



Reply: 24fv

2/9/23

Steps # 10-11-12 are the last of em.

You've got it from here.

Be blessed.

Criminals & Gangmembers Anonymous

STEP TEN

WE CONTINUED DAILY TO TAKE A PERSONAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES AND WHENEVER WRONG, HAD THE COURAGE TO HONESTLY ADMIT IT.

This is a very crucial Step. It is a constant reminder to us of this important message: "Personal recovery shall always come first." So, how do we proceed throughout the day able to focus on ourselves more than we allow "The opinions of others to become the opinions of ourselves." Also, how do we remain free from allowing other people attempting to decide how we should feel or deciding what our choices and decisions will be as if we were puppets on *their* strings. Our pride tells us to reject any idea that we allow others to, quite often, dictate how we feel or what we do. Yet the fact is, it happens more often than not. This Step takes away the power from others upon our emotional vulnerability. We learn to practice on-going self-awareness with confidence and determination to make the right choices and decisions. We are constantly alert to how we're feeling, making the adjustments necessary to take care of ourselves, using the appropriate Steps for solutions.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. Do you often notice how people can honestly affect how you're feeling? If so, please give examples.
2. How can other people actually decide the choices and decisions you make?
3. What does it mean to "allow the opinions of others" to become the opinion we have of ourselves?
4. How can we become "emotionally vulnerable" to others?
5. What does being "self-aware" mean to you?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

PERSONAL: Done in person without intervention of another.

INVENTORY: A list of traits, preferences, attitudes, interests or abilities.

COURAGE: Mental or moral strength to venture, persevere and withstand danger, fear or difficulty.

OPINION: Belief stronger than impression and less strong than positive knowledge.

DETERMINE: To settle or decide by choice of alternatives or possibilities.

SELF-AWARENESS: Awareness of one's own personality or individuality

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STEP TEN

WE CONTINUED DAILY TO TAKE A PERSONAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES AND WHENEVER WRONG, HAD THE COURAGE TO HONESTLY ADMIT IT.

Throughout the course of the day, we continued to be mindful of our thoughts, words and actions. Wherever the place we are at, no matter what things we are doing, we are careful in how we treat other people. Whenever we are at fault, we have the courage to be honest and admit our mistake and apologize to those affected. True integrity is not born of avoiding errors, rather owning up to our imperfections.

Stay on track in balancing your thoughts, feelings and actions throughout the day. Remember, you can practice recovery very well but you will never be able to prevent nor control the behavior and actions of others. Learn to accept people, places and things “as they are”, without expectation or demands.

When your defects surface (a destructive thought, word or action) promptly change to a positive thought, word or action.

If you insult or bring injury to someone, take responsibility for your actions and make amends.

The Tenth Step is like a “911” operator, it will lead you to those steps you can benefit from throughout the day when you “feel” yourself going “off-balanced”.

A Tenth Step should be done at least once a day.

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

INVENTORY: An itemized list of current assets; a list of traits, preferences, attitudes, interests or abilities used to evaluate personal characteristics or skills

PERSONAL: Done in person without intervention of another.

COURAGE: Mental or moral strength to venture, persevere and withstand danger, fear or difficulty.

OPINION: Belief stronger than impression and less strong than positive knowledge.

DETERMINE: To settle or decide by choice of alternatives or possibilities.

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WE CONTINUED DAILY TO TAKE A PERSONAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES AND WHENEVER WRONG, HAD THE COURAGE TO HONESTLY ADMIT IT.

As we continue to strive forward in our recovery from the lethal, destructive lifestyle addiction to criminality, this Tenth Step will become our primary guide toward self-improvement. This is the Step that reminds us to keep a mirror of honesty in our face, to judge our own thinking and behavior, before we are harsh with others for their behavior or when we feel the need to challenge others for failing to meet our expectations. Step Ten can keep us aware of our feelings and attitudes. It can remind us to “use the Steps throughout the day”, rather than simply “know what the Step means”. We have a tendency to neglect the power of the Twelve Steps by storing the *Knowledge* of what the Steps mean on the shelf in our mind. But the Steps truly work better for us when we take the knowledge off the shelf in our mind and put the *Meaning* of the Steps into daily, practical use. When we do so, we see the benefit through feeling better and treating others with more compassion.

It is through our life experiences and our experiences with using the Twelve Steps, that we realize we are imperfect people, given ‘Free Will’ by God and the grace to make choices and decisions that can improve the quality of our lives, or cause them to be frustrating. When we are listening to the radio, if static interferes, we make the necessary adjustments to remove the static so the sound is clear again. The Tenth Step is simply a reminder for us to use the Steps to adjust our thinking, attitudes and behavior whenever we start to go ‘off track’ or if we make a mistake in judgment. There is nothing complicated about applying this step. In blunt truth, we simply need to just do it – evaluate, monitor and be aware of how we are thinking and feeling – then whenever necessary, make any adjustments in our attitude and behavior to be responsible to respect ourselves and live in harmony with others, without challenge or conflict.

Some Simple Reminders For Applying Step Ten

- ⊗ For well-balanced Recovery, we should continue improving our choices and decisions and asking for God’s care and protection throughout the day in all our affairs
- ⊗ Be responsible and maintain self-honesty and truthfulness with others have Spiritual integrity. Take care of Yourself and do not expect or demand of others to do for you what is your responsibility.
- ⊗ You are in control of how you feel; you also have a choice in how you impact the feelings of others. Be fair and respectful.
- ⊗ Knowing the Steps brings knowledge, using the Steps, by applying that knowledge in your choices and decisions, makes you wise in action.
- ⊗ Don’t only think about what you are doing right, remember to consider how you have ‘failed’. We are imperfect, this allows room for growth and improvement in character.
- ⊗ Arguing for your limitations by allowing yourself to make excuses will limit your Recovery. When you ‘change’ a thought, word or action, things change around you.
- ⊗ You are a decent person –loving, kind and compassionate- you will experience these truths more often when you freely give them to others.
- ⊗ Be good to yourself today, eat well, be responsible and accountable for yourself, exercise, do something for someone else (without expecting anything back), Pray and meditate - this allows us to stay close to God, mind your own business – stay out of vicious gossip, don’t lie, if you focus on these simple things you will have less time to judge others and find yourself more at peace.

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STEP TEN

WE CONTINUED DAILY TO TAKE A PERSONAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES AND WHENEVER WRONG, HAD THE COURAGE TO HONESTLY ADMIT IT.

Most people have a fundamental understanding of what moral and ethical principles mean. The problem lies in the fact that most of us resist or refuse to adhere to these principles with normal consistency to remain in the free community. Moral principles relate directly to right or wrong behavior and our capability to not only distinguish between the two, but to make good choices and decisions with respect to these principles. To consider "ethical" principles, we now move into a mode of conduct that can be more difficult because it deals with our social relationships and our ability to display rightness, fairness and equality in our affairs and dealings. It is crucial to evaluate our reluctance towards adopting these principals in socially acceptable ways. These principals do not exist to cause us problems. We caused problems by not respecting them.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. Give a personal experience of how you apply 'Moral Principles' every day.
2. Give a personal experience of a difficulty in applying 'Moral Principles' every day.
3. Give a personal experience of how you apply 'Ethical Principles' every day.
4. Give a personal experience of a difficulty in applying 'Ethical Principles' every day.
5. Why do you have a reluctance toward applying Moral or Ethical Principles in your life?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

MORAL: Relating to principles of right and wrong behavior.

ETHICAL: Involving or expressing moral approval or disapproval.

RIGHTNESS: Being in accordance with what is just, good or proper.

FAIRNESS: Marked by impartiality and honesty, free from self-interest, prejudice or favoritism.

EQUITY: Free from bias or favoritism.

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STEP ELEVEN

WE SOUGHT TO IMPROVE OUR "SPIRITUAL AWARENESS" THROUGH PRAYER AND MEDITATION WITH GOD, ASKING FOR GUIDANCE IN BEING DECENT AND RESPONSIBLE TO OURSELVES AND MORE CARING TOWARDS OTHERS.

The innocence ingrained in us at birth was greatly damaged over the course of our lives before we began this "recovering journey". How we were treated, affected us and took us away from the spiritual light. In darkness we relied upon the addictive comfort offered through illegal activity. Through our honest efforts to recover to find the spiritual light of peace so craved, this step keeps us on the spiritual path.

Prayer allows us to communicate with God and meditation allows us to freely mingle in the mystery of God's presence. Through prayer and meditation we find the exit off the "freeway of normal activities" to relax, to reflect, to balance ourselves emotionally. As we return to normal routine responsibilities, we are then prepared to meet the "unknown" challenges or misfortunes with confidence and much compassion. Our personal relationship with God is nurtured through the application of this step.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. When you pray is it more for others or simply for yourself?
2. When you ask God for guidance, what are you asking for?
3. What does it mean to be decent and responsible to ourselves?
4. What does it mean to be more caring toward others?
5. Have you applied the recommended "Centering Prayer" meditation? If so, what benefits do you find? If not, why are you avoiding this important aspect of your spiritual growth and development?
6. Is prayer important in your life? If so, why or why not?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

INNOCENCE: Free from guilt or sin through being unacquainted with evil.

IMPROVE: To enhance in value or quality; to make better.

AWARENESS: Having shown realization; perception or knowledge.

DECENT: Conforming of standards of propriety, good taste or morality.

RESPONSIBLE: Able to answer to one's conduct and obligations.

CARE: Painstaking or watchful attention.

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LETTING GO RESTORES PEACE

Letting go, is our freedom to enjoy peace. Letting go does not mean some thought, feeling or emotion will simply disappear. It means we are not detaching ourselves from it, or holding on to it. We are freely letting it pass or are releasing it to pass. We are not saying a thought, feeling or emotion does not exist. We are saying we simply cannot change or control the thought, feelings or emotions of someone else who is impacting our lives whether intentionally or unintentionally. The Eleventh Step provides us the opportunity of practicing "letting go" of thoughts, feelings or emotions. The more often we practice letting go through the Eleventh Step, we learn to automatically "let go" of destructive thoughts or unhealthy feelings or emotions as we go throughout the course of the day.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. Why do you hold on to something that causes you discomfort?
2. If you prefer feeling calm rather than angry, why do you waste time not letting go of anger?
3. Is it healthy or unhealthy to allow someone else to have control of your thoughts, feelings and emotions? If it's unhealthy, then why do you do it?
4. Are you generally peaceful or frustrated throughout the day? Why do you feel this way (peaceful or frustrated)?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

RELEASE: To set free from pain, cares, etc..; relief from emotional tension through a spontaneous, uninhibited expression of an emotion.

DETACHED: Not connected, separate, not involved by emotion, interests, etc...

PASS: To go by without noticing, disregard, ignore, to cause or allow to go, move or proceed.

RESTORE: To give back something taken away, lost, etc..; to bring back to a former or normal condition as by repairing, rebuilding, altering, etc...

PEACE: Freedom from disagreement or quarrels, harmony, concord, an undisturbed state of mind, absence of mental conflict, calm, quiet, to become silent.

FREE: To set loose from any sort of restraint, not under the control of some other person or some arbitrary power, able to act or think without compulsion or arbitrary restriction.

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HOW DEFECTS OF CHARACTER BLOCK SPIRITUALITY

Although there are many things that block our spiritual path, there are also the defects in our character which also block us from recovery. How can we be spiritual if we're constantly judging others? How about always being aggressive with people? Can we grow spiritually inside while being negative? These defects in our character are what drove the destructive forces within us which ultimately stopped any spirituality we may have been able to let blossom into something beautiful.

There's nothing spiritual about the defects of character that we chose to let run our lives for so long. This is one of the reasons we come to CGA, so that we can restore ourselves back to the way God intended us to be. These defects never go away, but we can put them into remission and blossom spiritually by practicing spiritual principals daily.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. What defects of character block your spirituality?
2. How can you put your defects in remission?
3. Are you able to detect when your character defects are at work? How?
4. What is it about these defects of character that we practice them so often?
5. What must you do in CGA to become a spiritual person with respect to the Twelve Steps?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

DEFECT: A blemish, fault, flaw.

BLOSSOM: To bloom, to flower, to flourish.

SPIRITUAL: Pertaining to the spirit, not material, mental, intellectual, divine, pure, ecclesiastical.

CHARACTER: Distinctive qualities of a person or thing.

REMISSION: Act of remitting, relinquishment, abatement, pardon.

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STEP ELEVEN

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STUDY GUIDE

Step Eleven truly expresses what the Twelve Step recovery process is simply all about. This step keeps us connected to God, our source of power and comfort, while reminding us that our purpose in life is learning to love ourselves and freely share this love with others. Our private and personal relationship with God is more deeply developed, enriched and maintained through our constant application of this very important step.

In CGA we realize that prior to our experience in recovery, the fact that selfishness and our self-centered attitude about life kept us in emotional turmoil, in conflict with others and blocked out from a clear connection to our creator. Those of us who sincerely trudge the path of "taking our recovery serious" have come to find one central fact clear, without room for debate or denial: We have discovered that at the center of our lives and the core of our recovery stands firm our personal relationship with God and that without this primary relationship, genuine recovery cannot be possible. We no longer question nor challenge whatever God's will may be for us, we simply sacrifice ourselves to be humbly ready to act as God calls upon us to demonstrate good-will behavior and actions in all our affairs. We are prompt to acknowledge our human shortcomings with integrity to correct our faults in a responsible manner while being ever willing to extend our best efforts to help others in need.

We are those who have learned to practice true spiritual discernment in our free-will choices and decisions to give without expectations, to act without prejudice, to bend in our tolerance of others without breaking in our patience toward those who may be lacking in spiritual perfection, no different than we who would much rather point blame than accept it.

In CGA we recommend 'Centering Prayer' as a simple powerfully effective practice of meditation that is open to all to benefit while never excluding anyone. Centering Prayer provides a means to invite God into our presence when our normal activities of the day can disrupt our spiritual peace of mind. We have found that those who practice this recommended meditation often daily, have fewer complicated moments and a deeper, richer spiritual connection to God. We find that when we mingle in God's silence, the more clear God's will is revealed.

In essence, our Eleventh Step ensures that we take time each day to be alone with God. It prepares us to do our work for God in the Twelfth Step which follows. This step keeps us out of selfishness while leading us into selflessness. Through Prayer and Meditation we awaken to this spiritual awareness that our purpose is to serve God, not ourselves anymore. Our strength and motivation to help others is through God's inspiration. As servants of God, we take our personal recovery serious.

THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT STEP ELEVEN

1. If we truly desire a private, personal relationship with God and we are sincere in our desire to do "God's Will", and we are having difficulty, the likely explanation for our confusion is that our relationship with God may be lacking Eleventh Step practice on a daily basis.
2. We can prepare ourselves to receive the gifts of God by developing our relationship with God to an extent that we are quite comfortable with silence. In silence we learn to listen to the voice of God.
3. God is not bound by our beliefs, rules or lack of beliefs. God can and very often acts completely beyond our perceptions, desires or expectations. We cannot explain God because the reality of God goes beyond our human boundaries.
4. Centering Prayer is a human method of Prayer and Meditation that reduces the obstacles we create through our reluctance or refusal to detach from experiences through the course of the day. The consistent practice of the Eleventh Step can help us to let go of our own thoughts and allow freedom for God to act. Prayer is what we do to communicate; Meditation is where we detach and seek God's presence.
5. Centering Prayer is not trying to make our minds a blank. It is a discipline in that it provides a method to help one to be still and to listen to God in the silence.
6. Centering Prayer is not a relaxation exercise.
7. All that Centering Prayer requires of us is that we keep a loving intention to be in God's presence and to consent to God's action in our lives. We do this by using a simple word of our own choosing to draw our intention gently back to God whenever we become aware of any kind of distraction. We need do nothing more; we simply trust that God will accept our intention and make it possible.

FOUR SIMPLE GUIDELINES TO CENTERING PRAYER

1. Choose a 'Sacred Word' as the symbol of your intentions to consent to the presence and action of God within.
2. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, silently introduce your sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action.
3. When you become aware of thoughts, sounds or images, return ever so gently to your 'Sacred Word'.
4. At the end of the Prayer and Meditation period, remain in silence for a few minutes with your eyes closed.

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There are many types of top quality appliances, but if they are not connected to a power source, they are useless.

When we fail to pray and/or meditate, we lose our connection with the ultimate power source.

Prayer provides us with a means of maintaining physical and emotional balance. It also eliminates the distractions which can block an open channel for prayer.

Meditation can help to keep us focused on our Spiritual commitments and our private, personal relationship with God.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. Do you currently have a Daily Prayer Practice? If so, how does it help you?
2. Do you currently have a Daily Meditation Practice? If so, how does it help you?
3. Please explain how Meditation can help to reduce/relieve stress.
4. Please explain how Prayer and Meditation can help to improve your physical and mental health.
5. Please explain how prayer and meditation can help to improve your relationships with others.

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

ULTIMATE: The best or most extreme of its kind.

POWER: Ability to act or produce and affect.

PRAYER: To request in a humble manner.

MEDITATION: To focus, to let go of one's thought and emotions.

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STEP ELEVEN

WE SOUGHT TO IMPROVE OUR "SPIRITUAL AWARENESS" THROUGH PRAYER AND MEDITATION WITH GOD, ASKING FOR GUIDANCE IN BEING DECENT AND RESPONSIBLE TO OURSELVES AND MORE CARING TOWARDS OTHERS.

The Eleventh Step is our guide to improving our "Spiritual Awareness" through the practice of Prayer and Meditation with God. We are asking for God's guidance in being decent and responsible to ourselves, additionally by doing so, we become more inclined to be more caring and accepting towards others. As we move forward, following Spiritual Principles throughout the course of our day, it is less likely that we can go backwards into the old behaviors of our past.

The Eleventh Step can help us to constantly change or adjust our attitude, helping us to let go of any poisonous thoughts, before they become words or actions that will affect how we feel in the moment and impact others through our actions. Prayer and Meditation are necessary for daily character balance, and to help keep our intention of a stable, ongoing recovery in the front of our mind. With careful application of the Twelve Steps, singly or in concert we will become more honest, more humble, more complete human beings, as evidenced through our behavior, manner and actions.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. How can (or has) the Eleventh Step help(ed) you to maintain peaceful thoughts and a good balance in your attitude and behavior?
2. How can (or has) your Eleventh Step practice improve(d) your relationships with others, no matter where you are?
3. What does "Spiritual Awareness" mean to you and how do you apply it daily?
4. Why is it important to Pray or Meditate daily and what time(s) of day are most effective for you?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

PRAYER: Spiritual communion with God, An earnest request, The act or practice of speaking to/with God.

MEDITATION: To focus, to allow one's thoughts and emotions to fall away.

SPITITUAL: Concerning sacred things, The refining of Character, Not concerned with the material world.

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STEP ELEVEN

WE SOUGHT TO IMPROVE OUR "SPIRITUAL AWARENESS" THROUGH PRAYER AND MEDITATION WITH GOD, ASKING FOR GUIDANCE IN BEING DECENT AND RESPONSIBLE TO OURSELVES AND MORE CARING TOWARDS OTHERS.

The beauty and comfort of the CGA Twelve Step journey is that it involves the Refinement of Character, Recovery from Addictive Behavior and the Development of a Private, Personal Relationship with God, as we each understand God to be. Each of the Steps, either singly or in concert with each other, guide us in removing what has blocked us from having/developing Spiritual values and Moral Decency. As we transform our character, through utilizing the path laid out in the Twelve Steps, our Spiritual Awareness improves.

No one can rightfully predict with any accuracy just how deep any individual's Spiritual Awareness will be. Each relationship with God, achieved through Prayer and Meditation, is Private and Personal. Additionally, we will find that the level of each person's Spiritual Integrity will clearly be displayed through the example of how they live.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. What have any particular Step(s) done to improve your character?
2. Do you feel that you have a Private Personal Relationship with God that works for you?
Please explain why or why not.
3. What does 'Daily Spiritual Awareness' mean to you?
4. How does Prayer affect your Spiritual Awareness?
5. How does Meditation affect your Spiritual Awareness?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

PRIVATE: Not known or intended to be known publicly, Preferring to keep personal affairs to oneself.

TRANSFORM: To change in character or condition, To change the outward form or appearance of.

AWARE: Having or showing realization, perception or knowledge.

SPITITUAL: Concerning sacred things, The refining of Character, Not concerned with the material world.

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THE AWAKENING

The Twelve Step journey provides us with a Spiritual Awakening as well as awareness. Throughout this Twelve Step journey, we continue to experience various Spiritual Awakenings.

As this New Year approaches, let's take a moment, look back and identify those Spiritual Awakenings we have experienced in our lives over the last 12 months or so. Let's see what we were able to see anew and how we were able to benefit from these awakenings.

Let us also remember that we may need to pay attention to the areas of our Spiritual Selves that could use some improvement, as well as take some time to examine our Principals that could be "old" or not in line with our "new" Spiritual Selves.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. Throughout this past year, what are some of the things that you have become more aware of?
2. Give an example of at least one (1) Spiritual Awakening you have experienced.
3. Give an example of a Spiritual Principal that you need to work on.

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

AWARE: Having or showing realization, perception or knowledge.

SPITITUAL: Concerning sacred things, The refining of Character, Not concerned with the material world.

PRINCIPLES: A set of rules or a code of conduct.

AWAKE: To bring back to consciousness, alert.

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STEP TWELVE

WE, EACH EXPERIENCING A "SPIRITUAL AWAKENING" BY APPLYING THESE STEPS, FREELY SHARE OUR TRUTH AND EXPERIENCES WITH OTHERS LIKE US, AND CONTINUE LIVING IN GOOD ORDERLY DIRECTION IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS.

We come to realize that we are not emotional puppets to be tormented, neglected, manipulated or dangled on strings, by people, places or things. We are now freed from the grip of addiction through the spiritual power of the Twelve Steps. We are no longer helpless, but helpful. The flow of our lives is within the grace of selflessness, no longer selfishness. The Twelve Steps have taught us a lot about ourselves and how to develop and maintain relationships with others. A deep awakening was to realize the freedom we possess in making our own choices and decisions, respecting moral principles of right and wrong. Today we have "new vision" to see everything as it is. We know our limitations. We are careful of placing expectations upon others and we have earned integrity, through being responsible and accountable as a person. We have awakened to serve God, helping those we understand, being living examples that change is possible for criminals and gangmembers.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. What does "no longer being an emotional puppet" mean to you?
2. How does it feel to be freed from the grip of addiction to illegal activity?
3. What is the difference between selfishness and selflessness?
4. What benefits are there in freely making your own choices and decisions?
5. How do you see yourself, others and life itself as being different from before you did your Twelve Step experience?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

HELPLESS: Lacking protection or support.

HELPFUL: Of service or assistance.

SELFISH: Concerned excessively or exclusively with oneself.

SELFLESS: Having no concern for self.

FREEDOM: Absence of necessity, coercion or constraint in choice or action.

INTEGRITY: Adherence to a code of moral or artistic values.

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There's a great need in all of us to change our lives from destruction to peacefulness. If you think of our common problems, you'll know it to be the lifestyle addiction to criminality. We destroyed almost everything we came in contact with. Some of us even took life from others! No matter what we may have tried to change in our lifestyles, we simply couldn't do it! It was just too easy to take what we wanted; we didn't have to be responsible or accountable. We justified the things we did because we thought there was no other way. We even thought that there wasn't anybody who felt the way we did or experienced the things that we have.

With the Twelve Steps we become reunited with our true selves from within. These Steps benefit us through changing our characters, putting to rest resentments we have held on to for so long, as well as placing any blame where it rightfully belongs. We can heal on the inside from the traumatic experiences that have plagued our lives, very often since childhood. We learn to be responsible for ourselves as well as accountable for our actions. We learn what fuels the lifestyle addiction in us and that application of the Twelve Steps can restore our spirituality. There's so much benefit in the Twelve Steps, but simply "Knowing the Steps" isn't enough! To truly change, you have to apply the Steps to your everyday life, or what's the use? What you don't change, won't change. These Steps teach us how to 'live-life' because this is a 'life-long' journey.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. How do you benefit from the Twelve Steps?
2. What have you attempted to change about yourself before coming to CGA, but couldn't?
3. What do you like or dislike about the Twelve Steps?
4. What Steps do you find yourself using most often? Why?
5. Do you think that you can change with the Twelve Steps? Why?
6. How have your relationships with others changed since applying the Twelve Steps in your life?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

ADDICTION: The state of being addicted, devotion.

BENEFIT: An act of kindness, a favor, advantage to do a service to, to gain advantage.

CHANGE: To cause to become different, alter, transform, convert.

CHARACTER: The pattern of behavior or personality found in an individual or group, moral constitution.

DESTRUCTION: The act or process of destroying, demolition or slaughter.

LIFESTYLE: The consistent, integrated way of life of an individual as typified by his or her manner, attitude, possessions, etc...

NEED: Something useful, required or desired that is lacking, want, requirement.

PLAGUED: Anything that affects or troubles, calamity, scourge.

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3. Give an example of a Spiritual Principal that you need to work on.

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AWAKE: To bring back to consciousness, alert.

Head Strong
OPP TEAM
CO OPERATIVE

Criminals & Gangmembers Anonymous

STEP TWELVE

"CARRYING THE MESSAGE"

In the past we were all caught up in a destructive lifestyle in one form or another. The fact is that we were living in darkness. It was all some of us knew how to do. But then, one day, someone, somewhere, shared with us about CGA. Now here we are, sharing our past experiences, seeking similarities in each other; trusting in someone who trudged the path of recovery before us. Most important we are becoming open to having faith that God's grace will be with us on our Recovery journey. We know, that had it not been for someone struggling to change and having faith in God, then doing God's will to carry the CGA message to help others, there would be no CGA and most of us would be blind to the truth; still living a destructive lifestyle, harming ourselves and others.

After going through your Recovery Process, having a Spiritual Awakening, how can you not have the desire to help others? Many have tried to help criminals and gangmembers with no lasting success. Not just anyone can carry this message of healing, hope and change. We in CGA, having lived a destructive lifestyle, know the pain all too well and we know the depth of anger and the effects it brings. With our experiences, we understand the experiences of those like us and care enough to help them find their way out of darkness. Through our on-going recovery, it is truly our duty to God to love one another and carry this message of CGA in hope others can also recover from our common problems. We may not be able to help all, but if we can help one, that one may be able to help many more. We never know ... it's a matter of faith.

The question is: What about the ones who are still living a destructive lifestyle? How can we carry the message to them?

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. Are you aware when those around you are going through some hard times and take the opportunity to share with them how CGA has helped you and that the group can also help them?
2. Do you get caught up talking about the past with your friends or talking about negative things and fail to tell them about something positive that you are learning through your CGA efforts?
3. Is your fear of rejection from your friends blocking you from spreading a positive message about change?
4. Do you make an effort to be an example that change is possible so others will see the light of hope shining through us?
5. Let's examine ourselves, if you are not carrying the message, why not? After going through your recovery process, how can you not have the desire to help others?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

CARRY: To take from one place to another, to conduct oneself in a specified way.

HELP: To give something necessary to someone in need or in trouble.

HOPE: A feeling that what is wanted will happen, desire accompanied by expectation.

FAITH: Unquestioning belief that does not require proof or evidence.

Criminals & Gangmembers Anonymous

STEP TWELVE

WE, EACH EXPERIENCING A "SPIRITUAL AWAKENING" BY APPLYING THESE STEPS, FREELY SHARE OUR TRUTH AND EXPERIENCES WITH OTHERS LIKE US, AND CONTINUE LIVING IN GOOD ORDERLY DIRECTION IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS.

Most of us have never had any kind of genuine faith that could change our destructive course. Many of us felt that we could never get rid of bad, aggressive attitudes or have any kind of valuable relationships. But we have changed. We have had many 'awakenings' both great and small, these Awakenings have had to be Spiritual in quality because they are not of the evil kind, driven by our selfish wants or desires. Today, many of us commit our lives to helping other people. How could this be the case, when we never desired to do any such thing, or thought it was at all possible? Our Spiritual Awakenings are real to us and those around us, who cannot dispute the fact of our actions, attitudes and expressed beliefs. These Spiritual Awakenings are constant and on-going, no matter where we are, who we are with, what we are doing or what hour of the day or night it is.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. What 'Spiritual Awakening' came to you that first let you know that your Recovery was working?
2. Give the three greatest motivations that keep you focused in Recovery.
3. Has anyone in your life commented about the changes they see in you?
4. What does the term, "Spiritual Awakening" mean to you?
5. Can a person expect "Spiritual Awakenings" to continue occurring throughout their Recovery journey? Why or why not?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

SPIRITUAL: Of or in relation to, consisting of or affecting the Spirit, Concerned with pro-social values, Refinement of character.

SPIRIT: The feeling, quality or disposition characterizing something or someone, A special attitude or frame of mind.

AWAKENING: To become conscious or aware of something, To cease sleeping.

CONSTANT: Continually occurring or reoccurring, regular.

ON-GOING: Continuously moving forward, Growing, Actually being in process.

CRIMINALS AND GANGMEMBERS ANONYMOUS

AN OVERVIEW OF THE CGA PROGRAM OF RECOVERY

- **WHAT IS CGA?:** Criminals & Gangmembers Anonymous is the first Twelve Step recovery program that provides “the solution to the problem” for any criminal or gangmember who has the sincere desire to recover from the lifestyle addiction to illegal activity.
- **WHAT IS THE LIFESTYLE ADDICTION?:** There are many different lifestyles, whether one chooses to be:
 1. In the business profession
 2. In law enforcement
 3. Religious clergy
 4. Simply one of those who choose to be criminals or gangmembers as their only profession.Lifestyles may be different (according to a set of beliefs, manners and habits) but, for those of us who have chosen the criminal lifestyle, they all share a common addiction to their “choice of crime. Most often one crime of choice is intermixed with other crimes that work in concert with one another to achieve the ultimate goal of emotional pleasure or self-gratification, from taking what they want at the expense of taking the rights and freedoms of others. Once the destructive Cycle of Addiction is put in motion by defects in an individual’s character (for example: irresponsibility, selfishness, dishonesty, greed, insecurity, anger, fear or pain) that person cannot stop committing crimes until they are stopped by some means of intervention
- **WHY IS CGA FOR US?** Our problems primarily center around the inability to stop committing crimes. Some of us are substance abusers but these abuses are not the root of our problems. We simply abuse alcohol or drugs as temporary relief to escape feelings that are too painful to bear or we are too fearful to seek help to resolve. Some of us are gangmembers who follow a set of traditions and beliefs passed down to us from generation to generation. Others among us simply are not satisfied with what we earn from our jobs and always want more so we steal, take from or manipulate people, machines or both. We hide in darkness, wear masks and wear badges or crosses to deceive most, while preying on others. We all need help and CGA fits our need and understands our problems.
- **THE CGA SOLUTION:** CGA has designed its Twelve Steps following the framework model of the Oxford Spiritual Groups and the original Twelve Steps developed by and for alcoholics. We honor, rather than discount or debate the great works of those before us in this vein of recovery. Our only mission and commitment is to meet the needs of Criminals and Gangmembers: to provide a process of change in a language they can understand – that fits the needs of criminals. Our lethal experiences have proven that we must approach recovery more bluntly direct to meet the needs of a new generation of addicts in this new millennium. Our Twelve Steps are delivered in such a way that the criminal or gangmember cannot deny a problem exists, not side-step taking direct responsibility for their behavior and accountability for their actions.
- **CGA – A SPIRITUAL PROGRAM:** In CGA we believe that true transformation of character requires:
 1. Taking action to refine their character through a thorough Twelve Step recovery process, and
 2. Development of a private, personal relationship with God.Once the individual chooses to merge both into their lives, they begin to live along spiritual lines of decency and responsibility, in peace and harmony with others. We do not favor a particular religious belief system, nor exclude any others. In CGA we will not deny or reject anyone who lacks belief or faith in any religious doctrine. We firmly believe that for CGA to reasonably meet the task of striving to do “God’s Will” is to be an effective program of recovery that is comfortable to meet the needs of all and exclude no criminal or gangmember seeking help to change their lives.

Criminals & Gangmembers Anonymous

BUILDING A PASSION

For The Twelve Steps

In a recent CGA meeting one of our group members shared the PASSION he once had for the destructive lifestyle he lived and how important it is to build a similar passion for Recovery and the Twelve Steps.

In CGA we have answers that each one of us can LEARN and PRACTICE while changing our lives for the better. Things like:

1. ATTENDING CGA meetings.
2. LISTENING to others share their experiences while seeking similarities.
3. ASKING questions, There are no stupid questions, unless you don't ask them.
4. FINDING someone you are comfortable with (preferably someone with experience in the Twelve Steps) and ask them if they would help you go through the Twelve Steps.
5. PRACTICING being more honest with ourselves, open-minded to the positive suggestions of others and willing to put into practice the Twelve Steps of CGA.

And what of us who have been in these rooms for a while and that have experience with the Twelve Steps? What are we doing to keep our passion for recovery strong while helping the newer members build their own passion for Recovery and the Twelve Steps (our Twelfth Step)?

1. Are we still listening to better understand and help the newer members or are we smug in our Recovery and became lazy?
2. Are we still sharing our experiences to help others find solutions?
3. Are we still practicing the Twelve Steps in our daily affairs so that our actions support our words (sharing)?

All in all we are helping to build a passion for recovery and the Twelve Steps by being here today. Remember, many of us never gave ourselves a chance, many of us had many negative role models in our lives, and that the ugly and painful destructive experiences of our past led us here today. Today we have another chance through CGA for a better life. In the end it is our choice to follow after a better life or to live in the one that caused us, our families and many others so much pain and suffering.

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

LISTENING: To make a conscious effort to hear, attend closely, so as to hear. To pay close attention; take advice.

ASKING: To use words in seeking the answer to (a question); try to find out about by inquiring.

FINDING: To get by searching or by making an effort (finding the answer). To experience or feel. To learn what one's real talents and inclinations are and begin to apply them.

PRACTICING: To do or engage in frequently or usually. To do repeatedly in order to learn or become proficient. To teach or train through practice.

CHOICE: The right, power or chance to choose; option.



Criminals & Gangmembers Anonymous

STEP TWELVE

WE, EACH EXPERIENCING A "SPIRITUAL AWAKENING" BY APPLYING THESE STEPS, FREELY SHARE OUR TRUTH AND EXPERIENCES WITH OTHERS LIKE US, AND CONTINUE LIVING IN GOOD ORDERLY DIRECTION IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS.

An important part of our Recovery is making amends to those we've harmed and to ourselves. Giving back is one way to do that. Here's a few ways we can interpret "Giving Back":

- ▶ Amends Letters
- ▶ Community Service
- ▶ Self-help Groups
- ▶ Taking Care of/Helping Yourself
- ▶ Having a Positive Attitude and/or Influence
- ▶ Being Able to "Just Listen"

When we give back, we are practicing a new better way of life than when we were hurting others, ourselves or our loved ones. By giving back, we are proving to ourselves and others that our old, selfish ways are becoming a thing of the past. That we are actually changing and becoming more Responsible, Trustworthy and 'Better' people.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. What does "Giving Back" mean to you?
2. How do you relate the Eighth and Ninth Steps to giving back?
3. How often do you practice giving back?
4. Is there a specific time in our recovery when we should start giving back?

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

HELPFUL: Of service or assistance.

SELFISH: Concerned excessively or exclusively with oneself.

SELFLESS: Having no concern for self.

INTEGRITY: Adherence to a code of moral or artistic values.

HELP: To give something necessary to someone in need or in trouble.

GIVE: To turn over the possession or control of anything, to someone without cost or exchange, To make a gift of with no expectation of return.

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GIVING

What are your
Motives or intentions
When "GIVING"?

"SELFLESS"
CHARITY
FREE
GIFT

- OR -

"SELFISH"
EXPECTATION
INFLUENCE
MANIPULATE

Questions to be honest about:

1. What did you gain by "Taking from others", or "Using Others", or "Destroying People or Things", when you were caught up in your 'Lifestyle Addiction'?
2. By "Freely Giving" back to others and yourself, do you believe that you can change or reverse your lifestyle?
3. Is "Giving" just a material thing, or is it something that we can practice through our daily Words and Actions through practicing our daily commitment to Recovery? Explain your answer.

KEY WORDS DEFINED:

MOTIVE: Some inner drive, impulse, intention, etc... that causes a person to do something or act in a certain way.

INTENTION: Determination to do a specified thing or act in a specified manner.

SELFLESS: Devoted to others welfare or interests and not one's own, Unselfish.

CHARITY: Kindness or leniency in judging others, An act of good-will or affection.

FREE: Not held or burdened by obligation, debt, discomfort, etc... With no charge or cost, Open to all without restriction.

GIFT: Something given to show friendship, affection or support, A natural ability.

SELFISH: Concerned with one's own interests or welfare, Having little or no concern for others.

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Step Twelve is not the final Step; it is the beginning of a new way of life. This Step is about awakening with a new attitude about ourselves, about others and about life in general. It is the beginning of a more serious approach to being responsible for ourselves and less critical and judgmental of others. We have begun to find the gradual truth that the Twelve Steps do not remove our feelings or emotions; they do not make us immune from suffering or from being confronted with difficult challenges or sudden misfortune. The Twelve Steps do not and will not make us perfect. What the Twelve Steps do is provide a reliable solution to any problem, any situation that requires good, sound judgment and can lead us to becoming more responsible for our daily choices and decisions. This Step reminds us to keep our lives Simple and to stop taking everything else with other so serious. The Twelfth Step assures us that life will constantly be unfolding with new experiences while we are consistently prepared to react differently and opposite from our past reliance on destructive self-will.

QUESTIONS TO BE HONEST ABOUT:

1. Going to these Twelve Step Meetings, what were you able to see about yourself and your perceptions/prejudices about others?
2. How do you think the Twelve Steps either have helped or will help you?
3. Going through these Twelve Steps, what do the Twelve Steps mean to you?

IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY
A THOUGH, AN OPINION
OR IF YOU JUST WANT TO SPEAK ON HOW YOU FEEL
PLEASE
EXPRESS YOURSELF

Criminals & Gangmembers Anonymous

STEP REVIEW: TEN, ELEVEN AND TWELVE

STEP TEN

WE CONTINUED DAILY TO TAKE A PERSONAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES AND WHENEVER WRONG, HAD THE COURAGE TO HONESTLY ADMIT IT.

1. How many times throughout the day, do you take a Personal Inventory of your actions and thoughts?
2. What does this Personal Inventory consist of?
3. What does it mean, "Whenever wrong, had the courage to honestly admit it?"
4. Can you do your Tenth Step without doing the other Steps?

STEP ELEVEN

WE SOUGHT TO IMPROVE OUR "SPIRITUAL AWARENESS" THROUGH PRAYER AND MEDITATION WITH GOD, ASKING FOR GUIDANCE IN BEING DECENT AND RESPONSIBLE TO OURSELVES AND MORE CARING TOWARDS OTHERS.

1. What is 'Spiritual Awareness'?
2. What is Meditation and what is its purpose?
3. How is Prayer effective in making you a better person?
4. How do we become more decent and responsible to ourselves?

STEP TWELVE

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1. Does the Twelfth Step have anything to do with integrity or credibility? If so, how and why? Please explain.
2. If someone else did not 'live' their Twelfth Step, would you be in this room today?