

Working the Steps in 15 Minutes

Goal: to clarify the part(s) of a situation I can change with the help of my Higher Power and another COSA.

Instructions:

- *Choose a very specific situation. It should be a situation or experience where you need clarity. For example, don't work the Steps like this on your overall relationship with your mother - work them on your frustration that your mother visits without calling first.*
- *Use your situation, not someone else's. For example, work the Steps on your behavior around your son's drinking last Sunday, not just on your son's drinking.*
- *Keep your comments brief; whether you are helping someone else through the Steps or having someone else help you through the Steps.*
- *Move quickly through the Steps. Don't use too much detail.*
- *Don't worry if it doesn't work perfectly the first time. Practice!*

1. We admitted we were powerless over compulsive sexual behavior - that our lives had become unmanageable.

- ☒ What am I powerless to change or control in this situation?
- ☒ How has my serenity been affected and/or how is this situation causing unmanageability in my life today?

2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

- ☒ Do I believe it is possible that my Higher Power (HP) can restore me to sanity in this situation?
- ☒ What am I doing that feels insane in any way?

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

- ☒ Am I ready and willing to release my will about this situation and accept my HP's will for me? If not, am I willing to be willing?

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- ☒ Say a prayer (the third step prayer of your choice or simply "God help me with this situation - I turn my will over to you.")

4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

- ☒ What resentments or fears do I have about this situation? (share 1-3 briefly)
- ☒ Are any of my character defects popping up around this situation? (Selfishness? Dishonesty? Impatience?)

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

- ☒ What part, if any, have I played in this situation? What core beliefs about myself are coming up? (I am bad, I am not enough, I am unlovable, unwanted, unsafe, etc.)
- ☒ Say a prayer (or 5th step blessing). For example, "God bless _____ (someone on your resentment list) and heal me."
- ☒ How do I feel? Do I feel relief or shame?

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

- ☒ How are my defects of character hurting me in this situation? Or what, if anything, am I getting out of hanging onto them?
- ☒ Am I entirely ready to follow HP's will to turn over my character defects in this situation? If not, am I willing to be willing?

7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.

- ☒ Ask, out loud or to myself, my HP to remove my shortcomings as they relate to this situation.

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

- ☒ Have I caused harm to myself or anyone else with my actions in this situation?
- ☒ Am I willing to make amends to each of them?

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

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☒ In a sentence, what will I do to make amends for the harm I have caused to myself? To others?

☒ If I feel confused or unready to make these amends, who will I seek counsel from?

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

☒ Do I have all that I need or have I done what I can to forgive myself or another with this situation?

☒ What will I look for on my daily inventory to see if there is something unfinished?

11. 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.

☒ Pray about the situation over the next few days. Continue to ask to know if your HP has any additional guidance for you about this situation.

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all areas of our lives.

☒ What are my lessons learned from this experience?

☒ How can I be of service to others who might face similar situations and are still suffering?

Other resources available at the COSA website (<https://cosa-recovery.org/shop/>):

- COSA Booklet: "Using the Twelve Steps to Work Through Any Conflict"
- MP3 Recordings from past COSA Conventions related to this topic:
 - 2016 Chicago Convention: Emily G. 'Working the 12 Steps in 15 Minutes'
 - 2014 LA Convention: Albert A. 'Riding the Recovery Wave: The 12 Steps Through a Relationship Conflict' - Part 1 & 2
 - 2012 Vancouver Convention: Judith M. 'Working the 12 Steps on a Problem'
 - 2008 Seattle Convention: Deborra S. 'Working All The Steps on a Problem'