

POWER SHIFT

**STEPS TO CHANGE THE HABITS
CONTROLLING YOUR LIFE**



The essential guide for teens ready to stop feeling controlled by their habits and start feeling powerful again.

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**Steps to Change the
Habits Controlling Your
Life**

Teen Empowerment Edition

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Steps to Change the Habits Controlling Your Life

Teen Empowerment Edition

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Printed in the United States of America

POWER SHIFT

is dedicated to this generation
which had the insight
to create a plan of action
so that all teens could find both
peace within
and
a journey to make
healthier life decisions.

Power Shift: Steps to Change the Habits Controlling Your Life

Teens wanted a “plan of action”, a path to change behavior, a way to make positive personal choices and work through many of their challenges.

The following steps can be used when a teen has a behavior that he/she wants to change. Some of their examples included: poor attendance, controlling my temper, being a bully, or possibly removing an obsession like continuous texting and social media. It can be any behavior that causes personal harm.

Teens chose these Steps for Healing and Empowerment to create an opportunity for their generation to have a plan in place that would improve the quality of their lives.

POWER SHIFT confirms that everyone has a choice to change their habit or behavior. It's a choice and a commitment. Going through the Steps is a concrete path that can be done privately. The steps enable us to discover empowerment where you can control your decisions and commit to a higher power to make it happen!

Higher Power means a type of strength that you see in the universe that touches your life. It could be the power of love, hope, trust, friendship, family, nature, freedom, your Creator, etc. It's a personal choice based on the power of good in this world.



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Today teens face challenges that are unique to them.

POWER SHIFT has been written to remind you that:

- Your thoughts are important.
- Your voice matters.
- You have the right to your own opinion.
- You have the right to be heard.

INDIVIDUALS

POWER SHIFT is about reading, reflecting, and writing so that you have the opportunity to process your feelings and thoughts.

GROUPS

- If you are in a group, take turns reading through a section. Then allow 1-3 minutes to write down a response.
- Take time to share your responses with the group one person at a time.
- Make sure to support each other by validating that the speaker's thoughts had meaning and purpose.

Share with family or friends

POWER SHIFT can be downloaded for free on www.mpowrd.org

Create the opportunity to share this booklet with others. Teach them the process of reading, writing and reflecting for self-empowerment.

Protect your privacy by not including specific names and places in your responses. You can always refer to the moment, the person or place without specific identification.

Teens felt that these steps could help anyone at any time if someone wants a plan to change their behavior. They also believed that everyone needed a safe place to share their thoughts in this journey.

For best results, use a pencil or pen that doesn't lead through the pages when filling out this journal.

Step 1

**Admitting that
there is a problem**

I admit that I am powerless over a personal behavior
that is controlling my life.

Step 1

Admitting that there is a problem

I admit that I am powerless over a behavior that is controlling my life.

“Big Denial”

It's about getting past the Big DENIAL. It is the beginning part of wanting to be healthy, finding the courage and the honesty to admit that your life is out of control due to a behavior.

**None of us find it easy to admit that
we aren't in control.**

Somehow it makes us feel that we have failed, when it is simply a part of every individual's life journey. No one is perfect. Everyone has habits or behavior that can be detrimental in terms of moving forward and finding personal success.

Whom can you confide in when you are having a problem? Why?

Excuses

By making excuses, by refusing to admit our losses due to our behavior, by blaming others, or by minimizing what we do, the **denial** stands out loudly and clearly. We can never begin to heal, to find a better way, or to ask for help, if we refuse to admit that there is a serious problem. If we want to gain control of our lives, then we must admit that we are addicted to a certain behavior or substance that has taken priority in our lives.

Why do people have such a hard time admitting to their mistakes?

Denial

Denial plays a huge part in the society in which we live. Examples include substance abuse, such as: excessive drinking is frequently considered a “norm” in many families; marijuana is often a given in any social situation; hard drugs are available whenever and wherever.

Many of us live in homes which aren’t so perfect,

and/or maybe we suffer from loneliness or depression. We are all looking for a way to escape the pressure and disappointment that come with growing up, actually with just being human. If we deny that there is a problem, then we don’t have to admit that it exists. The problem is that it will also never go away.

Where do you see Denial (on a big-time basis) in life?

(example: “People say they follow the law, but speed all the time.”)

within society: _____

within my peers: _____

within social media: _____

Whether we are experimenting with drugs or alcohol, responding with rage, struggling with eating disorders, cutting, or other types of negative actions, we need to admit the damage that we are living with because of our behavior.

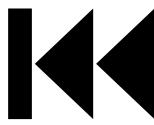
When we get to the point that we are willing to improve the quality of our lives, the steps begin. When we admit our negative behavior and begin working on positive change, we have reached Step 1.

Where do you see negative behavior in the world around you? (habits that cause harm)

What other kinds of behavior can turn into bad habits? Describe how it happens.

Examples: **smoking** - need to smoke all day and can't get by without it

drinking - can't party with friends unless alcohol/drugs are involved



Save your thoughts.

Your responses in this step reflect what is important to you at this moment in life and can be used to support you both today and in the future.

What did you learn from this step that you want to remember?

Add a sketch, quote, drawing or message that works for you.

Step 2

**Reaching out for help
from a Higher Power**

*I have found a power that is greater than I am,
which can restore my sense of peace*

Step 2

Reaching out for help from a Higher Power

I have found a power that is greater than I am,
which can restore my sense of peace.

Alone

It's time to stop believing that we are all alone in this world. Sometimes, we feel we have made such a mess of our lives that there is no hope for things ever getting better.

We often look at ourselves for constant blame.

When have you ever felt alone?

Where can lonely people find help?

Shame

When we are controlled by our negative behavior, we feel a sense of shame. We really don't understand why we can't change and are not even sure that we want to change. Usually, we are full of promises to ourselves and others that we will control our lives on another day, at a different time or place. We are always putting off that commitment to change. Mostly, it is because we have no clue how to begin to change.

Why do people often feel ashamed of their habits?

One of the most exciting parts about working on an active healing program is that each person has an opportunity to get help.

There truly is a power which can greatly influence our decisions.

It's just a matter of deciding and defining what the Higher Power is for each of us and believing that there is a chance for healing after all.

Defining a "Higher Power" is important for each person going through personal healing. It is an interpretation which can work only for you as an individual. Some teens have a clear vision of what that "Higher Power" is to them, while others struggle.

Truth, Integrity, Self-Respect are other suggestions that teens have created. Some simply call their "Higher Power" God, but many rely on words that have another meaning to them, such as: Love, Energy, the Power of the Group, Goodness, Peace, the Earth, Nature, and the Human Spirit. They are all on a path to positive healing.

What "hero" represents a Power that you wish you had? What is that power?

What is your Higher Power?

There are no limits to the interpretation of this term if it is based on a positive and respected value that an individual can rely upon for support and understanding. The process for finding a “Higher Power” may take time. Sometimes, it is discovered when teens identify with another’s interpretation.

Have your thoughts changed about the idea of a “Higher Power” since you were younger? How?

If you could pick one famous person to represent the personal power that you admire most, who would it be? Why?

*One of the students said it best,
“What we have learned is that in order to find healing
and peace, we must decide on which ‘Higher Power’
works for us. We may not know its name now, but we
are working on trying to decide
what will help us through our personal journey.
The power of good surrounds us.*

Finding your Higher Power

Higher Power can sometimes feel like an abstract, intangible concept. If we try to represent it with a symbol and explanation, it becomes easier to visualize. Therefore, it is important to try and make our Higher Power a reality to each of us on an individual basis.

Here is one example that a student chose as his Higher Power. Try to create a visual image and language to help describe what your HP means to you.

Higher Power: Truth

Who represents Truth: My grandfather (deceased) was always an honest man.

What symbol could represent Truth: The Stars and the Sky --- They are there each day no matter what. Their truth is that they may go through changes, but they are never a lie.

Where could I find Truth: In every action, in every day. Being truthful will help me to cut through all the garbage in my life.

When can I find Truth: I will start each day with Truth as my goal. If I mess up, I can start again.

How can I use Truth: I will use it as a Higher Power to “lean on” and help me through the tough times that I know are ahead. It reminds me that I can do better if I quit lying to everyone including myself. The truth will be my power to find the person I want to be.

OTHER EXAMPLES FROM TEENS

1. Nature
2. Goodness
3. Freedom
4. Positive Energy
5. The World
6. Respect for Self and Others
7. Love
8. Believing in Today
9. Believing in the Future
10. The Integrity (appreciation) of Life

What other ideas would you choose?

1. _____

2. _____

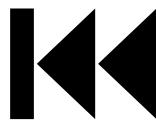
3. _____

What is your favorite choice? Why?

Does someone represent this to you? Who? Why?

Draw a symbol of your Higher Power.





Save your thoughts.

Your responses in this step reflect what is important to you at this moment in life and can be used to support you both today and in the future.

What did you learn from this step that you want to remember?

Add a sketch, quote, drawing or message that works for you.

Step 3 Committing to that Higher Power

*I agree to turn my will over to a “Higher Power”
as I define it.*

Step 3 Committing to that Higher Power

I agree to turn my will over to a “Higher Power”
as I define it.

Commit

If we have a clear idea of what we are calling our “Higher Power”, and we choose to commit to it, now is the time. Relax. Close your eyes and simply say to yourself, “I commit my life to the power of (truth, nature, goodness, God, etc.).” Will an immediate change come into your life?

**No guarantees of lightning bolts
across the skies.**

Maybe though, you may just experience a feeling of peace and safety for the moment.

Many people cannot turn their lives over to anything or anyone. It is far too frightening for them. They may have found that what they trusted in the past, turned out not to be true. This commitment is not about entrusting your life to something or someone who can disappoint you.

To trust in a “Higher Power”, which is based on goodness and your own personal truth, is a safer kind of place. It is a constant.

Why is it hard for any of us to trust?

When did someone lose trust in you?

Struggle

If you still struggle with the concept, don't worry. This journey takes time. What you question today, may be answered tomorrow. It's called PROCESS. It's also about believing that there is an optimal power in good.

“One Day at a Time..., just Do it Now”

Each day carries its own value and its own message. Some days we will know very clearly where we are headed, and other days we continue to search for answers.

If you could make a list of changes that you hoped to see right now (in your own life), what would you ask for first? List a few.

Teen quote from MPOWERD group meeting:

"MPOWERD is a great way to get teens to feel part of something real and it gives everyone a chance to talk about their feelings which makes them feel better about themselves. It helps me set more goals so that I can have a better life. The steps are exciting opportunities. I look forward to working on them so that I can feel that I have accomplished something in my life."

Change

Our definition of a “Higher Power” may change with time.

The terminology doesn’t matter; it is all about the same theme. If we commit ourselves to something that is greater than we are, this power that we sometimes cannot even define, will create change.

Positive choices will begin. We simply have to believe that our “Higher Power” is there to support us, to help us hold on to those values and expectations which are important, and to carry us through our personal healing.

What does “One Day at a Time” mean to you?

Help

This step is simply a way to ask for help. Although that may sound easy, the reality is that it also infers the word TRUST. If we are about to ask someone or thing for the strength to change, we have to believe that it is possible.

Teens agreed that the “Higher Power” needs to be a power that will never change nor can it be taken away. For many individuals, this concept takes a great deal of thought, insight and perseverance.

Is it hard to ask for help? Why? Explain.



Save your thoughts.

Your responses in this step reflect what is important to you at this moment in life and can be used to support you both today and in the future.

What did you learn from this step that you want to remember?

Add a sketch, quote, drawing or message that works for you.

Step 4 **Being Honest About My Mistakes**

I will make a fearless and honest review of my life, my values and my goals.

Step 4

Being honest about my mistakes

I will make a fearless and honest review of my life, my values and my goals.

Fearless

Just saying the word “fearless” makes us realize that when we look over our lives, we need to be honest. This step often brings pain to the forefront. When we recall those painful moments, we have experienced, it takes time to inventory them.

What was a disappointing time that you recall as a child?

Usually, when we are visualizing our past to our present, we recall sad moments or times that we “messed up”. Everyone has regrets. No one gets through life without making mistakes.

Often, we don't remember the good times as well as we do the bad.

The Shelf

One way that many of us survive the daily traumas, disappointments, tragedies and failures of life, is by putting them all on a shelf way in the back of our minds.

It is difficult for ALL of us to admit that we have made mistakes which have hurt others as well as ourselves. Also, it is extremely painful to relive (mentally) those moments when we were vulnerable to other people causing us pain.

Working through the hard times

How do you usually deal with pain? Do you ignore it? Do you talk to a certain person? Do you get angry, sad, or quiet? Do you put it on a shelf? Describe a time that was difficult and how you dealt with it.

Change

Our values and actions often change over time. Unhealthy behavior is often a result of trying to compensate for some part of life that isn't going as we had hoped.

Sometimes, we can't even identify why we chose to give up those values that once seemed so important, such as: family, friends, personal achievement, or peace of mind. One day they are important and the next day we ignore their importance.

It's important to decide "why".

What priorities have changed for you since you were young?

When I was young, all I cared about was _____
now I worry about _____

all the time. Why?

What part of life in general, just seems to be disappointing? Why?

**Who is the person you would hate to hurt the most?
Why?**

What are the best times in life for you?

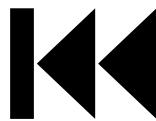
Name positive ways that you can have fun.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Who are people who have treated you with respect and kindness in your life?

Our own truth is what can set each of us free to move forward in life. There is comfort in speaking without fear or shame.

We are all simply human beings, full of both celebration and remorse. If we can accept our own humanity, good times and bad, and commit to healing, then we have achieved Step 4.



Save your thoughts.

Your responses in this step reflect what is important to you at this moment in life and can be used to support you both today and in the future.

What did you learn from this step that you want to remember?

Add a sketch, quote, drawing or message that works for you

Step 5 Admitting to someone whom I trust that I made some bad choices

I admit to my “Higher Power”. to myself and to another human being, what was wrong with my choices.

Step 5

Admitting to someone whom I trust that I made some bad choices

I admit to my “Higher Power”, to myself and to another human being, what was wrong with my choices.

Inventory

So up to now, our thoughts and decisions have been pretty much a personal and a private inventory. You have reflected upon those values and priorities that are important to you. This step, however, takes us forward to another place. It is about taking the information from our life inventory and admitting to ANOTHER HUMAN BEING what was wrong with our choices. This could be a parent, trusted relative or mentor.

**Whom would you trust to talk to about your choices?
Why?**

Fear

Generally, this step can instill fear in any individual. We all are afraid of rejection; we all fear criticism; we all fear disappointing others.

Therefore, it's important to find the right person to share this type of personal disclosure.

It is a time of risk.

To admit that our personal choices were wrong takes a great deal of courage. Therefore, be careful what you say and with whom you decide to share.

**How hard is it to admit that you made a bad choice?
How come?**

Share one small time that you really “messed up”. We have all been there.

There may be someone in your MPOWRD meetings with whom you feel safe; someone who has proven to be non-judgmental. Counselors, or other adult facilitators, who often run the meetings, could be that person with whom you feel most comfortable.

Is there anyone whom you feel doesn't judge you?

Comfort Zone

We need to identify our own comfort zones in terms of disclosure. We may start with times in life when we felt like we really blew it. Most of us are ashamed of those moments when we have betrayed or hurt another human being.

We also may carry shame for things that other people did to us, using or abusing us. It is important to have boundaries and to share with someone who has been in your life for a long enough time to prove that he/she can be trusted. Adults, whom you trust, may be your best resource.

Only share with someone who has proven to be a safe and trusted individual. Then always be selective with what you share until you feel that this person is worthy of your confidence.

Pain

By talking about the pain that we have inside because of the choices which we have made in life, we admit that we are not perfect to ourselves and to others. There is some relief in being able to admit that we have made mistakes, and there is great comfort in knowing that we are not alone. The process of healing is best in a community of peers working on the same goal.

MPOWRD meetings give teens the opportunity to hear from others, to know that we all struggle together, and to prove that we can and will all heal together as well.

Writing in this journal is a great way to reflect upon life skills, but why would this process also be effective in a group discussion?

Why do people like to “hang out” with others who are willing to share their personal experiences?

Why do we need to share our personal experiences with only those we can trust?



Save your thoughts

Your responses in this step reflect what is important to you at this moment in life and can be used to support you both today and in the future.

What did you learn from this step that you want to remember?

Add a sketch, quote, drawing or message that works for you

Step 6 Taking Action to Remove My Behavior

I am committed to having my behavior removed by a commitment to a “Higher Power”.

Step 6

Taking action to remove my behavior

I am committed to having my unhealthy behavior removed by a commitment to a “Higher Power”.

Commitment

This is a step that takes a huge commitment. Often, as much as teens love to come to MPOWRD meetings and work on their empowerment, it is still very difficult to believe that a "Higher Power" can help the healing process. It is about individual faith in something or someone that is greater than oneself. This takes a great deal of trust.

It also means that we are willing to change our lives.

That is difficult for many of us even to imagine.

What is one thing that you wish could change about yourself?

Why?

Sometimes, it is hard to find value in ourselves. It is also hard for us to admit our strengths. What is the best part of you?

Switching Behaviors

Often, we try to manipulate our poor decisions, by replacing one for another. By the time that we reach this step, we must seriously acknowledge that we want our behavior to be under control.

Why is it so tough to change behavior?

Decisions

When we start moving away from our negative behavior, we develop more self-confidence and individual pride. The decisions that we make seem more logical. One teen said, "I like feeling smart again. It's been a long time." People seem more approachable. Our view of family takes on a different perspective. Life is more manageable.

If your negative behavior stopped, what kind of changes in your life would you see ahead?

If we continue to make personal gains, why do we bother with Step 6? When we stop our destructive behavior, we are also given back the concept of time, time without poor habits. Step 6 ensures that we make a conscious decision to commit to that "Higher Power" to help us through the days that follow.

Healing does not have a beginning, middle or end.

It is a lifelong disease. We need to make a lifetime commitment to that power which gives us strength.

Responses

Students often ask each other, "What do you do now so you don't get in trouble?" Responses include: working out, climbing a mountain, reading something interesting, calling an old friend, volunteering, creating a painting, a story, a new life. Most importantly, we must take the time to construct a new world that is unrelated to those places and people that were a part of our negative behavior.

What changes would be the hardest to commit to? What would be the easiest?

Easiest: _____

Hardest: _____

Many teens admitted that they had to isolate themselves, stay at home more, or connect with only one friend whom they could trust. They often had to retreat from their social norm, find a new job, or reconnect with someone positive from their past.

If teens can connect with a community center for youth, a church group, a place to work for the homeless or needy, and find a way to commit to something greater than themselves, they will discover a new peace of mind and motivation to stay committed to healthier habits.

Life will have a new meaning and true empowerment will evolve.

How to Begin Positive Change

Behavior Self-Help Test

The following is a list of ideas that can help any person who is looking for positive change. Look through these ideas, and give them a value:

SCORING:

- 5...means that this idea really helps me to positively reflect on my behavior and make changes
- 4...means that this behavior "usually" helps me to positively reflect.
- 3...means that there is a 50-50 chance that it could help me to positively reflect.
- 2...means that this probably won't help.
- 1...means that there is no way.

Score each statement: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

1. Making a list of what are the positives and the losses in my life due to my unhealthy choices. _____
2. Calling someone I trust when I feel like I am resorting to making poor decisions. _____
3. Hanging out with people who are positive leaders. _____
4. Helping through volunteering my time instead of focusing on being bored or frustrated. _____
5. Reading through the steps when I am faced with making unhealthy choices. _____
6. Journaling about those parts of life that make me sad or angry and get me into trouble. _____
7. Staying home, away from others whom I get in trouble with. _____
8. Creating a plan for each day, so that during my free time, I can think of positive choices. _____

9. Investing my time in the arts, poetry, music, to express my feelings instead of negative thoughts. _____
10. Going to group meetings with adult facilitators where people may offer support to their peers. _____
11. Watching an inspirational movie where someone finds their way out of making poor decisions. _____
12. Making a set of action plans that I will keep close to me so that I can respond more responsibly. _____
13. Spending time with people whom I love and care for and could possibly help. _____
14. Reading information and studies about health so that I understand why I choose certain behavior. _____
15. Hanging positive messages on my mirror that I say to myself every day to face the challenges ahead. _____
16. Developing a chart, evaluating each day that I attempt to stay positive and in a healthy place. _____
17. Working on finding alternative, new ways to spend my time instead of old habits. _____
18. Listing all the great moments that have happened to me up every day. _____

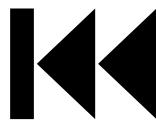
Adding up your scores: How many of each number did you select.

1's _____ 2's _____

3's _____ 4's _____

5's _____

From these results, what changes will you focus upon to make each day a more positive experience?



Save your thoughts.

Your responses in this step reflect what is important to you at this moment in life and can be used to support you both today and in the future.

What did you learn from this step that you want to remember?

Add a sketch, quote, drawing or message that works for you

Step 7 Referring to My Higher Power for Help

I humbly ask that my “Higher Power” be with me as a constant reminder toward healing and making positive life decisions.

Step 7

Referring to my Higher Power for help

I humbly ask that my “Higher Power” be with me as a constant reminder toward creating positive decisions and maintaining a healthier life.

Ask

Whether we call our “Higher Power”: Love, Truth, Nature, Positive Energy, etc., it is logical to imagine that strength embodied in some type of figure. Whether it is a Godlike image, an angel, a powerful force, the sky, a concentration of energy; your HP works for you. When we ask this power to be by our side and work with us in terms of healing, it is a question that will be answered.

Blame

Sometimes the world, our family and ourselves, find that we are always looking for someone else to be the cause of our problems. We have a difficult time owning up to our own mistakes; it's easier to find a responsible party somewhere else. We can always find some way to make ourselves look better. We can blame society, the media, our family roots, our lack of ability, our friends, our enemies...there will always be a large variety of victims on our list.

This is a time when we finally look at ourselves without blame, with total honesty, and admit that we choose our “Higher Power” to be with us for the rest of our lives. It means that we are committing to being the best person we can be, and that our negative behavior will not control who we are and whether we will succeed.

When would be the best time to remind yourself that there is a Higher Power to help?

Healing

There is something or someone out there that we can lean on. This part of healing is huge and is the greatest part of the steps. We will find that when we lean into a greater understanding of the power that is out to help us, we will be calmer. Life gets so suffocating when we are in a place that is full of dread. We can take a bigger breath, look at the world with hope, feel the love from our friends or family, and know that there is something better out there for us.

Trust—Love—Faith

It takes trust; trust in yourself, your own values and your own sense of goodness. It takes faith; faith that there is a way out and that there is something or someone waiting to support you. It takes love; love of yourself and love to share with a truth that is greater than you. There is a sense of greatness around all of us. We just have to open our minds and our hearts to find it. It is a positive force that could help us through a challenge if we ask.

Which do you think is the most important, Trust, Faith, or Love? Why?

POSITIVE CHANGE!!!

The fact that you were able to admit that you had a problem, along with your willingness to change, gave you the ability to get to this step. You are ready. You have already proven that you have found a new way to work through challenges that you face each day. The HP will always be there for you to "lean into" and become part of your world.

Sometimes, the steps feel like they are all the same. Doesn't this program kind of say the same thing over and over again?

Actually, the commitment that is needed from you is defined in the very first step and the recognition of the power of good is in the second.

The rest of the journey supports these two steps, asking for continued help while staying on this life-changing path.

Do people fail along the way? If that means going back to former habits, the answer is, "Yes it can happen." That is simply human nature and we can start again whenever we choose.

We are not perfect human beings.

No one is. We can only try to commit to a better part of ourselves. Are there others who are working on making better decisions? Absolutely! By following the steps, you are creating the opportunity for a life of personal success. Your Higher Power will continue to evolve.

When have you felt you failed and yet found a way to move forward?

Often when people have gone through tough times and have found that life can be better, they are full of appreciation for each day. The Higher Power will get you there!

How would you support a person who is wants to improve their life decisions?

One teen said, “We can do nothing about yesterday but can change everything about today.” What does this mean?

Why is it important to believe in ourselves?

MPOWRD encourages us to take each day of our lives and make it the best.

It shows us the power that is possible to recreate ourselves and help others find their own peace as well. By working on these steps, we are reminded to never take any day for granted and to continuously protect our journey toward healing and finding personal peace.



Save your thoughts

Your responses in this step reflect what is important to you at this moment in life and can be used to support you both today and in the future.

What did you learn from this step that you want to remember?

Add a sketch, quote, drawing or message that works for you

Step 8 Making Peace with Others Whom I've Hurt

I will make a list of all the people whom I have hurt and
will make peace with them.

Step 8

Making peace with others whom I've hurt

I will make a list of all the people whom I have hurt and will make peace with them.

Amends

It is difficult enough to mentally relive those experiences where we have hurt someone. But to have to go back and make amends takes a great deal of effort and courage. Where to begin? Sometimes it helps to go through your list with a good friend or mentor, someone you trust. There will be those situations that need to be addressed more immediately than others. There might even be some that will have to be “shelved” for the time being.

When was the last time someone hurt your feelings?

When was the last time you hurt someone's feelings?

Forgive

It is important to find peace in our past relationships when we have caused them pain. Unless we can reach out to those individuals, it is sometimes hard to move forward.

We need to find a way to forgive ourselves,

and the best way is to find a type of reconciliation. Asking for forgiveness is not necessarily a “given”, but it is a means to “let go” of our sadness and shame.

When was it the most difficult time for you to say you were sorry?

Whether (or not) others respond in a positive manner is a moment that we cannot control. We can only try to admit without excuses what we did. It is a time for humility.

Trying to make peace where damage has occurred is a way to move forward.

Does it seem harder to say “I’m sorry” as you get older?

Hope

It is not the reaction of others that will make this step successful. It is the attempt, the honesty, and the integrity that we bring to this act, which helps us to forgive ourselves.

We cannot control the emotions of others.

We can only hope they understand that we are admitting the wrong that we have done and that we are trying to treat them respectfully, knowing that this step is part of our own healing. If someone refuses to accept our apology, then we must allow them to have their own feelings. We must also remember that we did our best to make up for our mistake.

It is important to try and forgive others as well. Why?

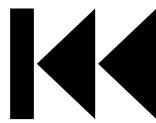
When trying to determine whom we need to apologize to, we may ask ourselves:

“to whom did we lie to, steal from, manipulate, con, bully, threaten, cheat...?”

Reflect upon each person, each situation, and evaluate your relationship.

If there are those in your life, who have caused you great pain, you may need to wait.

*Just take one person at a time,
the answer will be there when you are ready.*



Save your thoughts.

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Step 9 Giving Back What I Owe if Not Harmful

*I will return to others what is owed them as long as it
would not cause them harm.*

Step 9

Giving back what I owe
if not harmful

I will return to others what is owed them as long as it would not cause them harm.

Before you begin Step 9:

Make sure that the following items are considered:

Do I really **care** about making amends to this individual, or am I just going through the motions?

Is this the best **time** to work this out with another person? Timing is everything, and you need to be aware that your approach may be more acceptable in the future as opposed to today.

Try to be **realistic** about your approach. You may owe someone a tremendous amount of money; you may be a cause for breaking up a relationship; you may have been an advocate for someone else's pain. You cannot make everything perfect. One day at a time.

Is this person or situation **reasonable** to address on a one-to-one basis? Ideally, we need to talk to a person face-to-face, but distance and individual circumstances might require a phone call, a letter or a mediator.

If you have any problems with deciding the best approach, **consult** with a counselor, a mentor, a teacher whom you trust, a close relative or friend; a second or third opinion helps all of us. Just make sure that your choice for another opinion is from someone whom you regard with the greatest respect. The final decision is yours.

Assessment

This step involves a great deal of assessment. We have to look at each situation individually and decide what kind of loss was caused by our behavior. Sometimes we can return to others what we owe them through financial commitment; others may involve emotional support. Each relationship, everyone involved, demands a different action or reaction. It is up to us to decide how we can return to another what was lost through our former behavior.

What day that you were hurtful do you wish that you could take back?

How do you usually act when you try to make up for something that you did when you feel sorry?

Limited

Because we can never go back and relive a day, making it as perfect as we wished we could make it, we will sometimes be limited as to how we can “pay others back” as we had hoped we could. Knowing that it takes time for us to heal helps us to understand that it may take time for another person to accept or trust the changes which we are trying to make. The entire process of personal empowerment takes time.

It takes time to change attitudes, behavior and habits.

Fairness

Why do we hate when people cheat us, but sometimes deny when we cheat others?

(for example: the clerk who cheats you out of money vs. the clerk giving you more money than you deserve?)

Consistent

Be consistent. If you want someone's trust, let them know that you are working on making positive decisions and that you expect nothing from them. You are only hoping to gain their emotional support and care along the way.

Why does being honest sometimes feel so good?

When you start working on this step, as tough as it may be, you will find a different sense of peace.

The old relationships, where maybe cheating, lying, anger, denial, and abuse were a norm, are clearly in the past.

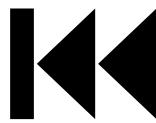
There will be a tremendous weight lifted off your shoulders.

This step gives you a sense of confidence in yourself.

You took the harder road.

You didn't DENY that your negative behavior had caused damage along the way.

You showed strength that you never realized you had.



Save your thoughts

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What did you learn from this step that you want to remember?

Add a sketch, quote, drawing or message that works for you

Step 10 Continuing to Be Honest About My Actions

I will continue to evaluate my own actions and admit to myself what choices were wrong.

Step 10

Continuing to be honest
about my actions

I will continue to evaluate my own actions and admit to
myself what choices were wrong.

Action

We were all hoping that there would be a road sign which would say, “Closed” or “Exit”, this journey is over. You have finally completed this course of action, and you will not have to worry any more. Your choices are under control; your life has some sense of order; you are establishing goals and making dreams happen. After all, this is a huge accomplishment, and you deserve the right to be happy.

What is the greatest challenge that you feel that you have overcome?

When I work on being positive, why does my world seem better?

Reality

Well, most of the above is true, but the reality is that all good things take work, and your job will never be over. But never fear, because when you work on the Steps, you will find ongoing strength and faith in yourself. You will know a true sense of serenity. If you slip back into your old habits, you know that there is a plan for help waiting for you.

It takes time and patience.

Working through negative behavior is a lifetime process. Great, where have we heard that before? Actually, it is about not getting too comfortable with where you are in terms of your choices, because whatever circumstances instigated your actions simply don't disappear. This shouldn't make you feel threatened; it is simply about the reality that continues to exist in each person's world.

Why do you think that most people often make the same mistakes again and again?

Answer

But guess what? You already know the answer. It is about taking the time to look at your day. Ask yourself, "Did I reflect on my steps?" "Did I do the best job that I could?" "Was I aware of other people's feelings?"

Did I get out of control with my anger?

Are you attending meetings? Are you paying your debts? Are you being unselfish? Are you careful of what you say to or about another person?

You may be asking yourself, "What do these questions have to do with being happy with my life?"

They are about keeping you in a healthy place, where negative responses and actions don't consume your day. They are about addressing your "Higher Power" daily, reminding yourself of the goodness in others, the greatness of nature, the reality of truth, the peace that is important to everyone.

The Steps for Healing help us all to be the best we can be.

Constant

Your “Higher Power” is the one constant thing in your life. It will never change, but you can redefine it when you choose. It will always be there for you to lean on, to believe in, and to draw strength from.

Why is it important not to forget about the concept of relying on a “Higher Power”?

What choices in your life will keep you “safe” in terms of your maintaining positive choices?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Look around you.

You have added one more day to your life without giving in to negative choices.

Never take one day for granted.

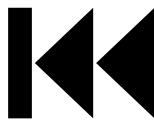
It is the greatest gift that you have given to yourself.

Take care.

Believe in yourself.

This step gives you a sense of confidence in yourself. You took the harder road.

You didn’t DENY that your behavior had caused damage along the way. You showed strength that you never realized you had before.



Save your thoughts

Your responses in this step reflect what is important to you at this moment in life and can be used to support you both today and in the future.

What did you learn from this step that you want to remember?

Add a sketch, quote, drawing or message that works for you

Step 11 Reflecting Upon My Actions Each Day

I will continue to commit to my “Higher Power”, through constant reflection, and work to follow through with my personal healing.

Step 11

Reflecting upon my actions each day

I will continue to commit to my “Higher Power”, through constant reflection, and work to follow through with my personal healing.

Stop

This step asks you to stop during each day, take a breath away from the chaos, and find your own quiet place. It may be in your room; it may be when you exercise; it may be when you journal; it may be just sitting outside. It is your alone time. It is when you turn your day over to that power that is greater than you. It doesn't even need a name. It simply exists and you know it in your heart.

Where is your best “alone” place? Why?

Some cultures call it focus. Some call it prayer. Some call it reflection. The title doesn't matter because the definition is the same. It is that space, that moment which you give to yourself; to push aside all of the problems that get so cluttered in your mind and offers you peace.

It is when we take all the burdens that weigh so heavily upon us, all the imperfect parts of life, including the tragedies, the sorrow, the injustice, and we put them aside. They don't leave us on a permanent basis, but they are gone for the moment so that we can think clearly.

Commit

What do we think of? We simply say to ourselves that we commit our lives to something that is greater than we are. Just like any relationship with a really good friend, we take time to connect.

Our “Higher Power” needs a constant commitment.

Why is commitment of any type difficult for most people?

If we know people who may seem to have some kind of spiritual connection, we can ask them how it works for them. It is always interesting to see what approach people use to reflect on their day. Just because we may have a “Higher Power” that is different than theirs, doesn’t mean that we aren’t all on the same path to finding peace and happiness.

Connect

Even when the times are positive, connect with your Higher Power.

It is with you during the good times and the bad. The more that you commit to it, the easier it will be to move forward. Finding a Higher Power is a celebration. We ultimately realize that we are no longer alone, and that feeling better is a reality that is a part of our lives.

Have your thoughts about a “Higher Power” changed since the program started?

Do you really believe that the power of good is stronger than anything else? Why?

Conversations with a Higher Power

A teen centered his Higher Power around his “Future”. He constantly “self-talked” saying to himself that the future carried a vision of success. His future belonged to him if he did not give his power away. His future would be full of positive energy if he committed 100% to each day through the process of finding healthier decisions.

One teen said:

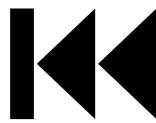
“I call my Higher Power, “Courage”. First, I think about the things that bugged me during the day, just to get them off my mind. Sometimes, I ask myself about what I could have done better. Then I say that I want to feel free, in my spirit and in my heart. I don’t want to hurt anyone. I want to like myself as a person. I want to be better.”

Another teen said:

“My ‘Higher Power’ is a woman of kindness. “She is the Earth and the Sky. When I close my eyes, I can feel her around me. She makes me calm. I know that she is always there.”

The one fact that we all know is that life can be incredibly tough, asking so much from each of us, demanding so much personal strength. Life can also be full of loneliness. For some, very few days pass that don’t present some type of challenge. Use this step to remind yourself that you are not alone. Use this step to remember to ask...

*“to Accept the things I cannot change, the
Courage to change the things I can,
And the Wisdom to know the difference.”*



Save your thoughts

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What did you learn from this step that you want to remember?

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Step 12 Sharing My Journey With Others

As I continue my journey in healing, I will share these
steps with others while continuing to make them a part
of my life

Step 12

Sharing my journey
with others

As I continue my journey through healing, I will share these steps with others while continuing to make them a part of my life.

Gift

There is nothing more powerful than finding a gift and sharing it with another. When you have reached Step 12, you will know that truth.

You have now found personal freedom to make clear decisions, while gaining control of your life. You will know the joy of commitment, whether it be to your family, your job, your friends, and, most importantly, to yourself. You have found something or someone greater than yourself to help you through daily challenges. You have found peace of mind.

What was the last “good news” that you were excited to share with someone?

Look

Now is the time to look around you. You will see that others are possibly “hurting. You will know that you have found something incredibly important to offer them. It is about taking time to listen to another person, making them feel valued and giving them a reason to believe in themselves.

**You want to be there for others.
These times are empowering
to both of you.**

What is more powerful, making someone feel guilty or loved? Why?

Begin

How to begin? It is never about convincing people to live a certain way or to break a bad habit. No one likes to be lectured to; it usually does more damage than good. Even if your intentions are the best, people don't want to be judged. They want to be accepted even when their behavior is destructive.

Therefore, the message is not about guilt, but about love and acceptance. It is when you can truly appreciate the person, without criticism, that one can find value in him or herself, and try to change.

What will you gain if you take the time to try to help someone else?

Value

We are here to find value in each person, so that we may learn to honor one another. If we can offer acceptance and love, then we are giving people a chance to believe in themselves.

No one can create this message more effectively to a teen than a peer who has faced his/her own challenges and discovered a healthier life, simply by a commitment to positive change.

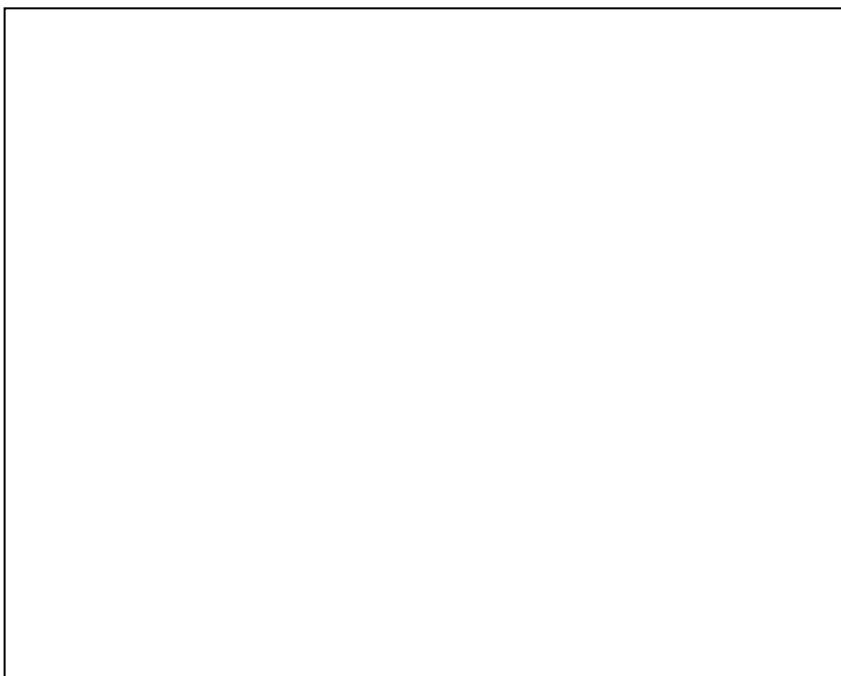
**Teens impact teens by actions
that show the power of positive choice.**

Why will teens listen to their peers more than most adults?

Boundaries

However, most importantly, every teen also needs to create boundaries. These boundaries are those spaces that keep someone removed from their own negative behaviors and past habits. It is important to maintain distance from those relationships that were part of a lifestyle that became self-destructive. Personal healing is about finding balance between taking care of oneself and reaching out to help others.

Imagine your life without negative behavior. Create a pathway of Hope. Draw road signs along the way showing your successes on the road to a positive action plan.





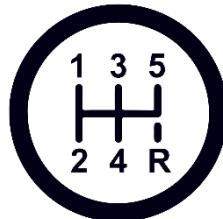
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The Power of Connection



Joining the MPOWRD Movement

You've done something important. You've taken time to learn, to reflect, and to begin understanding yourself more deeply. The pages in this journal have been a place for honesty, for healing, and for growth.

But the next step - the most powerful one - happens when you step out from these pages and into community.

The U.S. Surgeon General recently identified *loneliness* as the greatest challenge facing your generation. While personal insight and journaling can spark change, *true healing and empowerment grow through connection*. That's what MPOWRD was created to do.

MPOWRD is a peer-led leadership and prevention program designed *by teens, for teens* and is available for schools and youth centers. It's a place where you'll find belonging, encouragement, and a safe space to share what's real - without judgment, labels, or shame. MPOWRD meetings happen in schools, churches, and youth centers around the country, bringing young people together to support one another, discuss challenges, and discover their strengths.

It's about becoming leaders through empathy, honesty, and unconditional respect.

You can help bring MPOWRD to your school, church, or community. Talk with your school counselor, principal, or a trusted teacher or mentor about starting a group. Visit www.mpowrd.org to learn more about the curriculum, facilitator training, and ways to get involved.

Remember, MPOWRD isn't just a program. It's a movement from teens who *believe, focus, and commit* to building a better world ---

1 meeting, 1 voice, 1 act of courage at a time.

Healing begins when we reach out, share our own truths, and realize that we were never meant

to live this life alone.

Name one adult mentor whom you could share the MPOWRD program with to get MPOWRD peer empowerment support groups started in your school or community.

Check MPOWRD out at www.mpowrd.org today!



YOU'RE STRONGER THAN THE HABITS TRYING TO CONTROL YOUR LIFE. HERE'S YOUR PATH TO TAKE THAT POWER BACK.

Every teen faces moments where emotional pain wears you down and poor choices make you feel stuck, ashamed and alone. **Power Shift** gives you a step-by-step process to reclaim your life, rebuild your confidence, and change the habits that have been controlling your life. You become empowered!

Steps for Healing and Empowerment offer a clear, honest, and practical roadmap for personal change:

- **Admit there's a problem**
- **Reach out for help from a Higher Power**
- **Commit to that Higher Power**
- **Be honest about your mistakes**
- **Share with someone you trust**
- **Take action to remove the behavior**
- **Ask your Higher Power for strength**
- **Make peace with those you've hurt**
- **Give back what you owe, if safe**
- **Stay honest about your actions**
- **Reflect and reconnect each day**
- **Share your journey with others**



Each step is broken down with explanations, examples and journal prompts to help you understand your behavior while facing your challenges with courage and personal strength.

This book isn't about judgment. It's about hope, honesty, and the discovery of self.

Your habits don't define you.

Your choices do.

And your next choice can be the one that shifts everything.