risk taking tendencies. If you're withdrawing, you may become extremely agitated and act negatively to those around you. You may sleep all day. You keep secrets.

## **Living Amends**

The First 7 steps of recovery are all about you. The 8th and 9th step are about getting right with others.

Step 8 - We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

Step 9 - We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. Sex addicts often feel unworthy of their partner's respect and love. Many feel unworthy to have their partner in their life at all after everything they've put them through.

As understandable as it is to feel guilt and shame about

your past sexual behaviors and the deception that went with it, you still have inherent worth. Although it's unrealistic to expect it from your partner, you are worthy to be acknowledged and honored for the effort you've made to change your behavior and repair the damage done to your relationship.

As a sex addict, you may feel as though you will never get out from under the painful feelings of shame and remorse over your past behaviors. If remorse turns into toxic shame, you will struggle to maintain sobriety and may even allow your partner to abuse you.

Your partner has a right to create boundaries for herself and she has a right to leave the relationship, but he/she doesn't have a right to abuse you — ever. There is no justification for abuse of anyone, no matter what they've done.

The concept of a living amends is a mindset about the amends process that helps addicts gain a sense of progress and forward movement in what sometimes feels like an endless experience of shame, remorse, and regret.

Remorseful words like **“I'm sorry,”** and an **8th & 9th step amends process (in 12-step recovery)** can go a long way toward making things right, but neither of these comes close to a living amends.

What is a living amends? Here are some examples of what it looks like:

- regular engagement in recovery activities (12-step meetings, step work, group or individual therapy,



workshops, and fellowship with recovery peers)

- sustained (and sometimes imperfect) sobriety/abstinence from inner circle behaviors
- regular recovery check-ins with your partner
- willingness to hear your partner’s triggers and her or his feelings about them, without defensiveness
- willingness to engage in trust-building behaviors such as transparency around your phone and computer use or keeping your partner regularly informed of your whereabouts and activities
- willingness to eliminate some activities for a temporary amount of time (for example, business travel, mixed gender social or business activities that don’t include partners, use of phone apps, or use of electronic devices in certain situations)
- overall reduction in defensiveness or presenting yourself as a victim because you are in a repair and rehabilitation “season” in your relationship
- greater level of engagement and participation with home and family activities

As an addict, when you’re engaged in most of these activities — even imperfectly — you are making the best amends possible. By showing up, doing the work, and continuing to do “the next right thing,” you will make more progress toward trust-building and repair than with any amount of words.

## **Recovery work is redemptive and virtuous.**

If you are a person in recovery, you have certainly traveled

a long recovery journey: acknowledged your powerlessness, taken a personal inventory, shared your character defects and then eventually arrived at Step 9: Making Amends. Many find this step anxiety producing, yet freeing. You are at a spot in your recovery where you are able to take accountability for the hurt that your actions have caused others and to make amends.

What if your amends aren't welcomed at the time that you are ready to take this significant step? What if your spouse or your teenage child does not want to hear or accept it? What if they are not ready? What if they can't? As you will have needed support through this, so will they. It is important that everyone in the family unit receives counseling and/or attends appropriate meetings to get the support and knowledge that they will need on this journey. Your loved ones will have suffered consequences as a result of your actions. They will have experienced hurt, sadness, betrayal and anger. This list may go on and on.

Step 9 involves making amends whenever possible, EXCEPT when it may hurt others.

If your loved one is not ready, you can't force them, nor should you. An angry, hurt teenager may not welcome your amends at this time. It will need to happen on their timeline - not yours. A distraught spouse may not have been able to work through their grief, hurt, anger that your addiction brought the family. They may not be ready when you get there. You can reach out, state your intent and ask them to let you know when they may be ready and willing to hear the amends.

You have worked hard to get to this point. Your loved ones

will have needed to work hard in order to be ready. It can't be forced because you are ready. This step and healing only comes when everyone gets there.

[1] <https://tinyurl.com/tcr-102>