



### STEP EIGHT AND STEP NINE

Step Eight: *Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.*

Step Nine: *Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.*

Up to this point we have considered and concentrated on ourselves entirely. Steps Eight and Nine take us out of our overgrown egos, and we begin to move into the wonderful world we were born into. We begin to heal and address our position with injured relationships.

First, we are asked to look back and try to discover where we may have been at fault in our dealings with others.

Second, we make vigorous attempts to repair the damage we have done.

Most of us will see a great deal of wreckage we have caused others as a result of our active addiction. We already experienced part of this when we took Step Four, but in that Step we were only concerned with ourselves. Steps Eight and Nine suggest we concentrate on others.

Most of our stories highlight a simple fact: Those we hurt the most are usually the people who love us the most.

As we look back on our behavior toward others and how it affected them, we usually see how others treated us as a result of our behavior. The focus of Step Eight is on our behavior and the responsibility that requires us to admit our wrongs.

Step Eight requires clear thinking so we can be motivated, with courage, to begin this Step.

Purposeful forgetting is a great obstacle. This is often when we are inclined to say, "I didn't hurt anyone but myself." It is important to list all infractions to anyone's integrity be it physical, emotional, or spiritual in nature. Making amends not only simply means apologies but often restitution. It is difficult to be sincere, if one is unwilling.

### **KEY IDEA 1**

[Making amends] is a proven way of life by which the alcoholic corrects past mistakes and makes restitution to relatives, friends, or enemies.

#### **HARDCOVER**

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#### **PAPERBACK**

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#### **SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION**

It is not as important to understand how this process works at this point. We know that it works from observing the members who have taken this Step before us.

### **KEY IDEA 2**

[Steps Eight and Nine] work in conjunction with each other.

#### **HARDCOVER**

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#### **SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION**

We cannot be rid of the effects of guilt until we are aware of it, own it, and grieve it. Only then can we let it go.

**STEP NINE**

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

Qualities we need to accomplish this Step are good judgment, careful sense of timing, courage, and prudence.

There are different types of amends to be made:

1. Those to individuals who are readily available and to whom we need to make amends as soon as possible.
2. Those to whom we can only make partial restitution to, as a complete disclosure would bring harm to others or ourselves.
3. Those where action ought to be delayed at least for the time being.
4. Those we have to take a creative approach to, such as people who are unreachable or who have passed away.
5. The beginning of making amends to ourselves.

Most of us begin this Step as soon as possible after entering recovery as we demonstrate to others that we are taking action to correct negative situations caused by our behavior while under the influence. Good judgment needs to be exercised as we may rekindle arguments or try to buy peace of mind at the expense of others. We need to talk with our sponsors and fellow members about this Step.



**KEY IDEA 3**

Remember, in most cases you will require a lifetime to complete Step Nine.

**HARDCOVER**

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**SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION**

Another way to view procrastination is “AA begins on time and ends on time.” With our pride in balance we become more aware of the right timing in making our variety of amends.

**KEY IDEA 4**

Meditation and prayer are necessary to make amends.

**HARDCOVER**

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**SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION**

Instead of the term *meditation*, think of “taking quiet time” for ourselves—to reflect. In prayer, we seek courage for the confidence to take positive action while making amends.

**KEY IDEA 5**

Discretion in this connection is imperative.

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**SUGGESTION FOR SELF-STUDY OR GROUP DISCUSSION**

The alcoholic is a self-centered individual. It is a positive learning process to be able to take other individuals' feelings into account.

Note: Read and discuss topics of these four groups: friends, families, creditors, and the deceased.

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