



# Riding the Waves of Recovery

## Staying Afloat



In Twelve Step recovery we are metaphorically working each and every day to ride a wave, follow a path, or travel 'a road to happy destiny'. In our Program there are many slogans to help us on our journey: 'one day at a time', 'progress not perfection', 'thy will, not mine, be done'. Today's workshop will discuss how to stay afloat in recovery according to the 12 Steps set forth in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous and the Seven Tools of CEA-HOW. Our program offers key vocabulary words and concepts that can return us to balance in recovery and can serve as clear reminders during the high and low tides of daily living. At times, all it takes is a strong word or a slogan to balance a day and to remain afloat.

- I. **Recovery is living a 12 Step life.** According to the *Forever Abstinent* booklet, "no one has succeeded in staying abstinent long term without the use and acceptance of the Twelve Steps of Recovery".
  - A. Steps 1-3 remind us that we are *powerless* and our lives have become *unmanageable*. We learn that *Good Orderly Direction* and believing in a power greater than ourselves will restore us to sanity. We turn our will over to a Higher Power and become willing to let go of self-sufficiency.
  - B. Steps 4-7 involve the difficult work of looking deeply into our character with *willingness* and *honesty*. This is our new beginning to a lifelong process of *reflection*, healing, and spiritual growth. The inventory and sharing process relieve us of isolation. We learn humility and grow with *acceptance* for ourselves and others. We take the necessary *action* of becoming ready to ask our Higher Power to remove our shortcomings and through *humility* we become ready for *spiritual growth*.
  - C. Steps 8 & 9 help us to live with others, to forgive and to make amends. Here the opportunity for *peace* of mind is presented to us if we have *courage* and *willingness* to remain *humble* and guided by our Higher Power.
  - D. Steps 10-12 are our *action* steps, our guides to daily living. Here '*self-searching* becomes a regular habit'. With the strength and guidance of our Higher Power we now have an '*unshakeable foundation for life*'. We can examine our motives and petition our Higher Power for an understanding of our next right thought and action or our Higher Power's will for us. We practice prayer and meditation to enhance our spiritual connection. We strive to '*practice these principles in all our affairs*'. We live in the *solution* with service '*one day at a time*'.

- II. **The Seven Tools** - Our daily guide through recovery. Our tools are meant to enhance our recovery process. Utilizing the tools on a daily basis are the required actions that support our involvement with CEA-HOW and our continued personal growth.
1. *CEA-HOW Abstinence Food Plan* - writing down and committing our food reminds us that we are compulsive and without planning we will be more inclined to make choices that don't serve us well.
  2. *Literature & Writing* - each day we are given nuggets of program to ponder and to take with us throughout our day. We grow and learn as we write and process the tenets of recovery.
  3. *Anonymity* - we protect our privacy and the privacy of others with anonymity. We include the character flaw of gossiping within anonymity, reminding ourselves to 'stay in our lane' and 'on our side of the street'.
  4. *Telephone Calls* - making the required four calls a day keeps us connected to growth and ensures we are never isolated in program. We have the opportunity to receive and to share the gifts of recovery as we build our personal fellowship network.
  5. *Meetings* - meetings provide opportunities for serving and giving back to the program. Meetings bring literature and spiritual living right to our forefront. Meetings are the program in action; fellows sharing experience, strength, and hope, spreading a message that newcomers and oldtimers alike can embrace and reflect upon. Meetings provide us with sustenance when our abstinence is on the line. We receive nuggets of wisdom to carry us to the next meal or through the day.
  6. *Service* - service is essential to our spiritual living. Service says thank you to our Higher Power and to our Program. Service keeps us involved and moving toward spiritual growth. Service helps us to stay focused on the solution, to 'practice the principles in all our affairs', to spread the message of recovery, to edge away from self centeredness, and self seeking behavior. ***Service is the one tool that is also one of the 12 Steps, a testament to the importance of giving!***
  7. *Sponsorship* - sponsoring in CEA-HOW is an opportunity to grow and learn as we help others to grow and to remain abstinent. Sponsorship provides a relationship that is grounded in the 12 Steps as we receive and share the tenets of program. Listening without judgment we practice giving service and are challenged to serve as guides, sharing our experience, strength, and hope as it has been shared with us by our sponsors and their sponsors before them.

III. ***Slogans and Unique Words and Phrases keep us floating through each day.*** Research suggests that the exact origins of the slogans are unknown. Many speculate that Bill W. brought the slogans with him although some might have been borrowed from the Oxford

Group. There is evidence that a few were used as early as 1936 and they were included in the early drafts of the Big Book. *First Things First, Easy Does It, and Live and Let Live* are the three that are noted as having been 'originals'.

<p>One Day At A Time          First Things First          This Too Shall Pass          Attitude of Gratitude          Live and Let Live          Just for Today          Progress Not Perfection          Keep It Simple          Good Orderly Direction          Let Go and Let God          It Works If You Work It          Thy will not mine be done.          Nothing changes if nothing changes.          Live in the solution, there's always a solution.          I'm not responsible for my first thought...          Move a muscle, change a thought.          Keep coming back, without a snack!</p>	<p>Courage          Surrender          Willingness          Openness          Honesty          Gratitude          Acceptance          Humility          Action          Serenity          Solution          Faith          Hope          Service</p>
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### Origins of Slogans

IV. **Closing and Audience Feedback** - time permitting - How do you continue floating and you ride the recovery waves?

The 12 Steps in a word...

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|----------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Honesty     | 7. Humility             |
| 2. Hope        | 8. Self-discipline      |
| 3. Faith       | 9. Love                 |
| 4. Courage     | 10. Perseverance        |
| 5. Integrity   | 11. Spiritual Awareness |
| 6. Willingness | 12. Service             |