

# CONQUERING EATING DISORDERS

A CHRIST-CENTERED 12-STEP PROCESS

*Pat Springle*

FACILITATOR GUIDE

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LifeWay Press  
Nashville, Tennessee

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

*Conquering Eating Disorders: A Christ-Centered 12-Step Process Facilitator's Guide*  
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ISBN 0-8054-9978-4  
Dewey Decimal Number 616.8  
Subject Heading: EATING DISORDERS

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*Printed in the United States of America*

Leadership and Adult Publishing  
LifeWay Church Resources  
One LifeWay Plaza  
Nashville, TN 37234-0175

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# What Are the 12 Steps?

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As you strive to become an effective 12-Step group facilitator, you will profit from basic understanding about the Steps. The information in this chapter will help you to answer the following questions:

- What are the 12 Steps?
- Where did they originate?
- Are the 12 Steps Christian?
- How does a Christ-centered 12-Step program differ from the secular 12-Step approach?

## What Are the 12 Steps?

The 12 Steps are a process for letting God change your life—a process of repentance.

### Biblical Repentance

Many believers think about repentance on a very surface level. They think that feeling sorry for our sins is repentance. Other people think legalistically about repentance. They say that unless we turn from our sins, we have not repented. The biblical term for repentance means a “change of mind.” This meaning involves more than simply remorse. Biblical examples and personal illustrations follow.

The Bible says that Esau, after he sold his birthright, “found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears” (Hebrews 12:17). That challenging verse only makes sense when you realize that repentance is a combination of God’s enabling power and humankind’s choice to respond. In the fullest sense, repentance means that God restructures a person’s mind. Philippians 2:12b-13 includes the balance of God’s power and our cooperation. It urges: “work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.” The Steps represent a structured way for a person to cooperate with God.

Here is a personal illustration. I have a number of spiritual problem areas. When someone else has something newer, better, or more expensive than I have, I experience envy. In certain situations I experience lust or greed or hatred. All of these cause me pain and difficulty. If I had the power to do so, I simply would choose or decide never to experience them again. I would give myself repentance. What is the problem with that? You know as well as I do.

Try it the next time envy or greed or lust strikes. We are responsible not to let these sins get control of our lives. However, keeping them away from our lives does not occur simply by saying, “I don’t want to feel that, so I won’t.” Working the Steps is a way to cooperate with God while He changes our lives.

## The Nature of the Steps

The **12 Steps** are a basic set of **progressive principles that make major life change possible**. Some basic methods accompany the Steps just as basic methods accompany Christianity. These practices are necessary companions to the Steps themselves. Carefully review the parts of the simple definition you just read.

**The Steps are basic.** They are boiled down to the simplest form. To describe the Steps one speaker used the illustration of a desert rainstorm. When the flood waters rush down a desert arroyo or canyon, they wash away everything that isn’t fastened down securely. After the flood only the most basic elements are left. The Steps are like that. All the unimportant things are removed. What remains are the basic principles essential for healthy, victorious living.

**The Steps are progressive.** They build upon each other. When we build a house, we lay the foundation before we put up the walls. In the same way the progressive nature of the Steps helps us to put first things first and to make sense of the task of living effectively. In other words we must work the Steps in order. The quality relationship with God Step 11 describes is based on giving Him your life in Step 3 and clearing your conscience in Steps 8 and 9. You cannot make a decision to turn your life over to God in Step 3 until you have realized your own powerlessness in Step 1 and come to trust God in Step 2.

The Steps are principles. Unlike laws, principles cannot be broken. They are statements of truth like the axioms of mathematics. Under all circumstances the axiom  $2 + 2 = 4$  is true. Nothing anyone can do will ever change the truth of that mathematical axiom. In the same way the Steps teach us basic principles which always will be true no matter how many people disregard them. This set of life-changing principles teaches me that I—

- cannot take God's place and run my own life (Step 1);
- need to come to the place in my life that I believe in and trust God (Step 2);
- need to turn control of my life over to God as I come to trust Him (Step 3).

I carry out that decision by working the remaining nine Steps (Steps 4-12). Steps 4 through 12 represent the equipment I need to carry out the decision to let God be Lord of my life. These Steps lead me to—

- become honest with myself and others about my life (Steps 4 and 5);
- allow God to change my defects of character (Steps 6 and 7);
- clear my conscience and relationships (Steps 8 and 9);
- make humility and honesty a life-style (Step 10);
- develop a relationship with God (Step 11);
- share this new life with others (Step 12).

The Steps also are principles we never complete fully. Like the law of gravity, which always will be in operation, the Steps are as necessary after 70 years of recovery as they are the first day. You can see this in cooperation with the progressive nature of the Steps. Step 1 must be worked before Steps 3, 7, or 11 can be effective, but we never completely finish Step 1.

Every day we are to work the Steps anew. For example, we constantly confront situations in which we must determine responsibility. We must ask the question, *Is this something which I can change, which is my business, or is this someone else's responsibility?* Every time we encounter an issue which is God's business or someone else's business, we must take Step 1 again.

In the same way we must repeat the appropriate Step in the appropriate place in our lives. This repetition is not a burden; it means that finally we have a plan of action in mind for living life effectively. The 12 Steps are a road map for a successful, effective, Christhonoring life.

Finally, this definition says the Steps make major life change possible. A frequent slogan in the program says, "It works if you work it." The Steps don't change lives; God does. If you keep working the Steps, God will change your life.

## From Where Did the Steps Come?

The Steps are not original in that someone suddenly discovered them. People have been practicing the various Steps since the time of Christ because they are biblical principles. What is distinct about the Steps is their wording and organization. Here is an analogy. People have been witnessing and sharing their faith since the days of Jesus. Then Bill Bright wrote a booklet called the *Four Spiritual Laws*. The booklet was not new information. It was the gospel in a more communicable, and therefore more effective, form. In the same way, the 12 Steps represent a more effective statement of truth.

In the early years of the 20th century, Lutheran evangelist Frank Buchman organized a group of believers called the Oxford Group. The Oxford Group's goals were to live a life of spiritual victory pleasing to God and to make the gospel more available to outsiders.

Group members stated six principles which they saw as essential for the victorious and effective life they were seeking. Partly as a result of the Oxford Group's ministry, a powerful spiritual conversion experience delivered Bill W., the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), from what was thought to be a hopeless state of alcoholism. He then became active in the Oxford Group movement. Bill W. wrote the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*. It was Bill W. who stated the Oxford Group's principles as the 12 Steps. He deleted any reference to Jesus Christ. As a compromise to reach the alienated alcoholic, he referred only to God.

## Are the 12 Steps Christian?

Are the 12 Steps Christian? Several possible answers exist. The principles of the Steps have a Christian heritage as described above. The Steps are truths that have a biblical origin and that have grown in their statement through history. The AA version of the Steps is not distinctively Christian, because this version deletes the identity of God. That does not mean they are false or anti-Christian. They do refer to God. The personal pronouns referring to God are capitalized in the original statement of the Steps. This indicates a personal understanding of God.

Some Christians have attacked the 12 Steps, but this attack alienates those for whom Christ died. The example of the apostle Paul in Acts 17:16 is better. The Scripture says Paul's "spirit was being provoked within him as he was beholding the city full of idols." Rather than becoming offended and attacking the people, Paul sought to identify with them and to show them the identity of the living God. Acts 17:32 says that some listeners sneered at his message but "others said, 'We shall hear you again

concerning this.’ “ By a loving approach Paul gained a hearing. As believers our evangelistic task is much more simple when we lovingly help people to see that Jesus is the God they have been seeking and that He is the ultimate source of the Steps themselves. Many Christ-centered restatements of the Steps exist. One of those is the set of Steps *Conquering Eating Disorders* uses.

Many believers are like this writer and are indebted to the program for the hope and healing they have found through the 12-Step process. The biblical principles and the strong emphasis on applying those principles has brought Christ-centered, lasting change.

### **The 12 Steps and the New Age**

The religious beliefs of Hinduism and Buddhism have made powerful inroads in America in recent years under the guise of the New Age movement. This belief system is built on a polytheistic worldview. In this concept everything or everybody becomes God, since New Age tenets hold that the one God does not exist. The most unreasonable part of this thinking is that according to New Age concepts, individuals become god. Tragically the New Age movement has invaded much of the secular 12-Step movement. Consider the illogical nature of the situation. The person with the New Age concept of God tries to work the Steps as follows:

1. I am powerless—”but I am really god, I just don’t know it.”
2. I come to believe in God—”but I am god and the real God doesn’t exist. What’s going on here?”
3. I make a decision to turn my life and my will over to God—”but I am the only god who exists. How do I turn my will over to me?”

The Steps depend on our surrendering our life and will to the one God. New Age theology does not fit the Steps. Sadly people today are blinded, so they don’t see the unreasonableness of New Age thinking.

At the heart of the New Age movement is deception. Part of the task of Christians today is to show Jesus Christ lovingly to those who have been deceived. Because they deny the objective truth, the New Agers think that believing anything, no matter how foolish, is open-mindedness. They see Christians as prejudiced, narrow-minded bigots because the Bible teaches one God and moral absolutes. Believers need to exercise love and patience—along with clarity of thought and explanation—as they show Jesus to people.

### **How Does a Christ-Centered Approach Differ?**

You have read an overview of the origin and nature of the Steps. You understand that both secular 12-Step programs and Christ-centered 12-Step programs exist. How do they differ? The basic, but not only, difference is the identity of God. In Christ-centered programs we recognize that our Higher Power is the Creator of the universe who reveals Himself in, and in fact is, Jesus Christ. An important difference in methodology grows out of the issue of the identity of God. Since secular groups seldom identify the specific name or character of God, the groups rely on “group consciousness” for decision-making. The highest authority in the group can be only the group itself. Christ-centered groups recognize the Word of God in written form—the Bible—as the basis of authority.

We need to observe carefully and imitate the Spirit of Jesus as we relate to our secular counterparts. Many persons in secular 12-Step programs are working diligently to surrender their lives to God, but they do not know who He is. Jesus would not speak evil of and condemn those organizations as some modern believers do. What He would do—and what we must do—is love the members of these organizations and affirm the positive and biblical aspects of their program. Then we will have an opportunity to help them know the God who really lives and who loves them. Many people in secular 12-Step programs have been injured by the unchristlike acts of professing Christians. By alienating them further we will do nothing but shame the name of Christ.

# The Methodology of the 12 Steps

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The 12 Steps are a set of statements, but the program includes much more than the statements. The “more” is difficult to define simply just as the beliefs and actions of Christianity or of marriage are difficult to define simply. The “program” includes the Steps, the traditions, the practice of mentoring, the element of personal testimony, the group as a surrogate family, the Serenity Prayer, the slogans, and the group members supporting one another in meetings.

## Mentoring or Sponsorship

A strong pattern exists in Scripture for older believers guiding and disciplining, sponsoring or mentoring younger disciples. Jesus made a priority out of training the twelve apostles and a smaller “inner circle” within the larger group. Paul made it his practice to have a group of younger apprentices who spent time with him and learned from him. The apostle also gave these specific instructions for leaders to pass on what they had learned:

*And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.*

—2 Timothy 2:2

In the same way, sponsorship is a fundamental part of the 12-Step tradition. When we help a newer person in the program recover, we work Step 12. In the process we are encouraged to progress in our own growth. The newcomer reminds us where we have been. The sponsor grows from the sponsoring relationship.

Encourage the newcomer to watch the lives of the participants and to find a person who shows evidence of growth in his or her life. An important goal for a group is to provide a list of quality sponsors. The newcomer enlists a sponsor who then supervises the newcomer in his or her growth.

Everyone needs a mentor or sponsor. Many excellent Christian leaders for years have taught that anyone who seeks to be a Christian leader needs to learn from a more mature leader, and everyone needs to share his or her discipleship with someone. Be aware that the newcomer may need special encouragement to find a sponsor because this is a critical element in working the Steps.

## Step Work

“Step Work” refers to the process of doing the writing, taking the inventories, and performing the actions the 12 Steps call for. Step work is the other side of sponsorship and is the discipleship process through which the sponsor leads the newcomer.

*Conquering Eating Disorders* is designed for use in the Step work process with a sponsor. The plan is very simple. The newcomer enlists a sponsor and acquires a copy of *Conquering Eating Disorders*; then the newcomer does the work and shares the material with his or her sponsor. Of all the ways to use the book, working the material one on one with a sponsor, along with attending a support group, will prove the most effective in creating lasting change.

## The Slogans

The recovery movement has produced several slogans which are informal restatements of the key concepts of the Steps themselves. Making an exhaustive list of the slogans is impossible, but we can recognize that the slogans mean much to those who struggle with issues which often are overwhelming. Some of the slogans include: *Let Go and Let God, Easy Does It, Discovery Is Not Recovery, People Make Mistakes—People Aren't Mistakes*, and many more. Many of these are found in the margins of the member's book.

Slogans are important because they communicate practical truth in ways that people can understand and apply. In fact, new slogans are born each time another person applies the truth to his or her life. The slogan *Live Life on Life's Terms* seems to be nonsense until its meaning hits home. We frequently refuse to deal with issues on the basis of reality. We attempt to live in a dream world in which things are as we wish they were, or we live with the specter of how we fear things might become. *Live Life on Life's Terms* calls me to objectivity. I must live with what is real.

## The Serenity Prayer

The Serenity Prayer is so closely linked with the 12-Step recovery process it is almost inseparable. The prayer summarizes the Steps themselves. People repeat the prayer

in countless meetings every day. (See page 198 in the member's book for a copy of the Serenity Prayer.) Eating disorders stem from issues related to control. We have experienced circumstances which feel out of control. We found that the use or control of food was a way to regain the feeling of control. In our attempt to feel in control we displaced God and attempted to take His place.

The Serenity Prayer is an appeal for a specific solution for the compulsive, controlling addict. The Serenity Prayer asks for the peace necessary to stop trying to control things which are none of my business. While a person compulsively controls, he or she also leaves much undone. When someone tries to control all people and

circumstances which are not his or her business, neither time nor energy remains to tend to responsibilities. The typical result is a family or relationship in which everyone is controlling and manipulating each other and no one is tending to his or her own responsibilities. Praying the Serenity Prayer involves asking God for the courage for me to be responsible for my own business.

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Notes

<sup>1</sup>Adapted from *Right Step Facilitator Training Manual* (Houston: Rapha Publishing, 1990).

# Foundational Concepts

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A Christ-centered 12 Step group is not a typical Bible study in which the lecture method is the primary teaching vehicle. In fact, many of your church's best Bible teachers may not be qualified to lead a support group because they might not possess some of the important skills listed below. The support-group facilitator guides the group process, allows group members to share information and insights, and assists members ready to identify and explore their own feelings about certain issues the sharing prompts.

Since shared leadership is a part of the 12-Step tradition, think in terms of three levels or stages of leadership in groups.

- Every group needs at least one facilitator. The facilitator is the liaison person, responsible to the church.
- A co-facilitator is a facilitator in training. The cofacilitator also can be in charge when the facilitator cannot be present for a group session.
- Persons in the group who are working their Steps will learn to introduce a topic and to begin the sharing for meetings. Sponsors can help those they sponsor to know when they are ready to begin to lead meetings.

By using this three-stage leadership development plan your group will accomplish two important tasks. You will develop facilitators and leaders, and you will avoid the problem of immature and unhealthy leadership.

Important spiritual qualifications for a support-group facilitator are to—

- be a growing Christian with a personal relationship with Jesus Christ;
- be a person of prayer and daily Bible study;
- be an active member of a local church;
- have a sense of God's call to the ministry of support groups;
- be spiritually gifted for the work;
- have a commitment to confidentiality within the group;
- be willing to give time and energy to help group members;
- a teachable spirit;
- be sensitive to the daily leadership of the Holy Spirit;
- love the Lord and love people.

One specialized qualification exists for facilitators of Christ-centered 12-Step groups. The facilitator must be a person who is working the 12 Steps in his or her own life. Facilitators need to have been in recovery from an eating disorder for at least two years. Do not attempt to facilitate or to lead a group without being on a recovery journey—with accountability to someone in a sponsor relationship. In some cases those beginning a 12-Step group have to form a “buddy system” to work their Steps. The key is to be working the Steps with accountability to another person.



# Choose a Schedule and a Plan

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## Choose a Schedule and a Plan

When you hear the term 12-Step group, several images may come to mind, because a variety of types of groups exist. Three general types of groups in the recovery tradition are: the speaker's meeting, the Stepstudy meeting, and the sharing meeting.

A **speaker's meeting** is one in which an individual presents a testimony about his or her own recovery experiences. The speaker may be the facilitator, someone who has volunteered, or perhaps a person someone has invited to share with the group. As the name implies, the speaker's meeting is the type having the least amount of group participation. The speaker's meeting is more common in the Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) tradition than in eating disorders recovery. This type of meeting is particularly valuable for introducing the newcomer to the program. Some groups may find it effective to have a monthly speaker's meeting with a sharing or Step-study meeting on the other weeks.

**Step-study meetings** come in a great many shapes and descriptions. The common element of Step-study meetings is a format for studying and applying the 12 Steps. Some Step-study meetings are as basic as listening to cassette recordings and then taking time for personal writing or journaling. Other Step-study meetings are organized around reading and discussion of a book.

*Conquering Eating Disorders* is written to be used effectively in a Step-study meeting. AA groups often have Step-study meetings based on the study of the "12 and 12" (*The 12 Steps and 12 Traditions*), which is a text for anyone interested in learning more about the AA model of the Steps.

The third approach is the **sharing meeting**. In this format the facilitator or a mature group member usually introduces the topic for the meeting and the members share how the particular topic applies to their recovery. Sharing meetings have been called "feelings" meetings because they help us get in touch with our emotions. The topics for this type of meeting can be determined by a set course of study or determined by the leaders from week to week.

Group members can lead the meetings in a very unstructured way or in a more restricted fashion. Those who lead meetings should be those who have progressed in their recovery and working the Steps.

While sharing meetings probably are the most useful meetings, be aware of one guideline. Keep the group's focus on the 12 Steps, God's Word, and recovery. Keep meetings from becoming focused only on the pain or the past. Healthy meetings do not neglect the past or the pain, but they move toward change and growth.

## Why This Overview?

I have given you this overview to prepare you for several scenarios you probably will encounter in group life. One is the "this-group-isn't-doing-it-right" episode. Remember that we who suffer addictions are controllers. At some time in the ministry of groups you will encounter a highly controlling person who will announce that the group is doing things all wrong. No single right way to do a 12-Step group exists. Much better than to do it right or perfectly would be to do it purposefully. Prepare your group ministry so that the type or types of meetings are appropriate and are meeting needs.

A second reason for understanding something about the history and types of groups is a leadership issue. The 12-Step tradition is one of lay leadership. Avoid two extremes in determining the type of leadership for your group. The first extreme is conducting a class instead of a group. Leaders must avoid exercising excessive control. Group members grow as they help each other. They need to have opportunity to share the leadership. The other extreme to avoid is a lack of leadership. Many times the sickest member of the group will be eager to control the group, fix everyone else, and give out advice in all directions. The skill of a facilitator is to avoid dominating while maintaining enough group leadership to keep someone else from dominating the group.

## Choose a Schedule and Plan

A number of options exist for the schedule and calendar plan of a 12-Step recovery group. The issues in choosing an approach include the duration or term for a group, the plan for covering the content of the Steps, and whether to have an open or closed group.

## Length of Term for a Group

Groups in the 12-Step tradition generally are ongoing,

open-ended groups. Other options also exist for 12-Step groups. Here are three general approaches. Consider prayerfully the advantages and disadvantages of each.

### **Option 1: The Ongoing Group**

Ongoing groups with no ending date represent the first option. This option has the advantage of long-term consistency. The group always is there when people have a need. In time the group becomes known to the community so that a network of referrals can develop. The method also has a weakness. The method fits the eating disordered person's inclination to procrastinate. If the group schedules no ending date, the member has no deadline to encourage work toward goals.

### **Option 2: Ongoing Group with Specific Term**

A specific term for a group provides an incentive to work the Steps. The fact that the group has a beginning and ending date encourages one to complete his or her Step-work.

We suggest three options for specific terms of moderate length. You can adapt the approach to your situation and needs from these models. The first is a "school-year" model. Form the group in the fall—August or September—and continue it through the spring—April or May. The other possibilities are groups having one-year or two-year terms. In all cases you can reorganize the groups for another term for those who have incomplete work or for those who wish to continue to grow and minister through a 12-Step group.

A second advantage of groups with a specific term with a beginning and ending date is a matter of leadership. A church can enlist leadership more easily for a specific term.

### **Option 3: The Step-Study Group Model**

A group can be very valuable on a shorter term and more specifically on a Step-study plan. The simplest expression of this model would be a 12-week study to cover the 12 Steps. A 24-week format will allow more time to deal with each Step. If the group uses a study format, this format can be an introduction to the Steps. The facilitator needs to explain clearly to members that much more time than 12 weeks is necessary to process the material thoroughly. In a 12-week setting, the group takes the form of a discovery group on the Steps for the purpose of understanding and providing a general overview of the Steps. This 12-week model does not allow time genuinely to work the Steps, but it does provide opportunities for members to become familiar with the process.

Prayerfully select the approach with the advantages to meet your need and the disadvantages with which you can live. Then trust the Holy Spirit to work through the process. It really does "work when you work it."

### **Using the Newcomer's Packet**

Prepare a packet of materials to give newcomers who attend open groups. The newcomer's material will explain the nature, purpose, and procedures of the group. You will find a sample newcomer's pack at the back of this guide. You may copy or adapt the sample for use in your group. For the newcomer's material you also can copy the Christ-centered 12-Steps and the *Conquering Eating Disorders* principles. Add to the packet whatever information you consider important about meeting times, other meetings, and additional church services. Seek to answer the questions the new member to your group might ask.

Well-prepared newcomer materials are a great asset to your group ministry.

# Meeting Formats

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Select the meeting format to fit your group and time frame. The options include a traditional format, an additional Bible study option, a short-term Step-study format, or any number of variations to fit your situation.

## Traditional Format

1. Quiet moment (1 min.)
2. Read opening group remarks and prayer (1 min.)
3. Read Christ-centered 12 Steps (3 min.)
4. Welcome new members and guests. Ask new members to introduce themselves by first name if they wish (3-10 min.)
5. Introduce facilitator or speaker for the group (2 min.)
6. Pass the collection and prayer basket (1 min.)
7. Content for the week (45-60 min.)
8. Read “Declaration” (1 min.)
9. Close with the Lord’s Prayer or the Serenity Prayer (1 min.)

## Optional Format with Bible-Study Time

1. Read opening group remarks and prayer (1 min.)
2. Read Christ-centered 12 Steps (1 min.)
3. Welcome new members and guests. Ask new members to introduce themselves by first name if they wish (3-10 min.)
4. Introduce facilitator or speaker for the group (2 min.)
5. Pass the collection and prayer basket (1 min.)
6. Sharing (30-45 min.)
7. Bible study (30 min.)
8. Read “Declaration” (1 min.)
9. Close with prayer (1 min.)

One approach to Bible study is to ask a person to lead the study as you would with any other Bible study. Another approach is to assign each group member who desires to read a Scripture from the list of Scriptures in the facilitator’s guide.

Allow the group members a few moments to read and to think about their assigned Scriptures. Then allow

members to read their assigned passages and to make whatever application of them they desire. To avoid doctrinal conflict, allow comment only from the person to whom you’ve assigned the Scripture. Do not allow others to add their comments.

Groups also can adapt the Bible-study format to a Step study. During the Step-study time you can study one or more lessons from *Conquering Eating Disorders*. Consider reversing the order by scheduling the Bible study or Step study before the sharing time. If the study time precedes the sharing, then the sharing can be related to the Bible or Step study. Similarly, if the sharing is first, then you can do the Bible or Step study related to the topic of sharing.

## Short-Term Step-Study Format

Groups can adapt the 12-Step meeting to a study of the Steps in a limited time frame. One caution is in order. Make the fact clear to participants that study of the Steps is not the same as working the Steps. Study is for understanding. More time is required to work the Steps.

Groups can accomplish a short-term study of the Steps—an overview—in 13 weeks with one week for introduction and one week for each Step. Use the material from the group leadership models for learning activities in the study. If more than 13 weeks are available, you may expand the study by adding any number of weeks to the longer Steps.

Here is a recommended format for a short-term Step study.

1. Opening prayer (1 min.)
2. Read the Christ-Centered 12 Steps (3 min.)
3. Step study (45-60 min.)
4. Read the “Declaration” (1 min.)
5. Close with the Lord’s Prayer or the Serenity Prayer (1 min.)

# How to Lead a 12-Step Group

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## Avoid Controlling

Addiction is a condition marked by compulsive controlling. Group facilitators or leaders must beware of seeking to control the group. The facilitator or leader of a 12-Step group begins the group process and then allows the Holy Spirit to guide.

The facilitator occasionally may need to intervene in case of a problem, but if he or she feels a need to intervene often, the problem probably exists with the facilitator rather than with the group. In my experience with many years of group leadership, the most difficult thing to learn is to trust the Holy Spirit—allowing God to work through the process.

## Starting the Meeting

So how does a facilitator start the meeting? First ask someone to read the preamble or welcome statement and the Steps. Either you or someone you choose may read the information. Make a clear statement about confidentiality. At each meeting explain simply but clearly, “What you hear at this meeting remains here.”

Encourage people to understand that attendance at meetings is only part of the program. Explain that life change occurs by completing the Step work and working with a sponsor (provided your group has the capability of providing sponsors).

This guide contains a suggested welcome and preamble statement. Be sure that newcomers receive preliminary information about the group and that they understand that they may share or pass during the sharing time.

You begin the sharing portion of the meeting. Explain the topic for the meeting and share a part of your own pilgrimage of recovery. In this section I have given you some sample topics for meetings. Later in this guide you will find sample leadership models for every Step and for every lesson in *Conquering Eating Disorders*.

These are only representative of the hundreds of possible topics. Any of the key beliefs of the recovery process, any of the slogans, or any of the scriptural truths can form the basis for the sharing in a meeting.

## About Using Scripture in a Meeting

One word about Scripture is in order. The Word of God is our foundation. It is our authority and the basis of everything we hope and believe. For many people who have eating disorders, the Scripture automatically signals failure and guilt. Enormous emotional content—much of it negative—is tied to the Scriptures. Damage, not healing, will result if the facilitator uses Scripture to control or condemn.

The following guidelines will help you avoid the pitfalls about use of Scripture in the group:

1. When you lead a meeting of any sort, use “I” messages and not “you” messages. When using Scripture, take extra care to avoid “you” messages. An “I” message involves saying something like, “This happened the other day. . . and I realized that this aspect of my addiction was at work.” A subtle form of a “you” message might begin, “I read this in the Scripture, and it tells us how we may overcome. . . .” Remember that the Holy Spirit works through this process as we share our experience, strength, and hope—not as we tell others what their experience, strength, and hope should be.
2. When leading a meeting, but especially when using Scripture, emphasize how the passage speaks to your specific recovery.
3. Share horizontally rather than vertically. Share as a fellow struggler; don’t teach down to people who have problems while you give the impression that you have none. The group process works on the principle of confession. When we hear others honestly share their struggles, sins, and successes, our own denial seems to fall away. We suddenly realize, “Hey, that’s my story, too.” Nothing kills the power of a meeting like a facilitator who tells “these poor people how I solved my problems.” Share your humanity . . . and leave your divinity at home!

We encourage all facilitators and group leaders to take the LIFE course *WiseCounsel*. In *WiseCounsel* John Drakeford teaches about “modeling the role.” The more clearly you understand modeling the role, the better you can understand the goal for the group.

In an effective 12-Step group members model the role for each other. Even if you cannot take the course at this time, you will benefit from reading unit 3 of *WiseCounsel*.

### Sample Ways to Launch a Meeting

Here are some examples of ways to begin the sharing. After the opening prayer and reading of preliminary information the leader can share in this manner—

1. Our topic tonight is “Fear of Authority Figures.” One of the characteristics of addiction with which I struggle is fear of authority figures. I realize that I put people in the position of authority figures when doing so makes no sense. The other night I was in a restaurant. The server messed up the order and brought my son the wrong order. I am on a tight budget. What she brought cost more, and it wasn’t what my son wanted, but I found myself saying to the server, “Oh, that’s alright. I must not have spoken clearly enough.” Then I realized what I was doing. My recovery kicked in. I realized I was setting an example for my children that would continue the sickness in our family. I called the server back. I politely but clearly said, “This was not what he ordered. Please bring us. . . .” Through that experience I realized that I had been making the server an authority figure for me.

2. The topic for today’s meeting is based on the slogan, “If nothing changes, nothing changes.” Recently I realized that I am really good at working my program in my head. But I want to stop the cycle of dysfunctional behavior in my family. I realized that my children don’t see what goes on in my head; they only see what I say and do. So I did an inventory. I looked at the key parts of my addiction. I made a list of my unhealthy behaviors. That list includes being a people pleaser, being a martyr, being passive, and being a perfectionist. During the time I was working the Steps with my sponsor, I discovered that these were my particular habits on which I have to keep working the Steps. So I wrote my personal habits on a card, and I ask myself once a day, “How did I do today on people pleasing? and so forth.” As we share today, from where you are in recovery, how are you doing at either identifying and/or changing unhealthy habits? Because if nothing changes, nothing changes.

3. The topic for tonight is “Recovery is a messy business.” I have been a rescuer for a long time. I realize that it is unrealistic to expect the people I’ve caretaken suddenly to begin to be responsible for themselves. So I’m having to establish some boundaries in my life and risk other people getting angry or unhappy because I’m not doing what they want. (Share a personal example.) Here is a Scripture that teaches that progress comes with problems. Proverbs 14:4

says, “Where no oxen are, the manger is clean, But much increase comes by the strength of the ox.” Oxen are messy animals. A farmer in the Middle East in Bible times wouldn’t keep the stall vacant simply because an ox might make a mess. That Scripture reminds me that recovery also comes with some messes, or challenging situations. I cannot expect my family members to say, “Wow! I’m so glad you are in recovery. Now I won’t expect you to take care of my responsibilities for me any longer. I will instantly adapt by changing my behavior.” I am learning to expect some challenges but to know that the end results are worth the effort.

4. I have been doing some personal work related to Step 2. Before I entered recovery, I didn’t realize how my parents shaped my view of, and especially my feelings about, God. After doing a great deal of work, I realize how I really have felt about God. I felt He was critical of everything I did and that I never could please Him. And I felt He had abandoned or would abandon me. I am discovering that my feelings about God aren’t really who He is at all. I am getting acquainted with the God who is real and whom I can trust. As we share, the topic is our concept of God. How close is what you feel about God to who you believe God really is?

These examples are only models for a 12-Step sharing meeting. The concept is simple.

- State the topic for the meeting.
- Share yourself.
- Share a personal example from your life.
- Share from an attitude of humility.

Share your hope of success, but always share out of your humanity. Remember how as a kid you hated to hear adults tell you how they walked 12 miles to school, uphill, both ways? The reason you hated it was because they were sharing down at you.

Above all, pray and follow the Holy Spirit’s leading. Many of the best meetings I ever have attended were where one of two things happened. Either the leader simply said, “No topic; tonight, just share where you are in your recovery,” or the people in the group disregarded the topic and shared where they were anyway.

Facilitating a group requires more humility and restraint than anything else. In our answers-oriented faith, being quiet is difficult. Humility is required when you know the answer but also you know the person ideally discovers the answer for himself or herself.



# How to Be a Sponsor

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The apprenticeship or disciple-making relationship with a sponsor is vital to the 12-Step process. By serving as sponsor you will experience some of the greatest personal and spiritual growth in your life. A basic set of principles to help you do the work of a sponsor follow.

**1. Have a sponsor and be working the Steps actively.** Don't attempt to lead others where you have not been or at least are going. Ideally sponsors have one to two years or more in recovery.

The problem with the availability of sponsors is obvious. In the beginning of a 12-Step ministry, where do you find these sponsors? If you are starting a new program, you may find Christian sponsors from other 12-Step groups. In your church you may find individuals who have recovery experience. If no such sponsors exist, you may form a "buddy-system" partnership with another member of the group. You may have to sponsor each other. Although this approach is not the ideal one, every group has to start somewhere, and it does work. Even when your groups develop some maturity, you probably will continue to have a shortage of sponsors so that you continue to need to use a "buddy system."

**2. Establish and maintain clear boundaries and lines of responsibility and accountability.** Make clear how you will hold the person accountable. Avoid codependent relationships. The goal of being a sponsor is not to rescue or repair. The goal is not for you to accomplish anything. The person you sponsor is the worker. The goal is to allow individuals to "work the Steps" for themselves. You may see yourself as an encourager, a listener, a catalyst for those doing the work. Beware of feeling that you are responsible for their performance.

Sometimes a sponsor supplies encouragement, sometimes an objective point of view. Often people in recovery become "stuck" in a particular situation or on a particular Step. You can help the person you sponsor to brainstorm options and find ways to move forward. Remember that an effective sponsor seldom gives answers and does not take the responsibility that belongs to another.

**3. Be a listener.** Listening is one of the most difficult skills to develop. Often people's greatest need is for someone to listen to them with attentiveness. By listening you are giving a priceless gift to a person whom others have treated with disrespect. By not providing answers

you are affirming your confidence in the person. You are saying, "I believe you are capable of making wise decisions. You do not have to depend on someone else to tell you what to do." For assistance in developing listening skills see unit 4 of *WiseCounsel: Skills for Lay Counseling*.

**4. Encourage the grieving process.** Many of the problems of addiction and codependency involve incomplete grieving. When we have "stuffed" or buried painful emotions and hurtful experiences from the past, we must surface our losses and grieve them. Usually we are reluctant, if not resistant, to feel these painful feelings. A sponsor can challenge us to face our fear of emotion.

**5. Model responsibility.** At the first meeting, explain clearly the boundaries of the relationship. Explain that because you are a recovering person, you cannot rescue or fix the other person. Clearly state the amount of time you can spend with the person, where you can meet, how often you can meet, and the nature of the sponsoring relationship. Share your expectations of the person you sponsor. For example, I explain that I will assign work to be done (such as, "Complete the written work in Step 1 of *Conquering Eating Disorders*."), then the person calls me when he completes the work and is ready to meet. I say, "I am available. I encourage you to call me when you are upset, struggling, or just stuck, but I will not do your work for you or try to make you do your work. You are responsible for your recovery."

I then may call the person I am sponsoring, but I will call only to convey friendship and interest. He must make the appointment to review Step work. No norm exists for how often the sponsor and sponsoree meet; the frequency depends on the motivation of the sponsoree and how quickly he or she processes the Steps.

Model responsibility in another way. Set realistic boundaries on the number of people you sponsor. A general guideline would be to sponsor at one time no more than two people who are actively working the Steps. A better guideline may be to sponsor only one person who is actively working the Steps. After a person has done the initial Step work, you will continue to be his or her sponsor, but the relationship changes to that of colleague. You then may have time to begin sponsoring another person who is actively working the Steps.

You easily can allow the needs of others and the feeling of being needed to lead you to overcommitment and back to addictive behavior. I knew I was in trouble on this matter when I sat in a meeting with several people who shared about their relationship with their sponsor—and all of them were talking about me! You will struggle with this issue. Try to err on the side of caution.

### What Does a Sponsor Actually Do?

An effective sponsor follows the guidelines above, but specifically what is the sponsor to do? The sponsor is filling the role parents ideally would have played in a person's life. Here are some helps for sponsors:

1. In the beginning help the person understand the three parts of the program: Group for emotional support, Step work done by the person, and relationship with the sponsor for listening and encouragement necessary to work the Steps.
2. Listen as the person reviews each Step in *Conquering Eating Disorders*. You may ask the person to read his or her answers to you. You may choose another way to allow the person to review the Step work.
3. Give special attention to the written prayers the member's book asks the member to write. Some persons have no particular difficulty communicating with God. For others prayer is a great problem. Writing prayers can be a powerful experience in some individuals' lives.
4. Encourage the process of grief and catharsis. Catharsis involves relieving hidden fears and emotional issues by bringing them to the surface and expressing them. *Conquering Eating Disorders* teaches the skills necessary for confrontation. You may see the need for the person to express anger and grief through letters to God, parents, or

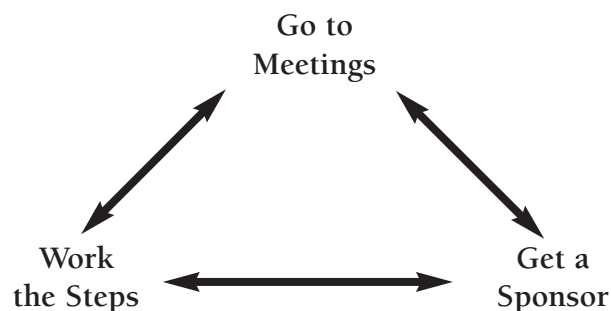
other significant people in the person's past. Make those assignments as necessary and listen as the person reads the letters he or she has written. Note that such assignments are to deal with emotions, not to cause harm by being mailed to living persons.

5. As part of Step 4 assign the person to write a history of his or her eating disorder.

6. Issues such as our self perception are a major part of eating disorders. Without practicing therapy you can assist those you sponsor to confront their unrealistic images of their bodies.

### The Changing Nature of Sponsorship

As a person works the Steps, the sponsor relationship changes. In the beginning the sponsor is the authority. In time the relationship changes to that of colleague. As you listen and encourage, be aware of this changing relationship. Don't allow your feelings and your need to be needed to stand in the way of this healthy change. The goal of parenting is to produce independent people who no longer need the parent. In the same way the goal of sponsoring is to work one's self out of a job.



# Special Issues Related to Eating Disorders

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Several specialized issues are particularly important for leaders of an eating-disorders support group ministry.

**1. Combined or Separate Groups?** The three primary eating disorders share a common issue. Each is an addictive process in which food is the identified “drug of choice.” Beyond that basic similarity, major differences exist which make a single group for all eating disorders almost impossible.

Individuals suffering from anorexia and/or bulimia generally feel that they have little in common with those recovering from compulsive overeating. If at all possible, seek to offer those persons struggling with anorexia and bulimia separate group experiences from those recovering from compulsive overeating.

**2. Health-Risk Issues:** Anorexia and bulimia are more immediately life threatening than is compulsive overeating, but all eating disorders are unhealthy and extremely dangerous. People who provide a support group ministry need to take several actions to deal with the health risks associated with eating disorders.

- Become familiar with symptoms that indicate a person is in immediate danger. Be aware if a person experiences rapid weight loss, relapse, heart problems, or depression. Be aware if the person continues to binge despite attending the group and if the person displays a recurring pattern of volatile emotions or experiences extreme fear or panic attacks. Refer this person immediately to a physician.
- Know what professional medical help is available.
- Urge all participants to put themselves under the care of a physician who has experience with eating disorders.

**3. Be Alert for Related Issues:** Many persons who have addictive disorders grew up in dysfunctional family situations. These recovering persons may identify a need for additional recovery from codependency. Studies indicate that a high percentage of persons with eating disorders have been the victims of sexual abuse. These individuals may need to do additional work on recovery from sexual abuse issues.

The first critical need for a person recovering from a food addiction is establishing a healthy pattern of eating behavior. While codependency or sexual abuse issues may underlie and support a primary addiction, and while the abuse issues need to be addressed and resolved, a major danger exists when a person attempts to accomplish too much too fast.

As a person’s eating behavior becomes more appropriate, that person then will be able to turn his or her attentions to the underlying issues in recovery. A person needs to become stable in physical health care, then in appropriate eating behavior, and then begin to address patterns and concerns such as control, unexpressed grief, and unresolved hurt. These issues affect every other relationship in a recovering person’s life.

Resolving the problems which arise out of abuse is sometimes a key to lasting recovery. Part of recovery from abuse includes remembering and dealing with pain from the past. Persons who are not solidly established in their recovery easily can dredge up more pain than they can stand. The stress can lead them to relapse. For this reason, be alert for related issues, but keep the focus of the group on recovery from eating disorders.

**4. Arrangement of Chairs:** Many eating-disorders people have been sexually abused and may feel trapped in a circle arrangement of chairs. If you arrange the chairs in a circle, leave an opening in the circle so such members won’t feel trapped.

**5. The Need for Referral:** Because of the health risks and the concerns posed by related issues, give attention to the matter of referral. Maintain a relationship with a medical doctor who has experience in the area of eating disorders.

In the same way, maintain a relationship with a professional Christian counselor to advise you when critical needs arise. See unit 2 of *WiseCounsel* for help in developing a referral list.



# Admitting My Powerlessness

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## Step 1

*We admit that by ourselves we are powerless over our eating behavior—  
that our lives have become unmanageable.*

### Goals for Step 1

1. Understand what eating disorders are and why they occur.
2. Recognize your eating-disordered behaviors and their consequences.
3. Admit you are powerless to conquer eating disorders.
4. Identify the parts of a Christ-centered approach to conquering eating disorders.
5. Begin the process of healing and victory God provides over eating disorders.

### Before the Meeting

- Read and complete the learning activities for Step 1 in the *Conquering Eating Disorders* member's book.
- Find a quiet time and place to pray for group members by name. Ask the Lord to give you the wisdom you need to prepare for and to lead the group meeting.
- Read the Group Leadership Models section which follows. The section provides activities that relate to each lesson in Step 1. Select the activities that best suit your group members' needs. Be aware that this section provides far more activities than you will have time to use during your meeting. If you are using the 13-week overview schedule, in which you spend only one week on each Step, you likely will use a few activities from this Step. If you use the Step Study schedule, you may use a number of the activities before your group moves on to another Step. If you are following the traditional 12-Step format, the leader will select for the meeting one topic from one of the examples given or from the leader's experience.
- Arrange the chairs. Many eating-disorders people have been sexually abused and may feel trapped in a circle arrangement of chairs. If you use a circle, leave an opening in the circle so such members won't feel trapped.
- If you select an activity that involves a handout, make enough copies of the handout for each group member to have one.

### Group Leadership Models

#### Lesson 1: Defining the Problem

Relate-one of the following stories:

- Barbara, page 10 of the member's book. Explain that Barbara's story is a typical example of a highly successful person with bulimia nervosa.
- Either Cathy or Doug, page 11. Explain that their stories are typical of persons who are victims of compulsive overeating.
- Annie, page 14. Explain that Annie's story is typical of anorexia nervosa.

Read or explain the ABC's of Eating Disorders on page 13. Explain that these three disorders seem very different but that they share some common issues. In each case the person's "drug of choice" is food. In each case a person uses food for some purpose other than to provide healthy nourishment—the person uses or controls it to replace needed emotional nurture in his or her life. Relate something about your journey with your eating disorder. Ask group members to share about their experiences.

Explain that no one knows for sure why eating disorders occur. Many professionals believe the causes can include:

1. life events such as illness or death of a loved one, divorce, or sexual abuse
2. the comments of others (both positive and negative)
3. our relationship needs—all addictions are relationships—like an illicit affair with our drug of choice
4. genetic or hereditary factors

Share your response to the question that follows Annie's story on page 14. Invite group members to tell what factors they have identified as contributing to their eating disorder. Remind group members that we are not blaming parents or others. The issue is to identify how we have reacted to life situations.

## Lesson 2: Describing the Results

Make and distribute copies of Handout I. Allow time for group members privately to check the list. Explain that they will not be asked to show their results to anyone or to share anything with the group that they do not wish to share. When group members have completed the checklist, explain the guides for evaluating the list from page 16 of the member's book. Explain that the sharing simply will be about how they each react to the list. Share something about your reaction when you first saw or took this, or a similar, checklist.

Explain the health effects of one or more of the eating disorders from pages 17-19. Be careful not to "preach" to the members of the group. We who are addicts generally are extremely controlling, and we do not respond well to others' attempts to control us. Share something about your journey to overcome denial and to admit that you have an eating disorder. Ask members to discuss how they react emotionally to the effects of their eating disorders. Explain that they are not to "take someone else's inventory" by sharing their reaction to anyone else's eating disorder.

Explain the brief section (page 20) entitled Scripture in Recovery. Reinforce that the purpose of the group, the book, and the use of Scripture is not to communicate shame and blame but to convey love, acceptance, and strength. Share how your view of Scripture has changed through recovery—especially if you once viewed the Scripture as shaming and now view it as freeing. Invite members to share where they are in their view and feelings toward the Scripture.

Relate the fact that many of us with eating disorders consider food, or certain foods, as our friend. Others consider food as the enemy. Relate something of your feelings about food or your feelings after bingeing. Share your feelings before recovery and how your feelings are changing now. Invite sharing.

## Lesson 3: Declaring Our Powerlessness

Explain that the paradox of addiction is that the more we struggle in our own power against the object of our addiction, the greater is the addiction's hold over our lives. Share the key concept from lesson 3: "Admitting my powerlessness is the first step to victory over my eating disorder." Share something about your own struggle to accept the reality of your powerlessness. Ask others to tell about their struggles.

Make and distribute copies of Handout 2. Allow the group members a few minutes to answer the questions. Share your own emotional reaction to one or more of the questions.

Ask group members to share their reactions to some portion of the list of questions. Relate the definition of *social unmanageability* (page 23). Share a portion of your experience that convinced you that your eating behavior had become unmanageable. Ask others to share their experiences.

## Lesson 4: Discovering the Solution

Explain the concept that we strive for progress, not perfection. We tend to view our lives in the extremes—a process called black-and-white thinking. In recovery we discover that things cannot be perfect, but they can be wonderfully better. They get better little by little as we cooperate with God to transform our lives in the four areas: mental, physical, social, and spiritual. Share one or more areas of your life in which you are experiencing progress rather than perfection. Invite members to share their progress in one or more areas.

## Lesson 5: Deciding to Begin

Explain the odd fact that when we leave our addictive behavior we go through a grief process. We can use the analogy of a romance as one model for understanding addiction. We have the equivalent of an illicit affair with our drug of choice. Share something about your experience of grief in recovery. Encourage others to tell about their experiences. Make a chart listing the five stages of the grief process—denial, bargaining, anger, grief, and acceptance. Briefly summarize the stages in the grief process. Explain that we do not go directly through the stages of grief. We may find ourselves in more than one stage at once, and we may find ourselves recycling back through the stages more than once. Share something about your experience with the stages of grief in your recovery process. Invite sharing.

## After the Meeting

- Read "Before the Meeting" for Step 2 to evaluate the amount of preparation you will need for your next meeting.
- Study carefully Step 2 and complete all the exercises in the *Conquering Eating Disorders* member's book.

# Coming to Believe

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## Step 2

*We come to believe that God, through Jesus Christ, can restore us to sanity.*

### Goals for Step 2

1. Identify attitudes and actions characteristic of distorted thinking.
2. Distinguish between guilt, shame, and blame.
3. Analyze past relationships with your parents.
4. Describe the impact your past relationships have had on your view of God.
5. Take steps to correct elements of a faulty concept of God.
6. Take steps to correct elements of a faulty self concept.

### Before the Meeting

- Read and complete the learning activities for Step 2 in the *Conquering Eating Disorders* member's book.
- Find a quiet time and place to pray for group members by name. Ask the Lord to give you the wisdom you need to prepare for and to lead the group meeting.
- Read the Group Leadership Models section which follows. The section provides activities that relate to each lesson in Step 2. Select the activities that best suit your group members' needs. Be aware that this section provides far more activities than you will have time to use during your meeting. Just as a reminder about which activities to choose, you likely will use only a few activities from this Step if you are using the 13-week overview schedule. If you use the Step Study schedule, you may use a number of the activities before your group moves on to another Step. If you are following the traditional 12-Step format, the leader will select for the meeting one topic from one of the examples given or from the leader's experience.
- Arrange the chairs.
- If you select an activity that involves a handout, make enough copies of the handout for each group member to have one.

### Group Leadership Models

#### Lesson 1: Baffling Behaviors

Make and distribute copies of Handout 3 (page 54 of the facilitator's guide). Explain that the word *sanity* in the Step 2 refers to "soundness of judgment." Share one or more of the

insane behaviors with which you have identified and how your thinking is changing as you work the program. Invite members to share their reaction to the material in the handout.

#### Lesson 2: Distorted Views of God

Read the story of Cathy's View of God from page 36 of the member's book. Describe what your view of God was like before you began recovery. Describe your present view of God. Encourage members to share their views of God before they began recovery and now. Do not correct your own or another person's view. Remind members that we do not attempt to control the feelings of group members. Seek to maintain a safe atmosphere for sharing.

Explain the difference between guilt and perceived guilt (page 37 of the member's book.) You may want to read the stories of Sue and Cliff, Arthur, and Sally and Mark to illustrate. Share from your experience an example of a time when you have punished yourself with perceived guilt and of a time when you have been genuinely guilty. Invite group members to tell their experiences with perceived and genuine guilt.

Briefly explain the difference between perceived guilt and appropriate shame or guilt. Relate that all of us have both experiences. All of us have done things for which, appropriately, we feel healthy shame or guilt. All of us have felt the burden of false guilt. Read the story of Barbara's shame (page 38.) Share some experience from your life with perceived and appropriate guilt. Invite members to discuss how perceived and genuine guilt or shame have impacted their lives. (Note: some persons use shame in a way as to indicate it is entirely bad. Inappropriate shame is damaging, but healthy shame is the gift God gives us to let us know when we are acting shamelessly.)

#### Lessons 3 and 4: Burdens of the Past and Bridge to the Present

This model applies both to lessons 3 and 4.

Share the key concept from these lessons—my concept of

God originates primarily from my parents or early caregivers. Read the three paragraphs under Your Parents and You on page 40 of the member's book. Share something about how working the exercises in these lessons helped you to see the similarity between your feelings about God and your feelings about your parents. Ask members how they see their feelings for parents shaping their feelings about God.

### **Lesson 5: Believing the Truth About God**

Explain that every person's greatest task in life is to come to know God as He really is. Relate that we have a concept of God in our intellect and emotions, but that concept may or may not be a true description of God. Share how studying Psalm 139 has impacted your life and how you are coming to know God through His Word. Invite group members to discuss either where they are in their journey to get to know God or how the psalm has impacted their view of God. Encourage members to be authentic in their sharing. Do not allow any person to tell what other members "should" feel.

Make a poster of the outline headings from pages 47-50: God Knows Me Thoroughly, He Protects Me, He Always Is Present, He Is a Sovereign Creator, God Has a Plan for Me, and God is Constant and Consistent. Place the list in a place where members can see it. Briefly explain the list, and explain that the psalmist's response to the list was verses 23 and 24. The psalmist said, in essence, "since this is your nature, God, I desire to know You and for You to know me completely." Share your own reaction to the character of God the Psalm reveals and your reaction to the list. Invite members to discuss their responses to the list. (You may suggest that the response could include disbelief, wonder, or anger, among other responses.)

### **Lesson 6: Believing the Truth About You**

Make copies of Handout 4—the false beliefs which have affected us all. Briefly explain the four false beliefs. Share which of the false beliefs has impacted your life the most. Share how God is replacing that false belief with the corresponding truth. Ask members which of the false beliefs has most injured their view of themselves and how.

Make copies of Handout 5—the false beliefs, painful emotions, and God's truths. Briefly explain the chart. Share how the truths of God are changing your thinking and your life. Encourage members to share their reactions to the chart. Remind members that God desires honesty more than "good" answers. Make certain that members can share what they feel without having other group members correcting or fixing them.

Relate the information on pages 53-54 about relapse. Explain that rather than failure, relapse is part of recovery. The point is not to avoid relapse entirely but rather to grow in our recovery so that relapse becomes less of an option and less of a problem.

### **After the Meeting**

- Read "Before the Meeting" for Step 3 to evaluate the amount of preparation you will need for your next group meeting.
- Study carefully Step 3 and complete all the exercises in the *Conquering Eating Disorders* member's book.

# Turning It Over

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## Step 3

*We make a decision to turn our lives over to God through Jesus Christ.*

### Goals for Step 3

1. Describe the twofold nature of Step 3.
2. Describe God's plan to deliver from the power of sin.
3. Describe our position in Christ as completely forgiven.
4. Describe the ongoing process of applying Step 3 to practical problems.

### Before the Meeting

- Read and complete the learning activities for Step 3 in the *Conquering Eating Disorders* member's book.
- Find a quiet time and place to pray for group members by name. Ask the Lord to give you the wisdom you need to prepare for and to lead the group meeting.

### Group Leadership Models

#### Lesson 1: Help from God

Explain the twofold nature of Step 3 (page 58 of the member's book). Share a brief testimony of when and how you received Jesus as Savior and of how you first took the Step as it pertains to your eating disorder. Encourage members to tell where they currently see themselves in relation to the third Step.

#### Lesson 2: God's Provision in Christ

Review the opening paragraphs of Lesson 2 about self-will. State that all our addictions are painful results of our out-of-control self-will. Share your responses to the learning activity (pages 60-61), explaining how your self-will has damaged the three areas of your life. Share something about how working the program is changing these damaged areas of your life. Invite group members to discuss how self-will has harmed them and how the recovery process is repairing that damage.

Explain the concept that the 12 Steps are a path to repentance. Relate that repentance means a changed mind—something we cannot do on our own. Just as we use a jack to lift a car to change a tire, the Steps are equipment we use to cooperate with God as He changes our minds. Share your answer to the learning activity on page 61 describing how the first two Steps lead us to repentance. Invite sharing.

#### Lesson 3: Your Position in Christ

Relate or read the story of Annie's search for God through perfect performance (page 62 of the member's book). Share your reaction to Annie's experience—how you also have traveled a path similar to Annie's. Share how you have come to accept God's grace to replace your perfection. Encourage members to share their reaction to Annie's efforts.

Explain the concept of propitiation (page 63 of the member's book.) Do not attempt to explain the concept entirely—propitiation involves the entire Old Testament sacrificial system. The key is that Jesus completely has taken the blame for our sin. He has left no blame for us. Point out the question, "How much of God's wrath was satisfied?" from the learning activity on page 64. If your feelings were a response other than number 4, share your past feelings and how you are coming to accept the fact that you are completely forgiven. Ask members to discuss their feelings about God's complete forgiveness.

#### Lesson 4: Working the Step Part One

Remind group members that Step 3 applies in two ways. Share the fact that for this meeting the emphasis will be on applying the Step to our eternal relationship with God. Summarize the section of the member's book (page 66) about Trusting in Christ. Share your personal testimony of how you have come to trust in Christ. Invite members to share their progress in relation to the eternal application of the Step. Emphasize that it is OK still to be working on this Step—you don't have to have your relationship with God all together. Also emphasize the final paragraph of the lesson on page 68 about instant deliverance.

#### Lesson 5: Working the Step Part Two

Read Colossians 2:6. Explain that the verse says we are to continue to live the life God has given us in the same way that we received Christ. Share one or more examples of how you have applied the Step to practical problems in your life. Explain that this principle is not about being perfect but is about turning issues over to God as they arise. You may desire to share instances of failure also. Remind the group members that our hope is not in our ability to hold on but in God's promise of faithfulness. Encourage group members to share how they have applied this principle to



# Taking My Inventory

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## Step 4

*We make a searching, courageous moral inventory of ourselves.*

### Goals for Step 4

1. Describe a moral inventory.
2. Write an inventory of dishonesty and resentment.
3. Write an inventory of self-pity and false pride.
4. Write an inventory of criticism and destructive anger.
5. Write an inventory of fear and impatience.

### Before the Meeting

- Read and complete the learning activities for Step 4 in the *Conquering Eating Disorders* member's book.
- Find a quiet time and place to pray for group members by name. Ask the Lord to give you the wisdom you need to prepare for and to lead the group meeting.

### Group Leadership Models

#### Lesson 1: Why Take a Moral Inventory?

Summarize the first section of the lesson. Explain that in the early days of Alcoholics Anonymous the veteran members of the program encouraged newcomers to take the first three Steps immediately. The newcomer admitted powerlessness over the addiction and prayed to God, asking Him to take charge of the newcomer's life. Then the person began working the Steps—by taking his or her moral inventory. Relate that we begin actually to work the Steps with Step 4, and we recover as we work—not hear, memorize, believe, or talk about the Steps. Ask members to share where they are in their journey with the 12 Steps and how they feel about taking the next Step.

Explain that an inventory is a “taking-stock” activity. When we conduct an inventory, we honestly list all the things, both good and bad, in our possession. Stress the importance of writing an inventory. By writing an inventory we become aware of many things we previously did not see. Explain that Step 4 is not an “immoral” inventory. (See explanation on page 74 of the member's book.) Share something about your growth through taking the Step. Encourage members to share about their own growth.

Summarize the member's book section beginning with “Trying to hide your flaws”(page 75). Explain that only by rigorous honesty can we break the cycle of guilt and denial that drives our addiction. Read the paragraph on page 76 which begins with “In Step 2, you decided to seek God to restore your sanity.” Share how taking your inventory has been important in your recovery. Ask others to tell their experiences.

Make and distribute copies of Handout 6. Briefly explain the chart. Share how one or more of the false beliefs has resulted in the games in your life, and share how God is replacing the old games with the alternatives as you work the Steps. Invite members to share their responses.

#### Lesson 2: Dishonesty and Resentment

Explain the barometer illustration that begins the lesson (page 78). Share an example from your life of how the pressure once built up with the result that you acted out your addiction. Share the slogan, “Stress makes us hug our addictions.” Encourage members to tell how working the Steps is helping them to relieve pressure in a healthy and godly way.

Relate one or more of the forms of dishonesty from the inventory on page 79. Share about how you are coming to face the dishonesty in your life. Share positive change that has come in your life as a result. Invite members to share progress in their journey to face and deal with dishonesty.

Define and explain resentment (page 80). Share how resentment has been a part of your life and how God is changing your life. Stress the benefits that come from the difficult task of facing and eliminating resentments. Ask members to share where they are in their journey to be rid of resentment.

Summarize and explain the member's book section about forgiveness (page 81). Explain that many people do not want to forgive because they have distorted ideas about forgiveness. State that forgiveness is a gift we give ourselves because it frees us to live effectively. Share something about your journey in learning to forgive.

Ask others to tell about their own journeys in this area of forgiveness.

### **Lesson 3: Self-pity and False Pride**

Make and distribute copies of Handout 7—Self-pity Characteristics. Summarize the member's book section entitled "Self-pity: How to be a Life-long Victim." Share your reaction to the characteristics in the handout and share which characteristics you checked. Invite members to share their reaction to one or more of the characteristics or to share how they are overcoming the self-pity trap.

Read the two paragraphs entitled "Gratitude: Cure for the 'Pity Party' Blues" (page 85). Share your responses to the two learning activities that follow. Share how you are learning to replace self-pity with gratitude. Encourage members to share their progress in learning to replace self-pity with gratitude.

Summarize the member's book section entitled "False Pride/False Humility: Two Sides of a Counterfeit Coin," page 85. Explain that in recovery we learn to replace our extreme thinking with a realistic evaluation of ourselves. Share one or more examples in which you have identified and are replacing your false pride or false humility. Invite others to share examples.

Explain that humility requires self-acceptance. Summarize "Humility: Having the Mind of Christ," page 86 of the member's book. Explain the parable of the chief seats at the feast. Share how you believe you would feel if you were so self-accepting that you could take joyfully the lowest seat at the banquet. Encourage members to tell how they are growing in self-acceptance or what they need to do to grow in self-acceptance.

### **Lesson 4: Criticism and Destructive Anger**

Summarize the member's book section entitled "Criticism: Verbal Dissection" (page 89). Share the part criticism has played in your addiction and recovery. You may share how the criticism you have received has affected your life, but seek to share also how you have been guilty of criticizing others. Invite members to discuss the reasons why they practice criticism and what they are doing to overcome the habit of criticizing.

Summarize the member's book section on destructive anger (page 91). Emphasize the fact that we often are unable to forgive until we have acknowledged the full extent of the offense, expressed our anger, and purposed to forgive. Share something about your journey to replace anger with forgiveness. Invite sharing on this topic.

### **Lesson 5: Fear and Impatience**

Read the member's book section entitled "Fear: God's Warning System" (page 94). Share something about your struggle with fear and how working the Steps helps to resolve the problem. Ask members to tell their experiences in dealing with fear.

Read the sections entitled "Impatience and Impulsiveness: I Want What I Want—Now!" and "Slow and Steady Wins the Race" on pages 95-96. Share about how God is changing your life in the area of patience and impulsiveness as you work the program. Invite sharing.

# Freedom Through Confession

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## Step 5

*We admit to God, to ourselves, and to another person the exact nature of our wrongs.*

### Goals for Step 5

1. Define confession and describe four benefits that come from confession.
2. Describe key biblical teachings about confession.
3. Make final preparation to share Step 5 with another person.

### Before the Meeting

- Read and complete the learning activities for Step 5 in the *Conquering Eating Disorders* member's book.
- Find a quiet time and place to pray for group members by name. Ask the Lord to give you the wisdom you need to prepare for and to lead the group meeting.

**Ask God to guide you as you seek to balance activities while allowing enough time for spontaneous sharing. When you are in doubt about which direction to go, lean toward sharing.**

### Group Leadership Models

#### Lesson 1: Why Take the Fifth Step?

Relate that persons who work Step 5 almost always report two things. Before they complete the Step, they say it is the most frightening thing they ever have undertaken, and after they complete it they say it is the most freeing thing they ever have done. Read the story of Doug's Step 5 on page 100 of the member's book. Tell about your struggle to share your Step 5 and about the benefits you have experienced by breaking the silence. Invite members to share their feelings regarding having taken or facing taking the Step.

On pages 100-102 review the four benefits of confession. State the principle, "We are as sick as our secrets." Share something about the benefits you have experienced by sharing your fifth Step. Encourage members to share their feelings about Step 5.

#### Lesson 2: Taking the Step Part I

Explain that shame is the feeling that we somehow are stained, evil, or wrong in a unique sense—that we are wrong in a way that others are not. On page 103 review the story of David's sin. State that since God forgave David, loved David, and even called David a man after His (God's) own heart, we can believe that God will forgive, love, and accept us as well. Share something about your experience in accepting the fact that God accepts you. Ask members to share how they feel about the matter of God's forgiveness and acceptance. Emphasize that feelings are feelings—it is OK to share how you really feel.

Explain that in our attempt to gain God's forgiveness, we often play a game of penance. Summarize the member's book section entitled "Accepting Forgiveness: Part of Confession" (page 105). Share something about your experience with making yourself do penance for your sin. Share how God is changing this habit as you work the Steps. Ask members to discuss how they relate to the concept of penance.

#### Lesson 3: Taking the Step Part II

Summarize the material about choosing a good listener (page 106). Relate that Step 5 usually is best shared by telling the story of our lives. Share something of the process you went through to prepare your fifth Step, enlist a listener, and share your confession. Emphasize that persons have differing experiences with Step 5. Some persons have an immediate feeling of great relief; others may not. The important issue is to break the bondage of secrecy that enables Satan to frighten us with the fear that our secrets will be disclosed and convince us that we're alone and helpless. Encourage members to tell their feelings about planning to take or having taken Step 5.



# Acting in Faith

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## Step 6

*We commit ourselves to God and desire that he remove patterns of sin from our lives.*

### Goals for Step 6

1. Recognize and surrender obstacles to your commitment to Christ.
2. Evaluate and choose six proper motivations for obedience.
3. Evaluate and choose to avoid four improper motivations for obedience.
4. Freely choose the role of a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Before the Meeting

- Read and complete the learning activities for Step 6 in the *Conquering Eating Disorders* member's book.
- Find a quiet time and place to pray for group members by name. Ask the Lord to give you the wisdom you need to prepare for and to lead the group meeting.

**Ask God to guide you as you seek to balance activities while allowing enough time for spontaneous sharing. When you are in doubt about which direction to go, lean toward sharing.**

### Group Leadership Models

#### Lesson 1: Becoming Willing to Obey

Read or relate the first four paragraphs on page 112 of the member's book about the principle expressed in Step 6. Explain that as we desire what God desires, we will experience meaning and purpose in life. Remind the group that we seek progress rather than perfection in our application of the Steps.

Share some specific area of your life in which you have experienced progress in applying Step 6 to a problem. Invite group members to share their feelings and progress about Step 6.

On pages 114-116 of the member's book review the seven fears about God. Share your reaction to one or more of the fears and the progress you are making at replacing the fear. Ask group members to share about their fears.

Relate the story of Annie and the learning activity from Jeremiah 20 (page 115 of the member's book). Explain that many of us have the false belief that God cannot tolerate our anger, but the great leaders of the Bible honestly expressed their emotions to God. Share something about your journey to honestly face and express your anger to God. Encourage sharing.

#### Lesson 2: Positive Reasons to Obey

Make and distribute copies of Handout 8. Briefly review the six positive reasons to obey God. Share your reaction to one or more of the reasons. Ask members to discuss their reactions and feelings about the list.

#### Lesson 3: Harmful Reasons to Obey

Briefly review the four harmful reasons for obedience (pages 120-122). Explain that these reasons result in unhealthy obedience. Share your experience with one or more of these reasons in your life and recovery. Ask members to share their experiences.

#### Lesson 4: Ownership and Conduct

From the lesson in the member's book (page 123) explain the principle of ownership. Share something about your journey to make the choice that Jesus Christ is the owner of your life. Invite group members to share their honest feelings and struggles about the issue of the lordship of Christ in their lives.

# Ready for Change

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## Step 7

*We humbly ask God to renew our minds so that our sinful patterns can be transformed into patterns of life and health and righteousness.*

### Goals for Step 7

1. Identify why we need a renewed mind.
2. Determine the effect of performance-based worth on your life, and describe the solution.
3. Evaluate the effect of addiction to approval on your life, and describe the solution.
4. Estimate the effect of habitual blaming on your life, and describe the solution.
5. Estimate the effect of low self-esteem on your life, and describe the solution.
6. Describe three practical actions necessary to work Step 7.

### Before the Meeting

- Read and complete the learning activities for Step 7 in the *Conquering Eating Disorders* member's book.
- Find a quiet time and place to pray for group members by name. Ask the Lord to give you the wisdom you need to prepare for and to lead the group meeting.

### Group Leadership Models

#### Lesson 1: The Grace Step

Explain that depravity is the biblical teaching that sin has damaged every aspect of our lives (See page 127 of the member's book). Share some area of your life in which you have identified distorted thoughts, emotions, and behavior. Share how God is helping you to overcome and transform this sin damage as you continue to work your 12-Step program. Invite members to share how God is helping them to overcome denial; to see the results of depravity in their lives; and to change thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

Explain that our belief system serves as a filter. We perceive the situations in our lives through the lenses of our belief system. Until we begin to make changes to our basic beliefs, we will have little success changing our thoughts, emotions, and actions. On page 128 of the member's book read the example of Todd. Share an example from your life in which you have identified one

of the basic false beliefs that led to wrong thoughts, emotions, and behavior. Share what you are doing to replace the false belief with God's truth. Invite members to share how they see their belief system influencing and damaging their lives.

#### Lesson 2: The Performance Trap

Briefly summarize the member's book material about fear of failure. Make and distribute copies of Handout 9 (page 57 of the facilitator's guide). Share your response to the learning activity in the box on page 133, or share another example of a situation in which your performance did not measure up to the standard you set for yourself. Share how you identified the standard—part of your belief system—behind your response to the situation and behind your resulting thoughts, emotions, and actions. Emphasize how by correcting the standard you seek to respond in a more healthy and Christ-honoring way. Invite group members to share their reactions to the handout. Ask them specifically to discuss how they react to the patterns they see working in their emotions and actions.

From page 134 explain justification. Share with group members the following story someone in a group told: "I grew up in a church which taught that if you sinned, God would erase your name from the 'Lamb's Book of Life' and that you would have to be saved all over again. I had a dream one night that I saw the 'Book of Life' and saw that on my page, my name had been erased so many times that only a hole remained." Explain that the truth of justification is that God makes us just as if we never had sinned, and He views us as holy and righteous through Jesus. Share something about your journey to accept the fact that God has forgiven you and accepts you. Ask members to share about their journeys in this area.

#### Lesson 3: The Approval Addict

Summarize the member's book material about the false belief that *I must have the approval of certain others to feel good about myself*. Share something about your struggle with approval-based self-worth. Ask members to share their own struggles with this issue.

Read the four paragraphs under “God’s Answer: Reconciliation” (page 139). Explain that when we have failed or someone disapproves of us, we can learn to use the following formula: “It would be nice if \_\_\_\_\_ (my boss liked me, I could fix the refrigerator, my complexion were clear, James had picked me up on time, or \_\_\_\_\_), but I’m still deeply loved, completely forgiven, fully pleasing, totally accepted and complete in Christ.” Share an example from your life and recovery. Invite sharing.

#### **Lesson 4: The Blame Game**

Briefly summarize the member’s book section on page 142 under the subheading “The Fear of Punishment and the Tendency to Punish Others.” Explain that this false belief leads to denial, the central characteristic of all addiction. The fear of blame keeps us from facing and solving our behaviors. Share an area of your life in which the fear of punishment kept you in bondage. Then share how the principle of propitiation sets you free from the fear of punishment. Ask other group members to tell their responses to the principle of propitiation.

#### **Lesson 5: Shame**

Explain that the first three false beliefs lead to the final false belief—I *am what I am*. I cannot change. I am hopeless. In the past when we have experienced shame from other people, we often begin to shame ourselves. On

page 147 of the member’s book read the two paragraphs under the heading “Shame and Performance.” Share your response to the learning activity in which you described a time when you have acted in ways that illustrated your low self-worth or a time when you abused yourself. Encourage members to share how shame has impacted their self-worth and their performance. On page 148 read the section under the heading “Shame and Appearance.” Explain that God’s answer to shame is the principle of regeneration. Share your reaction to the truth that God has made you new and complete in Christ. Ask others to share how they react to this truth.

#### **Lesson 6: Taking the Step**

Explain the process of making a truth card to create new patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting. Share the illustration of the ravine (page 150). Share your experience with the Truth Card and with creating new patterns. Encourage sharing.

Read the paragraphs under the heading “Exposing Ungodly Thoughts” (page 151). Share your responses to the learning activity in which you wrote your thoughts about the four basic truths. Emphasize to group members that God wants us to be honest. He understands when we react with skepticism to these changes in our old beliefs. Read the two paragraphs under the heading “The Awkwardness of Change” (page 153). Encourage group members to tell their reactions to one or more of the beliefs.

# Forgiveness and Amends

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## Step 8

*We make a list of all persons who have hurt us and choose to forgive them. We also make a list of all persons we have harmed and become willing to make amends to them all.*

### Goals for Step 8

1. Describe the nature of genuine forgiveness.
2. Describe six negative results of lack of forgiveness.
3. Describe four parts of the process of forgiving.
4. Make a list of the persons you have harmed.

### Before the Meeting

- Read and complete the learning activities for Step 8 in the *Conquering Eating Disorders* member's book.
- Find a quiet time and place to pray for group members by name. Ask the Lord to give you the wisdom you need to prepare for and to lead the group meeting.

**Ask God to guide you as you seek to balance activities while allowing enough time for spontaneous sharing. When you are in doubt about which direction to go, lean toward sharing.**

### Group Leadership Models

#### Lesson 1: Persons to Forgive

Read the first two paragraphs of lesson 1 on page 156 of the member's book. Discuss the statement, "Stress makes us hug our addictions." Explain that the statement reminds us that when we begin to experience stress—such as stress brought on by lack of forgiveness—we are in danger of having old habits overcome us. Share an example of a time when you have experienced a "slip"—a time of returning to your eating-disordered behavior—because of stress from guilt or unforgiveness. Ask group members to share about times that they have experienced this situation.

On page 156 read the three methods we often substitute for forgiveness. Explain that each of these methods fails to solve problems and falls short of genuine forgiveness. Summarize from the member's book the harmful results of failing to forgive. Share one or more examples of times when you have used these ineffective substitutes for forgiving. Encourage group members to share about times this has happened to them.

Tell the story of the unmerciful servant (page 158). Explain that having been forgiven motivates us to forgive others. Share about a time in your recovery when the fact that God has forgiven you motivated you to forgive someone. Invite sharing.

#### Lesson 2: Forgiving Others

Make and distribute copies of Handout 10, Reasons We Don't Forgive. Share your reaction to one or more of the reasons and examples. Encourage group members to discuss which of the reasons they have used to avoid forgiving.

Summarize the six results of lack of forgiveness (page 162 of the member's book). Share how lack of forgiveness has affected your life and how you have benefited from working this Step. Encourage group members to tell their experiences in this area.

#### Lesson 3: Taking the Step Part 1

Explain that forgiveness is not erasure. Forgiveness is counting the debt paid in full. Read or summarize the discussion of forgiveness based on Christ's sacrifice (page 164). Share an example of your experience of learning to forgive. Encourage others to share their examples.

Summarize the four-part process of forgiving described on page 165. Share an example from your book of forgiveness. Ask group members to share examples.

#### Lesson 4: Taking the Step Part 2

Read the list of questions to ask in filling out your list of offenses on page 166. Share something about your struggle to fill out your list and about the benefits you have experienced from the Step. Ask group members to share their experiences in this area.

# Making My Amends

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## Step 9

*We make direct amends to people where possible, except when doing so will injure them or others.*

### Goals for Step 9

1. Describe some of the benefits that come from making amends.
2. Identify four principles to guide confrontation.
3. Make your amends.

### Before the Meeting

- Read and complete the learning activities for Step 9 in the *Conquering Eating Disorders* member's book.
- Find a quiet time and place to pray for group members by name. Ask the Lord to give you the wisdom you need to prepare for and to lead the group meeting.

### Group Leadership Models

#### Lesson 1: The Benefits of Amends

Read the first four paragraphs of the lesson from the member's book (page 170). Share the story of an amend you have made. Share your struggle to make the amend, your decision to do so, and the results of the amend. Invite group members to share which benefits of making their amends they most desire. Summarize the information under the heading "Correcting Problems in Faith" on page 171. Explain that participating in a confrontation does not necessarily mean that you participate in an angry meeting. To confront means to face a problem or situation. Share an example from your own experience of facing a situation and making an amend.

#### Lesson 2: The Skill of Confrontation

State that we need to develop the skill of confronting problems rather than hiding from problems. Explain that the four principles for confrontations include: all confrontations must have a goal, a focus, an initiator, and specific participants. The goal is to restore fellowship with the person. The focus is the offense, not the offender. The person who recognizes the problem initiates the confrontation, and confrontation occurs only between the specific people involved. Share your struggle with fear of confrontation and your struggle to practice the principles. Invite group members to discuss their feelings about confrontation.

#### Lesson 3: Taking the Step

On page 177 read the story about the result of Barbara's difficult amend. Share about a time when you made a difficult amend. Encourage group members to share.

# Pressing On

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## Step 10

*We continue to take personal inventory, and when we are wrong, promptly admit it.*

### Goals for Step 10

1. Develop a plan for continued spiritual growth in your life.
2. Build skills for dealing with strong or painful emotions.

### Before the Meeting

- Read and complete the learning activities for Step 10 in the *Conquering Eating Disorders* member's book.
- Find a quiet time and place to pray for group members by name. Ask the Lord to give you the wisdom you need to prepare for and to lead the group meeting.

**Ask God to guide you as you seek to balance activities while allowing enough time for spontaneous sharing. When you are in doubt about which direction to go, lean toward sharing.**

### Group Leadership Models

#### Lesson 1: Continuing the Journey

Read the first two paragraphs of the lesson from the member's book on page 183. Share your response to the learning activity by sharing which Steps you are practicing with reasonable—not perfect—consistency and which Steps you continue to cause you to struggle. Ask group members to tell how they see themselves progressing in working the Steps.

Duplicate and distribute copies of Handout 11. Explain that the fruit of the Spirit is for everyone. God desires to develop all of the character traits called the fruit of the Spirit in every believer. Most of us find we need certain traits more than we do others. Share which expression of the fruit you find most difficult, but needed, in your life. Invite group members to share which of the fruit they most need in their lives.

Explain that keeping a journal is a useful way to check our progress in recovery. Writing and periodically reviewing a record of our feelings and actions help us to grow emotionally and spiritually. Read the "Tips on What to Include in Your Journal" from pages 187-188 of the member's book. Share some of the ways keeping a journal has benefited your recovery. Invite sharing.

#### Lesson 2: Monitoring Our Emotions

On pages 189-190 read and explain the six-part plan for learning to identify and understand emotions. Describe the example in the member's book. Share a personal example of using the method from your experience. Encourage members to share their own examples of using the method.

Summarize the section of the member's book entitled "Relapse Intervention" (page 191). Share the actions you find helpful in preventing relapse. Invite sharing.

# Abiding in Christ

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## Step 11

*We see to know Christ more intimately through prayer and meditation, praying only for knowledge of His will and the power to carry that out.*

### Goals for Step 11

1. Identify four key elements of prayer.
2. Describe aspects of meditation.
3. Review six elements of Bible study.

### Before the Meeting

- Read and complete the learning activities for Step 11 in the *Conquering Eating Disorders* member's book.
- Find a quiet time and place to pray for group members by name. Ask the Lord to give you the wisdom you need to prepare for and to lead the group meeting.

### Group Leadership Models

#### Lesson 1: Prayer

Read the paragraph titled "Praise" on page 196 of the member's book. Explain that humility is an accurate evaluation of ourselves. Emphasize that we need the humility that comes from acknowledging God as God. Share how praising God helps you to grow. Invite group members to share how they feel about a growing humility and about praising God.

Summarize the material in the member's book under the subtitle "Petition" on page 196. Explain that we often

believe God considers us a bother rather than a joy. To illustrate how God feels about us tell the story of Don. Share how your view of God has changed through recovery. Invite sharing.

#### Lesson 2: Meditation

Explain that Christian meditation is different from Eastern meditation. The meditation of the Eastern religions rely on emptying the mind of conscious thought. Christian meditation is the discipline of better getting to know God by contemplating the Bible, the attributes, or the acts of God. Share how meditation has impacted your life or the ways you have found to spend time in meditation. Ask others to share their experiences.

#### Lesson 3: Bible Study

Explain that the purpose of Bible study is application—that we apply the truth of the Bible to change our lives. Review page 203 and tell the story of Doug and his smoking. Share about a time when the Bible has convicted you of a specific needed change in your life. Encourage group members to tell about times when the Bible has prompted them to change.



# Assisting Others

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## Step 12

*Having had a spiritual awakening, we try to carry the message of Christ's grace and power to others who struggle with eating disorders and to practice these principles in every aspect of our lives.*

### Goals for Step 12

1. Describe two types of spiritual transformation.
2. Prepare to share your recovery testimony and your testimony of faith.
3. Practice applying the Steps to a life situation.
4. Identify resources for continued growth.

### Before the Meeting

- Read and complete the learning activities for Step 12 in the *Conquering Eating Disorders* member's book.
- Find a quiet time and place to pray for group members by name. Ask the Lord to give you the wisdom you need to prepare for and to lead the group meeting.

### Group Leadership Models

#### Lesson 1: A Spiritual Awakening

Read or tell the story entitled "No Second-Class Believers" from page 207 of the member's book. Share your experience of feeling like a second-class believer and how you related to Barbara's story. Ask members to share their feelings about how they related to the story.

Explain the two models for spiritual transformation (page 208). Emphasize that neither model is superior to the other. Share which model is more nearly like your experience. Invite members to describe their spiritual experiences, spiritual awakenings, or where they are in relation to Step 12.

#### Lesson 2: Sharing the Message

Explain the outline for sharing your recovery testimony on page 211. Emphasize that the outline is only an aid to organize and explain your experience. Use the outline to share your recovery testimony as you would when making a Step 12 call. (A twelfth Step call is when a person shares his or her testimony to intervene in another person's

addiction.) Invite members to share something about their recovery testimony or to share where they would like to be in their recovery.

Explain the four-part outline for sharing your Christian testimony from page 213 of the member's book. Use the outline to share your testimony of faith. Invite group members to share their testimonies of faith or to share where they would like to be in their relationship with God.

#### Lesson 3: Practicing the Principles

Read the story of "A Bad Day" from page 216. Share your responses to the exercises on page 217 about the story. Invite group members to share their insights and feelings about how the Steps can help them cope with difficult circumstances.

#### Lesson 4: Where Do I Go from Here?

Relate the story of "Cathy, the Sponsor" from page 219. Explain that many of us complete our Step work and then feel the need for something to do next. Share about whether your experience parallels that of Cathy. Share some things you have found to help you continue your spiritual growth. Invite sharing.

Some people may choose to go through the 12 Steps again for their personal development. Some may continue in a group because they sense that they can minister best by being sponsors or facilitators. Others need new material. Explain that at some point each person will complete the Steps. Though we never outgrow the Steps, nor do we stop doing the work of Step 12, we will arrive at the point of desiring additional growth. Summarize the final lesson in *Conquering Eating Disorders* (page 219-221). Share ways you have found valuable to continue your spiritual growth. Invite sharing.



# Scriptures Related to the 12 Steps

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## Step 1

Psalms 5:1; 6:24,6-7; 10:14; 12:5; 13:1; 16:4; 18:6,27; 20:2-3; 25:16-18; 28:1-2; 30:10; 31:9-10,22; 34:18; 38:1-9; 39:4-5; 40:17; 42:6-8; 44:15-16; 51:17; 55:4-8; 69:1-3,20,33; 72:12-13; 88:1-4; 102:1-7; 116:1-9; 147:10-11; Proverbs 14:12; 18:14; 26:12; 28:26; Isaiah 55:8-9; Jeremiah 9:23-24; Matthew 9:36; Mark 4:35-41; Romans 7:18-20; 2 Corinthians 1:9; 3:4-5; 12:9-10; Ephesians 2:1-2; Hebrews 11:32-34; 1 Peter 2:9,10; 2 Peter 2:19

## Step 2

Psalms 18:1-3,16-19; 20:7-8; 27:13-14; 33:18-22; 46:1-3; 71:1-3; 107:41-43; 109:21-27; 119:123-125; 119:162-166; 121:1-8; 130:1-8; 142:1-7; 149:4; Proverbs 1:7; 2:2-12, 15:16; Matthew 9:12-13; 12:18-21; 20:29-34; Mark 5:35-36; 9:23-24; Luke 1:37; 9:56; 11:5-13; 13:10-13; 18:35-43; John 3:14-18; 6:28-29,63,68-69; 7:37-39; 8:12; 10:9-10; 11:25-26; 12:46; 14:6; Acts 3:16; 4:12; 16:31; Romans 8:38-39; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; 15:20-22; 2 Corinthians 1:8-11; 5:21; Galatians 1:4; Ephesians 2:4-5; Philippians 2:13; Colossians 2:13,14; Hebrews 2:14-18; 7:24-25

## Step 3

Psalms 3:5-6; 4:8; 9:9-10; 17:6-8; 23:1-6; 28:6-9; 31:19-20; 56:3-4; 61:1-4; 62:5-7; 68:19-20; 86:11-13; 91:1-4; 94:17-19; 116:1-19; 143:8; 147:11; Proverbs 3:5-6; 14:26-27; Matthew 6:31-34; 10:37-39; 11:28-30; 16:21-26; Luke 9:57-62; 11:2-4; 24:46-47; John 1:12-13; 5:24; 6:35-40; 8:11; 12:26; 17:3; Acts 2:21; Romans 3:21-24; 4:20-25; 5:1,8,11; 8:1; 10:9-13; 2 Corinthians 1:3-5; Ephesians 1:3-14; 2:8-9; Hebrews 4:1-2; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 2:24-25

## Step 4

Psalms 27:1-3, 13-14; 42:9-10; 51:6; 58:6-9; 66:18; 73:21,22; 90:8; Proverbs 5:3-6; 10:17; 13:13; 14:14-15; 15:11, 31,33; 16:2-3; 19:19; 20:1, 19-20; 21:9; 22:24-25; 23:27, 29-35; 25:28; 26:20-22; 29:20, 22-23; 30:11-12; Isaiah 26:3; Lamentations 3:40; Matthew 5:27-32; 10:8; 18:21-35; 23:23-28; Mark 11:25; Luke 7:36-50; 11:33-36; 12:1-6, 15,21; 16:14-15; 17:3-6; Romans 7:15; 12:3; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3; 4:19-20; 7:3-16; 15:34; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 10:12; 13:5; Galatians 5:19-23; 6:3-

5; Ephesians 4:1-3, 26-27; 5:18, 22-23; 6:1-4; Philippians 2:3-4; 4:5-7; 1 Timothy 5:8; Hebrews 4:15-16; 12:15; James 2:2-8; 1 John 1:5-10; 4:7, 11, 18

## Step 5

Psalms 32:1-11; 38:18; 41:4; 51:3-4; 69:5; Proverbs 16-18; 21:2; 27:17; 28:13-14; Matthew 23:12; Luke 15:4-7; John 14:16-17,26; 16:13; Acts 19:18; Ephesians 4:14-15,25; Colossians 3:9; Hebrews 4:14-16; James 5:16; 1 John 1:9

## Step 6

Exodus 21:1-2,5-6; Deuteronomy 5:29; 6:24; Psalm 4:35; 16:7; 19:7-14; 32:6-11; 94:12-13; 119:9-12,29-40; 139:23,24; 141:3-4; Proverbs 3:11-12; 13:18; 17:10; Matthew 3:8; 5:3; 7:24-27; John 14:15,21; Romans 6:1-4,11-12; 12:2; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 7:9-10; Galatians 5:16-17; Ephesians 4:22; James 1:5-6

## Step 7

Psalms 10:17; 25:8-11; 32:1,6-8; 34:4-6,15; 37:4-6,23-24; 39:7-8; 51:1-2,10; 79:9; 91:14-16; 103:2-5; 119:133; Proverbs 18:12; 22:4; Matthew 7:7-11; 15:22-28; 18:4; 21:21-22; Luke 18:9-14; Acts 3:19; Romans 5:1; 12:2; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 4:19; Colossians 1:21-22; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:6-7; 1 John 3:22-24; 5:14-15

## Step 8

Proverbs 10:12; 14:1,30; Matthew 5:43-48; 6:14-15; 7:1-5; 18:21-35; 22:36,40; Mark 11:25; Luke 6:31,37-38; 10:25-37; 19:8; John 13:34-35; Romans 2:1; 12:9,14,17; 13:8-10; 14:7-10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 13:1-5; 2 Corinthians 5:9; Galatians 1:10; Philippians 2:3-4; 4:5,8; 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13; 2 Timothy 1:7; James 4:11-12; 5:9; 2 Peter 2:19,23; 3:8-12; 1 John 2:9-11; 4:19-21

## Step 9

Psalms 51:14-17; 90:17; 126:5-6; Proverbs 3:27; 12:18-20; 15:1-4; 16:6-7,20-24; 25:11; Ezekiel 33:15; Matthew 5:9,23-24; 7:12; 12:35-37; Luke 6:27-36; Romans 12:18,21; 14:19; 15:2; 15:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:1-3; Galatians 6:7-10; Philippians 1:9-11; 4:2; Colossians 3:12-13,18-21; 4:5-6; Philemon 8-17; James 3:17-18; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:17-19

### Step 10

Psalm 24:3-5; 68:5-6; 85:8-9; 101:2-4; 103:8-18; Matthew 5:8; 12:34; 26:71-75; Luke 6:41-42; 14:25-35; John 17:15-17; Romans 8:1,13; 12:3,16; 16:19-20; 1 Corinthians 10:12,13,23-24; 2 Corinthians 5:15; 10:17-18; Galatians 4:9; 5:11,13-16; Philippians 2:14-15; James 1:13-14,19; 1 Peter 2:11; 3:17-18; 1 John 2:3,15-17

### Step 11

1 Chronicles 16:11; 2 Chronicles 7:14; Psalm 1:1-3; 5:3; 50:15; 55:22; 66:16-20; 84:5-12; 105:1-4; 127:1-2; Isaiah 59:1-2; Jeremiah 29:11-14; 33:2-3; Matthew 5:6,23-24; 6:5-15; Mark 1:34-35; 6:45-46; Luke 3:21-22; 6:12-13,46-49; 9:28-31; 12:27-34; 22:39-46; John 3:30; 4:13-14; 8:31-32; 14:12-21; 15:4-11; 16:23-27; Acts 20:28-32; Romans 5:3-5; 8:26-28; 12:10-13; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 14:20; 15:58; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; 5:14-15; 7:9-10; 9:6-

15; Galatians 2:20; 5:22-26; 6:14; Ephesians 1:17-19; 2:18; 5:19-21; 6:10-18; Colossians 2:6-10; 3:14-17; 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Timothy 2:1-4; 2 Timothy 1:12-14; 2:15; 3:14-17; James 1:5-6,22-27; 1 Peter 1:20-21; 3:12; 4:7-11; 5:8-10; 2 Peter 1:2-8; 1 John 1:7; 4:9-10,19; 5:4-5,18-21

### Step 12

Psalm 22:22-24; 35:27-28; 40:1-10; 78:4; 92:1-4; 96:1-2; 103:6-14; 106:1-3; 107:1-9; 111:1-6; Matthew 5:14-16; 11:28-30; 16:15-17; 28:19-20; Mark 5:19; 16:15; Luke 5:27-29; 12:35-40; John 1:40-45; 4:34-36; 15:16; Acts 3:6; Romans 1:14-17; 10:1, 14-15; 1 Corinthians 9:22-27; 15:10; 16:9; 11 Corinthians 2:14-17; 4:1-2; 5:10-11, 18-20; Galatians 6:1-2; Ephesians 2:8-10; Philippians 1:6; Colossians 1:9-13, 27-29; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-4; 2:3-4, 10,12; 5:14; 1 Timothy 1:5, 12-16; Titus 2:7-8; Hebrews 10:24-25; James 5:7-8,19-20; 1 Peter 2:9-10; 3:15-16

# Welcome

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We in this recovery group purpose to conquer the painful effects of eating disorders. To that end we support each other as family. We seek to apply the biblical principles in the 12 Steps to our lives and to our relationships.

We welcome you. The only requirement for membership in this group is a desire to recover. We cannot fix your problems, and we will not seek to run your life for you. We will accept you and love you. This is a safe place.

We recommend several actions to help you begin recovery.

1. Attend several group meetings before you decide if this is a group for you.
2. Read the information in this newcomer's packet. We also encourage you to obtain a copy of *Conquering Eating Disorders: A Christ-Centered 12-Step Process*, begin to read the book, and complete the learning activities in the book. The book is available at the meeting, or members can tell you where you can get a copy.
3. Participation in the meetings is your choice. You can pass when it is your turn.
4. You will receive a phone list. Call a sponsor to work with you as you have questions and as you work on the Steps. Use the phone list to call people when you need help.
5. We guard the anonymity and confidences of group members carefully. Do not share who you see or what you hear in these meetings with any person or prayer list.
6. Keep coming back. God will change your life as you apply the Christ-centered 12 Steps.

Attending this meeting is the first step in confronting the denial in our lives. We are glad that you are here, and we will encourage and support you as you grow with us.

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(group name)

# Preamble

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*(to be read by the facilitator, group leader, or someone the facilitator or leader appoints)*

We welcome you to the \_\_\_\_\_ meeting of *Conquering Eating Disorders*. This group is a fellowship of Christians who share our experiences, strength, and hope with each other so that we may solve our common problems and grow in Christ.

We recover by being honest with ourselves and others. We seek always to make this meeting a safe place, an affirming place, and a responsible place.

- To make certain that this is a safe place, we keep everything said during this meeting confidential, and we keep it in this room.
- To make certain that this is an affirming place, we do not give advice. We desire to affirm that God can lead you to make healthy and Christ-honoring decisions. Please attempt to use “I” messages instead of “you” messages. We share our experience, strength, and hope.
- To make certain that this is a responsible place, we share only our own issues. We do not “take other people’s inventories.” We neither fix nor blame others. We seek to practice and model responsibility by allowing each other to be responsible for our own lives, decisions, and actions.

When we attended our first meeting, many of us were having a variety of feelings. We were relieved to find a place where people might understand our pain and despair. We were angry that we had to get help and could not manage alone this part of our lives. We felt lonely and were ashamed of the way our lives had become. We had secrets that we were reluctant to share.

Our group is not a therapy group or a study group. It is a Christ-centered support group. We do not give advice. We share our experience, strength, and hope with each other.

Here we learn a new way of living. We learn, at our own pace, to experience in a healthy way intimacy and sharing with others. We learn to trust, to ask for our needs to be met, to say no when no is appropriate, to express our feelings, and to hang around when all we want to do is run. Here no one shames us for what we have done or still are doing. Here we have a safe harbor within which to heal, and for that we are grateful. The only requirement

for membership in our group is a desire to change our unhealthy behaviors.

Those of us who have experienced life change through the program need to challenge you. This program works as we complete the work with the help and supervision of a sponsor. If you do not have a sponsor, we encourage you to enlist one, complete the written work in the member’s book, and share your work with your sponsor.

We are happy you are here. We encourage you to take one day a time and keep coming back ... it works.

*(to be read by the facilitator)*

My role is to guide our sharing. I may find it necessary to move the conversation in order that all may have time to share. We plan to close at \_\_\_\_\_, but in case our meeting runs over beyond this time, feel free to leave.

## **The Declaration**

*(This declaration of our identity in Christ is from Search for Significance LIFE Support Edition.)*

*Because of Christ’s redemption,  
I am a new creation of infinite worth.*

*I am deeply loved,  
I am completely forgiven,  
I am fully pleasing,  
I am totally accepted by God.  
I am absolutely complete in Christ.*

*When my performance  
reflects my new identity in Christ,  
that reflection is dynamically unique.*

*There has never been another person  
like me in the history of mankind,  
nor will there ever be.  
God has made me an original,  
one of a kind, really somebody!*

# 12 Steps for Eating Disorders

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## **Step 1**

We admit that by ourselves we are powerless over our eating behavior—that our lives have become unmanageable.

## **Step 2**

We come to believe that God, through Jesus Christ, can restore us to sanity.

## **Step 3**

We make a decision to turn our will and our lives over to God through Jesus Christ.

## **Step 4**

We make a searching, courageous moral inventory of ourselves.

## **Step 5**

We admit to God, to ourselves, and to another person the exact nature of our wrongs.

## **Step 6**

We commit ourselves to God and desire that He remove patterns of sin from our lives.

## **Step 7**

We humbly ask God to renew our minds so that our sinful patterns can be transformed into patterns of life and health and righteousness.

## **Step 8**

We make a list of all persons who have hurt us and choose to forgive them. We also make a list of all persons we have harmed and become willing to make amends to them all.

## **Step 9**

We make direct amends to people where possible, except when doing so will injure them or others.

## **Step 10**

We continue to take personal inventory, and when we are wrong, promptly admit it.

## **Step 11**

We seek to know Christ more intimately through prayer and meditation, praying only for the knowledge of His will and the power to carry that out.

## **Step 12**

Having had a spiritual awakening, we try to carry the message of Christ's grace and power to others who struggle with eating disorders and to practice these principles in every aspect of our lives.

# Conquering Eating Disorders

## Principles

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These principles give the group a sense of purpose, direction, and focus. They remind the members of the group that the Lord is the ultimate source of healing and hope and that members can be patient and trusting in their healing process. The principles also explain many of the business aspects of the group. These principles are read at every group meeting in the Traditional Group Format, and they should be reviewed occasionally in the Optional Group Format.

### Principle One

Our common welfare should come first: personal recovery depends upon the unity in Christ of all *Conquering Eating Disorders* members.

### Principle Two

We have but one ultimate authority—a loving God as shown to us through Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit expresses Himself through our group as we share our experience, strength, and hope. Our leaders are trusted servants to the group.

### Principle Three

The only requirement for group membership is a desire to change our eating-disordered behaviors.

### Principle Four

The program is under the leadership of the local church which sponsors the group.

### Principle Five

The primary purpose of the program is to carry the message of recovery to the eating-disordered person. Groups never should endorse, finance, or lend the *Conquering Eating Disorders* name to any related facility or

outside enterprise because problems of money, property, and prestige may divert us from our primary purpose of helping other eating-disordered persons.

### Principle Six

Each group should be self-supporting through collections participants take up in the meetings. The group declines outside contributions.

### Principle Seven

The group should remain a non-professional organization. Where clerical or service help is needed, the group can pay persons to provide these services. However, the group is free to anyone who wants to participate.

### Principle Eight

The group has no opinion on outside social issues. This avoids having the name *Conquering Eating Disorders* drawn into public controversy.

### Principle Nine

The group's public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion. We maintain personal anonymity. Anonymity is crucial to the success of the group. It reminds us to place Christ and the principles of the 12 Steps before personalities.

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## Handout 1

## Eating Behaviors

- 1. Do thoughts about food occupy much of your time?
- 2. Are you preoccupied with a desire to be thinner?
- 3. Do you starve to make up for eating binges?
- 4. Are you overweight, despite concern by others for you to lose weight?
- 5. Do you binge and then vomit afterward?
- 6. Do you exercise excessively to burn off calories?
- 7. Do you overeat by bingeing or by “grazing” continuously?
- 8. Do you eat the same thing every day and feel annoyed when you eat something else?
- 9. Do you binge and then take enemas or laxatives to get rid of the food you have eaten?
- 10. Do you hide stashes of food for future eating or bingeing?
- 11. Do you avoid foods with sugar in them and feel uncomfortable after eating sweets?
- 12. Is food your friend?
- 13. Would you rather eat alone? Do you feel uncomfortable when you must eat with others?
- 14. Do you have specific ways you eat when you are emotionally upset, sad, angry, afraid, anxious, or ashamed?
- 15. Do you become depressed or feel guilty after an eating binge?
- 16. Do you “feel” fat even when people tell you otherwise?
- 17. Are you ever afraid that you won’t be able to stop eating when you are on a binge?
- 18. Have you tried to diet repeatedly only to sabotage your weight loss?
- 19. Do you binge on high-calorie, sugary, “forbidden” foods?

- 20. Are you proud of your ability to control the food you eat and your weight?
- 21. Do you have weight changes of more than 10 pounds after binges and fasts?
- 22. Do you feel your eating behavior is abnormal? Do you try to hide it from others?
- 23. Does feeling ashamed of your body weight result in more bingeing?
- 24. Do you make a lot of insulting jokes about your body weight or your eating?
- 25. Do you feel guilty after eating anything not allowed on your diet?
- 26. Do you follow unusual rituals while eating, such as counting bites or not allowing the fork or food to touch your lips?

If you checked five or more of the questions numbered 1, 2, 6, 8, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 20, 22, 25, 26, you have eating behaviors typical of anorexia nervosa.

If you checked five or more of the questions numbered 1, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 22, 26, you have eating behaviors common in bulimia nervosa.

If you checked five or more of the questions numbered 1, 4, 7, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, and 24, you may be dealing with compulsive overeating.

## Handout 2

## Dietary Habits

1. What best describes your compulsive eating behavior? Circle the phrases that apply:

binging	excessive exercise
purging	using laxatives/diuretics
hoarding food	continuous "grazing"
avoiding meals	self-starvation
skipping meals	other _____

2. When did you first begin these behavior(s) and why?

3. Why do you think you have continued them?

4. If you binge and purge, how frequently do you binge?  
\_\_\_\_\_ times daily    \_\_\_\_\_ times weekly

how frequently do you purge?

\_\_\_\_\_ times daily    \_\_\_\_\_ times weekly

5. How often do you think about eating, calories, or your weight?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> 1-4 times a day  | <input type="radio"/> 11-20 times a day        |
| <input type="radio"/> 5-10 times a day | <input type="radio"/> more than 20 times a day |

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## Handout 3

## Sane and Insane Behaviors

**Sane**      **Insane**

- |                       |                       |  |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | For women, missing more than three periods and failing to consult a doctor.  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | "Feeling" fat, when others insist that you are not.  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Believing that others are out to control us when they fearfully point out that we look like we just got out of a concentration camp. |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Exercising three to four hours to bum off calories.  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Taking 30 laxatives to get rid of a cookie.  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Hoarding food like a squirrel hoards nuts, even when you resist eating it.   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Eating a cookie and then starving yourself for two days to "atone" for your "sin."   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Thinking of a food as a "friend" or an "enemy."  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Being afraid of having others see you eat.   |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Spending tremendous amounts of money on "junk food," eating it, then making yourself throw up.                                       |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Continuing to overeat when your doctor says that your body weight is affecting your health.  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Waiting anxiously for everyone else in the house to go to bed so that you can make something to eat.                                 |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | "Wolfing" down food like a wild animal.  |

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## Handout 4

## False Beliefs

*I must meet certain standards to feel good about myself. If I fail to meet these standards, I cannot really feel good about myself.* This results in a fear of failure.

*I must be approved (accepted) by certain people to accept myself. If I do not have the approval of these people, I cannot accept myself.* This results in a fear of rejection.

*Those who fail are unworthy of love and deserve to be blamed and condemned.* This results in a fear of punishment and the tendency to punish others.

*I am what I am. I cannot change. I am hopeless.* This means I am simply a total of all my past performances, both good and bad. I am what I have done. This belief leads to a sense of shame.

## Handout 5

## False Beliefs & God's Truths

False Beliefs	Painful Emotions	God's Truths
The Performance Trap: <i>I must meet certain standards to feel good about myself.</i>	<b>The fear of failure</b>	I am completely forgiven by and fully pleasing to God. I no longer have to fear failure. (Romans 5:1)
Approval Addict: <i>I must have the approval of certain others to feel good about myself.</i>	<b>The fear of rejection</b>	I am totally accepted by God. I no longer have to fear rejection. (Colossians 1:21-22)
The Blame Game: <i>Those who fail (including myself) are unworthy of love and deserve to be punished.</i>	<b>Guilt</b>	I am deeply loved by God. I no longer have to fear punishment or punish others. (1 John 2:2)
Shame: <i>I am what I am. I cannot change. I am hopeless.</i>	<b>Feelings of shame</b>	I have been made brand-new, complete in Christ. I no longer need to experience the pain of shame. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

## Handout 6

## Games We Play

Game Type	Typical Games	False Belief	Alternatives
Self-defense	Dishonesty Resentment	Fear of failure	Honesty, Forgiveness
Self-deception	Self-pity False pride/ False humility	Fear of rejection	Gratitude, Humility
Self-delusion	Criticism, Destructive Anger	Fear of punish- ment; tendency to punish	Love, Constructive Anger
Self-distortion	Fear, Impatience, Impulsiveness	Sense of shame	Trust, Patience

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## Handout 7

## Self-pity Characteristics

Read carefully this list of common characteristics associated with self-pity. Check those you have thought, felt, or said.

- Projection: “I feel bad . . . it’s your/his/her fault.”
- Denial: “I never did anything wrong.”
- Avoiding responsibility by reciting a long list of past hurts.
- Avoiding responsibility by pleading physical illness or distress.
- Reading the “whine list”: “I can’t.” “I tried once before.” “I never get anything right.”
- Controlling others by making them feel important. “You’re the only friend I have.” “You’re the only one who understands me.”

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## Handout 8

## Positive Reasons to Obey

1. Christ's love motivates us.

Our obedience to God expresses our love for Him.

2. Sin is destructive.

God's plans for my life always are for my good. Disobeying God always causes pain and hurt, although the pain may be delayed or disguised.

3. The Father's discipline trains us.

God is training me to live effectively and to obey Him for His glory and my good.

4. God's commands for us are good.

God gives commands to protect me from the harm of sin and to lead me to a life of effective service and victory.

5. God will reward our obedience.

My self-worth is not based on my performance and obedience, but my actions make a huge difference in the quality of my life and on my impact on others.

6. Christ is worthy.

Christ is worthy of my love and obedience.

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## Handout 9

## Case in Point

**Think of a situation in which your performance did not measure up to the standard you had set for yourself. Try to remember what thoughts and emotions arose because of that situation. What action did you take in response to those emotions? Read the example below; then write an example from your experience.**

Situation: I failed to make a sale.

Standard: I must meet my quota to feel good about myself.

Thoughts: I'm a failure. I'll never make my quota. I'll never get promoted. I'll probably be fired any day now.

Emotions: Fear, anger, depression.

Actions: I avoided my boss for three days. I yelled at my wife and my kids. I took out my anger on them.

Situation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Standard: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thoughts: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Emotions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Actions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## Handout 10

### Reasons We Don't Forgive

1. The person never asked forgiveness.
2. The offense was too great.
3. The person won't accept responsibility.
4. I simply don't like the person.
5. The person did it too many times.
6. The person isn't truly sorry.
7. I've found an excuse for the offense.
8. Someone has to punish the person.
9. The person did it deliberately.
10. Something keeps me from forgiving.
11. If I forgive, I'll have to treat the offender well.
12. I'll forgive but I won't ever forget.

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## Handout 11

### Fruit of the Spirit

#### The Fruit of the Spirit

**JOY:** *Joy* is derived from a word which means gladness and gratitude. You develop an "attitude of gratitude" as you see the positive changes God is making.

**PEACE:** The Bible word for *peace* means tranquility, harmony, freedom from anger. Peace results from confronting the source of your anger in an appropriate way rather than lashing out at others or turning your anger on yourself.

**PATIENCE:** *Patience* means perseverance, endurance, longsuffering. You may get anxious occasionally when you cannot control what is happening; in the past, anxiety may have meant BINGE TIME! or STARVE TIME!

**KINDNESS:** Practicing *kindness* involves doing things that are the most loving and helpful for others. Kindness includes being open, honest, and direct. Sometimes kindness hurts, but it never harms.

**GOODNESS:** *Goodness* means having moral integrity. It means having an earnest desire for God to lead you into patterns of thinking and relating which are loving, honest, and open, and for which you need never be ashamed.

**FAITHFULNESS:** *Faithfulness* means trustworthiness. As you continue in recovery, you will become increasingly responsible.

**GENTLENESS:** *Gentleness* means meekness, not weakness. To be gentle means to draw back from being impulsive in anger or given to a raging response.

**SELF-CONTROL:** How our eating-disordered thinking challenges this one! *Self-control* means possessing the strength to govern yourself. God gives power to manage your life in the right way. Selfcontrol will make you faithful, responsible, and a trusted steward of your attitudes and actions.

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