

First Step

BALANCE

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STEP EIGHT

TOPIC

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

The first time I read this step, I simply didn't want to do it. How could anyone "think" I had anything to make amends for. I was okay. It was the addicts in my life that were the problem. As soon as they got their act together, I would be okay. As usual, I was wrong again.

Today, I see the many ways Step 8 has guided me in keeping the focus on me. I am one of those addicts. Yes, my co addiction is an addiction. I am an addict.

My first list needed to be a list of the harm I had placed upon myself. This too was new and different. I was a good co dependent. I did not think of self. Others must come first (good family training).

I had two lists. My first list was all the people who had harmed me. It was also a list of all the things I had done to harm myself. My second list was a list of all the people I had harmed. Somewhere I read that Step 8 can be easy because all we have to do is make the list. Don't think ahead to what we have to do with the list. Just make the list. Free up our mind, get the names out. The healing begins when we make the list. Trust our higher power to prepare us for whatever it is we need to do with that list later.

If we look at the person we have harmed, we will be able to see better how we have harmed ourselves.

Do not worry about doing this step well enough. Do not worry about doing any of the steps well enough. We are on a journey. We can add more later. Just **start today** so your journey can begin.



YOUR

COSA

NEWSLETTER

from the work book, "A Spiritual Guide Through The Twelve Steps".....Review-

ing our Fourth Step will help us determine who belongs on our list. Preparing to make amends is a difficult task. As we recognize the damage caused by our actions, we will glimpse the great relief that we will feel when we no longer cause injury to ourselves and others.

Forgiving ourselves and others helps us overcome our resentments. God has already forgiven us for the harmful actions that separated us from Him. Developing the ability to forgive ourselves is an important element in our ongoing recovery. To do so, we first must accept responsibility for the harm done and make amends with dignity and self-respect. Making amends without personally extending our forgiveness leads to dishonesty and further complicates our lives.

from Melody Beattie's book, "Codependents' Guide To The Twelve Steps".....All that has come into our lives was designed to prepare us to become who we are and to help us learn the lessons we came here to learn. There is a purpose for and a gift from each relationship, even the most painful relationships. The longer I work at recovery and the less I view myself as a victim, the more receptive I am to these gifts.....Forgiveness, right relationships, and peace begin inside us. They begin with this step. The chance to heal will come. Regardless of the part played by another, we are now free to identify, own, and take responsibility for ourselves.

This day I will marry my friend, the one I laugh with,
live for, dream with, love. That was on our
wedding invitations. Little did I
know I was going to face the
biggest challenge of my life-
married to a sex addict.

October 12, 1985 we walked
down the aisle. June 3, 1994 we
were divorced. Brian was
attractive, funny, everything I
wasn't. I knew at the time life
was going to be wonderful.
Despite the dating tragedies of
knowing my future husband
wasn't fully committed and was
attracted to other women, I still
went ahead to experience the
pain of the unknown truth. As
our married years came to an
end-after two separations, I still
agreed to talk after eleven
months of separations. I read
books by Dr. Jennifer Schneider
and told Brian we will work it
out. To my surprise, I learned I
was codependent. I needed to
"fix things" and make the
marriage work. I wanted
commitment and my husband to
give me love and respect.
Unfortunately, before signing the
divorce papers, I ran into a girl
Brian saw while we were married.
I was angry all over again and
thought what else don't I know
or what will I do if it happens
again. That slap in the face
made me realize that they just
can't change overnight.

I want to remember the good
times and move on. We don't
communicate anymore but hon if
you read this newsletter, I will
never stop loving you because
when we divorced you took away
a special part of me-you. I had
to set you free. I don't know
what is true anymore and
couldn't afford to hurt anymore.

I have learned a lot through
my experience and have regrets.
He was with me one day and
then gone. For those of you

going through this struggle,
there is kindness through-
strangers-Ila, my counselor,
Brian's counselor. I wouldn't
have been able to get through it
if it wasn't for these special
people. I've asked the good
Lord for guidance and a possible
future this beginning, to my new
life-alone. It's not all that bad.
I've gotten stronger.....Lisa

Dear God . . . by Lynette R.

Dear God - I'm alone

Dear God - Are you home?

Dear God - Can you listen to me?

I need you, tonight -

Dear God - Where are you?

Dear God - Is it true?

Dear God - Can you hear what I say?

I need you tonight -

Dear God , it's been a long time
from the morning - until now
And everything that happened
seemed so big - until now

Dear god, - Here am I

Dear God - Here you are

Dear God - Can you stay right by me

I need you tonight

Dear God - I Love You.

Dear God - Is it true?

That you love me?

Cause everything that happens
seems OK when you are near
and everything I do
- goes a whole lot easier -

Dear God - I'm alone

Dear God - Are you home?

Dear God - Can you listen to me?

I need you tonight