

PREAMBLE TO THE STEP GROUP FORM

There is a yearning in our heart that is always longing to be expressed. It is the expression of who we really are. Who we really are is sometimes stifled by the ways that we think and live. Addiction and obsession come from not knowing or living as who we are. No matter how stuck or ingrained our way of life may appear, this voice in our heart ceaselessly calls out.

Sometimes we hear it through pain, sometimes in our own discomfort. Sometimes it is a beautiful spark which shows up as inspiration to try something better. The Step Group Form can nurture that spark into a passionate flame.

We have found freedom from the powerful holds of addiction and habitual behavior through this form of self-survey. There is a distinct possibility that you will wind up with a completely different personality through this work. The Step Group Form begins with a daily writing practice that is a thorough but simple look at our past and current point of view. To bring out the very best that we can be, we compare the moments of our life with the personal ideals inscribed in our heart. This is a comprehensive self-survey of our life and character.

Our problems fall into two categories. The first group are the kinds of problems that life itself presents. These problems are the opportunities life brings to us to work through. The second group are the useless problems we make for ourselves. Problems that we make for ourselves do not have to exist at all. This type of problem stems from not knowing who we are.

The most fundamental question in life is "Who am I?" The event writing in this form provides the groundwork to understand the answer to this question. The writing prepares us for the Character Discussions in the next step. If we know who we are, we can recognize our point of view. We have a choice. We can express ourselves kindly out of the goodness of our heart. Our behavior comes from our point of view. It is the point of view that subtly generates the emotions and attitudes that make up our personalities, our outward expression. Sometimes our habitual point of view is incredibly painful and is unrecognized by us. When this point of view is generated from inappropriate habitual and histrionic thoughts we make problems for ourselves.

Those of us who share this work sincerely appreciate the freedom we are experiencing. We have found the freedom in life to be and do what our dreams offer.

We are enjoying life in a new way. We intentionally nurture those who come in contact with us. This possibility exists for you too. It exists without the constraint of what you now think, or the limitations of what others think. This is real freedom. To be free from what limits you in life, you must be free from what you think limits you.

We support this process. We believe in it and we wish to share it with you because we know this Form offers a way out to those still trapped in suffering.

How the Step Group Form Begins

The Step Group Form begins with a simple writing practice. The writing is a personal self-survey which encompasses writing every event of your life that you can remember in a particular format.

Briefly, one sits down to write daily one-half hour to an hour. They write what comes up as it comes up. They write within the confines of “*the Framework*” of the inventory and they write in a particular style. It is important to understand the writing form, so much so that the guide will impart knowledge and skill to the writer in that form for the first few weeks. The style is not free-form writing.

They learn to write the events of their life in a manner where they record the actual event looking for just the facts of the event. Their thoughts and feelings in the event are separated from the event and written below the event.

When using the writing style of this Form, the writing of an event usually takes up about four lines of a sheet of lined notebook paper. We use one sheet of paper per event. The rest of the paper is used in the ensuing steps. One sheet of paper is more than filled by the time we are finished with the steps.

This Form of self-survey is clear-cut and definitive to make it easy and understandable, without complication. *The Framework* outlines the specific requirements and is the blueprint for its use.

As human beings, we have problems in life. Some of these problems are beyond our control. The areas in which we do well and have little difficulty are those which offer us very little opportunity to advance in life.

Then there are the problems that we make for ourselves. It is in the areas where our problems are the greatest, that we experience the most potential for growth.

Growth is possible in its fullest manifestation.

Not understanding the reality of our true nature will leave us with very little understanding of the nature of reality. In this state, we are influenced by many erroneous points of view which we think are true but have no basis in reality. We tend to see what we expect to see. Over a period of a lifetime, these perspectives come to represent reality to us. This type of reality and the problems it contains show up in our imagination and thinking. This type of problem creates for us a false reality. When we are caught in this distorted reality, it warps our perception. This interferes with our ability to look at the circumstances of life objectively.

These types of problems seem like they deserve our attention. If we could just be free of this compelling predisposition, we would not have to concern ourselves with problems that only exist in our head.

The *Framework* sets the stage where we can discover the point of view that is causing undue problems. By working within the *Framework* we have a way to observe our behavior. We view ourselves through our interaction around these listed items over a period of time. By doing so we begin to find thinking that creates problems in our life.

Working with a guide is imperative. We recommend you read “*The Guide Relationship*.¹” This guide will help you begin. To work with a guide is to contact this person weekly discussing *the Framework* and your treatment of it. After the guide is sure you have learned the correct writing form, they then are used as is described in *The Guide Relationship*. This person will guide them through this form of writing, making sure they are working within the Form.

One who is a guide is someone who has finished this Form and is up to date with current use of *the Framework*. Anyone who has written before the current use of *the Framework* can easily incorporate it’s use in their work with someone. A guide has finished the event-writing portion of the Form and is actively involved in service of some kind or is actively involved in participation in this Form.

If you are interested in receiving further information, we recommend first the booklet entitled *The Twelve Steps as a Transformational Possibility, Section One*. Cost is \$10.00 plus shipping and handling which is normally \$3.00 additional, except when out of the country. If you are out of the country, send \$7.00 additional. Make a check or money order out to International Step

¹“*The Guide Relationship*,” International Step Foundation, March, 2000.

Foundation, P.O. Box 22, Glenwood, New Mexico, 88039.

The web site address is: www.stepgroup.org. From the web site there are many FREE Downloads of materials and information on the Twelve Steps and the Step Group Form.

Our commitment is that no one find the 12-Steps, walk away and die. We can find the life-transforming miracle we are looking for through the beauty of the Twelve Steps. This is the principle the International Step Foundation stands upon as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) public educational charity.

We serve two categories of people: those in 12-Step programs wishing a clearer understanding of the Twelve Steps as an enhancement to their 12-Step program, and those people who are sincerely interested in changing their life and altering their current course of existence. For both groups we offer clear and understandable input and suggestions for embracing the Twelve Steps as a way of life.

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