

# A Collection of Alternative 12 Steps

provided by the

Albuquerque Freethinkers Group



*We are dedicated to supporting alcoholics  
who have found it difficult to embrace religious beliefs.*

*We do not ask anybody to believe in anything except that  
**recovery is possible.***

*Anybody with a desire to stop drinking is welcome to join us as  
we seek a life free of alcohol and addiction.*

## Meetings

### **Wednesday evening, 7:00 PM**

Heights Club, Room 2  
8520 Marble NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87110  
(west of Wyoming between Lomas and I-40)

### **Saturday morning, 8:30 AM**

Little Anita's Restaurant in Old Town  
2105 Mountain Rd NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87104  
(corner of Mountain and Rio Grande)  
Meeting is in the semi-private dining  
area to the right of the cashier.

For more info visit us at: [abqftaa.org](http://abqftaa.org)

## Albuquerque Freethinkers Group

### Twelve Steps to Recovery

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe and accept that powers and abilities beyond our understanding could restore us to sanity.
3. With conscious decision, we turned to our fellows in recovery for inspiration in allowing our recovery to be guided by those powers beyond our understanding.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Openly, honestly, and without reservation, admitted the exact nature of our wrongs to ourselves and then to another human being.
6. Were entirely ready to accept help, in whatever form it may come, in letting go of all these defects of character.
7. With humility and openness, expressed a sincere desire to eliminate our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Through reflection and meditation, sought to develop an awareness of powers outside of ourselves, asking only for the direction needed to return to sanity, and the ability to remain on that path.
12. Having found recovery as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

## Gabe's 12 Steps

1. We admitted we could not control our drinking, nor do without it, that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that others who had had or understood our problem could help us return to and maintain sanity.
3. We decided to accept what they said and act on their suggestions.
4. We made a searching inventory of our bad feelings, of those aspects of our own character that had contributed to these and of the harms we had done. We noted occasions where we had done well and were glad of these.
5. We showed the inventory to at least one other person and discussed it with them.
6. We accepted our moral and personal weaknesses, and accepted that they needed to change.
7. We became willing to admit those weaknesses to others, where appropriate, and to heed any advice they might offer.
8. We became willing to make amends to those we had harmed.
9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. We continued to take personal inventory, when we were wrong promptly admitted it and when we had done well, recognized this.
11. We adopted a practice of meditation and one of reflection upon our place in the world and how we could contribute to it.
12. Having experienced a psychic change as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

These steps are reprinted as found on <http://aaagnostica.org/alternative-12-steps> where they appeared with the following comment:

Inspired by his therapist, Gabe S. created this version of the 12 Steps. Gabe's version is perhaps typical of a non-believing recovering alcoholic. Part of Gabe's story is shared on the AA Agnostica website: *A Higher Power of my Understanding*.

## Agnostic AA 12 Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe and accept that we needed strengths beyond our awareness and resources to restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to entrust our will and our lives to the care of the collective wisdom and resources of those who have searched before us.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to ourselves without reservation, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were ready to accept help in letting go of all our defects of character.
7. With humility and openness sought to eliminate our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through meditation to improve our spiritual awareness and our understanding of the AA way of life and to discover the power to carry out that way of life.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

These steps are reprinted as found on <http://aaagnostica.org/alternative-12-steps> where they appeared with the following comment:

This version can be found on the AA Agnostics of the San Francisco Bay Area web site which lists a number of area agnostic groups and their meeting times and locations.

## Humanist AA 12 Steps

1. We accepted the fact that all our efforts to stop drinking have failed.
2. We believe that we must turn elsewhere for help.
3. We turn to our fellow men and women, particularly those who have struggled with the same problem.
4. We have made a list of situations in which we are most likely to drink.
5. We ask our friends to help us avoid those situations.
6. We are ready to accept the help they give us.
7. We honestly hope they will help.
8. We have made a list of the persons we have harmed and to whom we hope to make amends.
9. We shall do all we can to make amends, in any way that will not cause further harm.
10. We will continue to make such lists and revise them as needed.
11. We appreciate what our friends have done and are doing to help us.
12. We, in turn, are ready to help others who may come to us in the same way.

These steps are reprinted as found on <http://aaagnostica.org/alternative-12-steps> where they appeared with the following comment:

B.F. Skinner, the 1972 Humanist of the Year award winner, and a researcher and writer and Harvard University, drafted these steps which were first published in 1987.

## White Bison

1. Honesty
2. Hope
3. Faith
4. Courage
5. Integrity
6. Willingness
7. Humility
8. Forgiveness
9. Justice
10. Perseverance
11. Spiritual Awakening
12. Service

These steps are reprinted as found on <http://aaagnostica.org/alternative-12-steps> where they appeared with the following comment:

White Bison, Inc. developed The Medicine Wheel, a culturally appropriate recovery program for Native American people which uses a single word version of the Steps in which “each of the 12 Steps is represented from the perspective of the value that it reflects”.

## A Buddhist's Non-Theist 12 Steps

1. We admitted our addictive craving over alcohol, and recognized its consequences in our lives.
2. Came to believe that a power other than self could restore us to wholeness.
3. Made a decision to go for refuge to this other power as we understood it.
4. Made a fearless and searching moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to ourselves and another human being the exact nature of our past.
6. Became entirely ready to work at transforming ourselves.
7. With the assistance of others and our own firm resolve, we transformed unskilled aspects of ourselves and cultivated positive ones.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. In addition, made a conscientious effort to forgive all who harmed us.
10. Continued to maintain awareness of our actions and motives, and when we acted unskillfully promptly admitted it.
11. Engaged through the practice of meditation to improve our conscious contact with our true selves, and seeking beyond self. Also used prayer as a means to cultivate positive attitudes and states of mind.
12. Having gained spiritual insights as a result of these steps, we practiced these principles in all areas of our lives, and make this message available to others in need of recovery.

These steps are reprinted as found on <http://aaagnostica.org/alternative-12-steps> where they appeared with the following comment:

These Steps were created by Bodhi, from Sydney, Australia. They can be found on Mike H.'s Realistic Recovery website.

## Gabe's Therapist

1. Alcohol was something that we could not do with, or without. Our lives, and our relationships, were shattered.
2. We gained hope by talking to others who either have had or understood our problem.
3. We decided to accept what they said and act on their suggestions.
4. We needed to own our behavior both good and bad.
5. We discussed it with someone else.
6. We identified those personal characteristics which had shaped our lives and accepted that they needed to change.
7. We asked for practical help in effecting these changes.
8. We made a list of those people whose lives had been affected adversely by our actions and behavior, became prepared to make amends.
9. We repaired the harm we had done to them, whenever possible without doing further harm to ourselves or anyone else.
10. We continued to own our behavior on a daily basis.
11. We tried to discover our own place in the world and to get in touch with our own personalities.
12. We became prepared to help others follow the same path.

These steps are reprinted as found on <http://aaagnostica.org/alternative-12-steps> where they appeared with the following comment:

Gabe (see Gabe's 12 Steps on an earlier page) was inspired by his therapist's 12 Steps. These Steps take a psychological approach to the program of recovery from alcoholism, an approach that has become common since the very first days of AA.



## The 12 Step Journal

1. We admitted we were powerless over our addiction/compulsion – that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that, like all human beings, our power was limited and we needed to learn to let go and learn from others.
3. We made a decision to let go of control, assume a spirit of goodwill, seek the wisdom of responsible others, and discover our true “voice within”.
4. We made a searching and fearless inventory of our strengths and weaknesses.
5. We admitted to our journal, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to listen to wise counsel and seek that still small voice within to guide us to change our behaviors which have been harmful to ourselves and others.
7. Humbly began the process of deep change so we could overcome our weaknesses.
8. Made a list of all persons we have harmed, became willing to make amends to them all, and to forgive those against whom we have held grudges.
9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Through meditation and journaling we continually seek to clarify and improve our own judgement and to consider the best direction and purpose our lives can take.
12. Having developed a deeper wisdom and an appreciation of the spiritual as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other addicts and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

These steps are reprinted as found on <http://aaagnostica.org/alternative-12-steps> where they appeared with the following comment:

The Twelve Step Journal, by Claudette Wassil-Grimm, published in 1995, is a workbook designed for anyone in recovery, regardless of belief or lack of belief.

## Russell Brand's Twelve Steps

1. Are you fucked?
2. Could you not be fucked?
3. Are you, on your own, going to "unfuck" yourself?
4. Write down all the things that are fucking you up or have ever fucked you up and don't lie, or leave anything out.
5. Honestly tell someone trustworthy about how fucked you are.
6. Well that's revealed a lot of fucked up patterns. Do you want to stop it? Seriously?
7. Are you willing to live in a new way that's not all about you and your previous, fucked up stuff? You have to.
8. Prepare to apologize to everyone for everything affected by your being so fucked up.
9. Now apologize. Unless that would make things worse.
10. Watch out for fucked up thinking and behavior and be honest when it happens.
11. Stay connected to your new perspective.
12. Look at life less selfishly, be nice to everyone, help people if you can.

As published by Russell Brand in his book *Recovery: Freedom from Our Addictions*, Copyright Russell Brand, 2017 (Reprinted here without permission – Sorry Russell! We did buy several of your books though!)

## Secular Twelve Steps for Recovery

1. Admitted that we could not control our addictions – that in fact they had somehow taken over our lives.
2. Despite having failed to recover on our own, we came to believe that recovery was possible – but only if we could accept help.
3. Made a decision to ask for help, this time without questioning the source.
4. Took the time to make an honest inventory of things we wanted to stop doing, as well as things that we wanted to get better at.
5. Shared our inventory with someone we trusted. If they asked questions, we answered them honestly. If they had advice, we listened quietly.
6. Truly opened ourselves up to the possibility of help, even if we did not understand the source, in working through everything on our list.
7. Learned that there is no shame in asking for such help when we need it.
8. Made another list, this time of the people that we had mistreated, lied to, abused, stole from, shortchanged, or otherwise harmed somehow while we had been focused on feeding our addictions.
9. Reached out to those people, unless it would hurt them even more to hear from us again, and honestly apologized for any harm that we had done. If that meant paying them back somehow, then we did the best we could to make things whole.
10. Continued to take time each day to make sure that we were not backsliding into our old behaviors, and that we were continually working to improve. Sometimes we are given several opportunities to do this in a single day.
11. We also take time each day to appreciate the gift of help in our lives. We work to stay connected with it, consciously reminding ourselves not to take it for granted or question the source.
12. Having grown to appreciate the gifts that sobriety has given us, we made ourselves available to others so that we might help them in the same way that we were helped in our own recovery.

Inspired by reading the many alternate versions of the Twelve Steps, Pete S. decided to write a version of the steps that he was able to personally relate to. He found the exercise helped make the program more meaningful to him and would encourage anyone else to do the same.

*When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help,  
I want the hands of Recovery always to be there.*

*And for that: I am responsible.*

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