

CLA WEDNESDAY NIGHT 9:30 pm ET STEP STUDY MEETING “WORKING CLA 12 STEPS” Format

Good Evening and Welcome to this “Working CLA 12 Steps” Wednesday Night Step Study Meeting.

My name is _____ and I am the Moderator for this meeting. Please join me in the We Version of the Serenity Prayer.

Serenity Prayer:

God, grant us the Serenity to accept the things we cannot change, Courage to change the things we can, and the Wisdom to know the difference.

We invite Newcomers as well as Long-timers to participate, and hope you will make this a commitment and will return every 13-week quarter to share your personal Experience, Strength and Hope as we use the 12 Steps to recover from our Clutter Problem. The meeting begins promptly at 9:30pm ET and covers one step per week for 12 weeks and the 13th week we will share on personal progress and rewards in working CLA’S 12 Steps, and our plans to make these Steps a way of living.

- May I have a volunteer to read the CLA Preamble? The Preamble can be found in the *blue leaflet, "A Brief Guide"* as well as under the *about tab on our website.*
- **PREAMBLE**

Clutterers Anonymous (CLA) is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem with clutter and help each other to recover.

We achieve this as individuals, groups, and a fellowship by practicing our 12 Steps of recovery and by being guided by our 12 Traditions. Each of them embodies a set of principles for living life effectively, inside and outside CLA. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop cluttering.

There are no dues or fees for membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. Our fellowship is based on suggestion, interchange of experience, rotation of leadership, and service. Clutterers Anonymous is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology, or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues. Our primary purpose is to stop cluttering one day at a time and to carry this message of recovery to clutterers who still suffer.

May I have a volunteer to read the 12 steps of CLA? The 12 steps can be found in the *blue leaflet, "A Brief Guide"* and the *yellow leaflet "Recovery From Cluttering"*, *The Red Booklet* and online under the *Resource Tab*.

Step 1. We admitted we were powerless over clutter—that our lives had become unmanageable.

Step 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Step 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood God.

Step 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Step 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Step 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Step 7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.

Step 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

Step 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Step 10. Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

Step 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.

Step 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

May I have a volunteer to read the 12 Traditions? They can be found on the *back of the blue leaflet, the Red Booklet* and on the *website under the Resources Tab*.

The Twelve Traditions of CLASM

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon CLASM unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as expressed through our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for CLA membership is a desire to stop cluttering.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or CLA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the person who still suffers.

6. A CLA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the Clutterers AnonymousSM name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every CLA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Clutterers Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. Clutterers Anonymous, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. CLA has no opinion on outside issues; hence the Clutterers Anonymous name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television, and all other media.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

We will now go around the virtual room and introduce ourselves by first name only and the state you are from. If you are NEW to CLA or to this meeting please let us know so that we can give you a special welcome.

MODERATOR reads: “We in Clutterers Anonymous believe our “dis-ease” is three-fold – Physical, Emotional and Spiritual. Physical decluttering may address the Physical and some of the Emotional aspects of our “dis-ease.” However, please keep in mind that the foundation of CLA and all 12-Step recovery programs is **Spiritual**, as seen in our 12 Steps. Recovery means a new way of thinking and acting on life, rather than reacting to it, and this takes time. The Steps embody a set of Principles, that when followed, promote Inner Change. This affects Healing on all three levels, and it is achieved through the process of surrendering to something greater than ourselves. Working the 12 Steps will grant us the Order, Serenity, and Simplicity that we have sought desperately for so long.”

MODERATOR says: At this Step Work Meeting we will read the long version of one CLA Step each week and then write or reflect for 4 minutes in silence and then the Meeting will be open for 3-4 minute shares on your personal experience, strength and hope or your feelings when you heard it read this evening.

- **May I have a volunteer to read the long version of this week's Step from the yellow leaflet "Recovery From Cluttering," or from our website under the Resources Tab. Please read it twice and slowly. (Moderator announces the Step for the week and keeps track weekly).**
- **Please take 4 minutes to write or reflect in silence on you own experience with this Step and/or feelings when you heard it tonight.**
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- **We now invite sharing on the specific Step for this week. You may and are encouraged to leave contact info for bookending and outreach. Please say it slowly and twice. We do not permit crosstalk, so please keep the focus of your sharing on your own personal growth and recovery. and remember that "What you hear here, let it stay here." Please time yourself and if you go over 4 minutes I will give you a gentle reminder and ask you to quickly wrap up your thought.**

At 10:10pm ET MODERATOR READS The Long Version of Whatever Step we are on. (Google, "Long Version of AA 12 Traditions"). Sharing resumes, either on the Step or Tradition or BOTH!

At 10:25 ET MODERATOR SAYS: That's all the time we have for sharing. Thank you to all who shared and all who did service at this meeting.

We will have a BRIEF FELLOWSHIP AFTER THE MEETING IN ORDER TO ANSWER ANY NEWCOMMERS QUESTION, EXCHANGE PHONE NUMBERS OR CONTINUED SHARING.

MODERATOR ANNOUNCES: 245 previous meetings from 2010 through 2015 have been recorded. The number to listen to the recordings is provided by the Moderator to members on the phone meeting at this time. (**ALERT:** *Moderators will be provided with that number*) Members can go to the RESOURCE TAB, click on 12 Steps and a BOX at top of page directs them to the next page where there is a chart of all the recordings. (It can be printed out if folks would like)

MODERATOR SAYS: Our seventh tradition states that every CLA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. We have no expenses for this meeting yet our World Service Organization does have expenses including those for the website, literature and our 800 number. Donations can be made on our CLA website by pressing the **green donate** button at the bottom of each page of the website. Or you can mail a check to our Los Angeles post office box and that information is at the bottom of each page of our website and on the back of all our leaflets.

CLOSING: *Lets close this meeting with the WE version of the Organized Life Serenity Prayer*

ORGANIZED LIFE SERENITY PRAYER

God, grant us the Serenity of an organized life with leisure time,
The Courage to change our habits to ensure these joys, and
The Wisdom to be flexible.

And God grant us *patience* for the changes that take time,
Appreciation for all that we have,
Tolerance for those with different struggles,
And the *Strength* to get up and try again,
One moment, one hour, one day at a time.

Twelve Step Prayers

From the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous

The Twelve Step Prayers were created using the text of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. The text used to develop the prayers are shown at the end of the prayer in parenthesis.

First Step Prayer

Dear Lord, Help me to see and admit that I am powerless over my alcoholism. Help me to understand how my alcoholism has led to unmanageability in my life. Help me this day to understand the true meaning of powerlessness. Remove from me all denial of my alcoholism. (This prayer is developed from the chapter, More About Alcoholism)

Second Step Prayer

Heavenly Father, I am having trouble with personal relationships. I can't control my emotional nature. I am prey to misery and depression. I can't make a living. I feel useless. I am full of fear. I am unhappy. I can't seem to be of real help to others. I know in my heart that only you can restore me to sanity if I am just willing to stop doubting your power. I humbly ask that you help me to understand that it is more powerful to believe than not to believe and that you are either everything or nothing. (p. 52:2, 52:3, 53:1, 53:2)

3rd Step Prayer:

"God, I offer myself to thee - to build with me and do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!" (63:2 original manuscript) (see also the webpage with other Third Step Prayers)

A 4th Step Resentment Prayer:

"God, Please help me to be free of anger and to see that the world and its people have dominated me. Show me that the wrong-doing of others, fancied or real, has the power to actually kill me. Help me to master my resentments by understanding that the people who wrong me were perhaps spiritually sick. Please help me show those I resent the same Tolerance, Pity and Patience that I would cheerfully grant a sick friend. Help me to see that this is a sick man. Father, please show me how I can be helpful to him and save me from being angry. Lord, help me to avoid retaliation or argument. I know I can't be helpful to all people, but at least show me**

how to take a kindly and tolerant view of each and every one. Thy will be done."(66:2, 66:3, 66:4, 67:0, 67:1)

Fifth Step Prayer

Higher Power, Thank you for helping me complete my housecleaning. I can now look the world in the eye. I can be alone at perfect peace and ease. My fears have fallen from me. I have begun to feel your nearness. I have begun to have a spiritual experience. I feel I am on the Broad Highway, walking hand in hand with the Spirit of the Universe. (75:2)

Sixth Step Prayer

Dear God, I am ready for Your help in removing from me the defects of character which I now realize are an obstacle to my recovery. Help me to continue being honest with myself & guide me toward spiritual & mental health. (76:1)

Seventh Step Prayer

"My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good & bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you & my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here to do Your bidding." (76:2)

A Pre - Eighth Step Prayer:

"God, Please remove my Fears and show me your truth. Show me all the harms I have caused with my behavior and help me be willing to make amends to one and all. Help me to be willing to go to any lengths for victory over alcohol."(76:3)

A 9th Step Prayer :

"God, with regard to this amend, give me the strength, courage and direction to do the right thing, no matter what the personal consequences may be. Help me not to shrink from anything. Help me not to delay if it can be avoided. Help me to be sensible, tactful, considerate and humble without being servile or scraping."(79:1, 83:3)

A 10th Step prayer for Growth and Effectiveness:

"God, please help me Watch for Selfishness, Dishonesty, Resentment and Fear. When these crop up in me, help me to immediately ask you to remove them from me and help me discuss these feelings with someone. Father, help me to quickly make amends if I have harmed anyone and help me to resolutely turn my thoughts

to someone I can Help. Help me to be Loving and Tolerant of everyone today. Amen"(84:2)

A 11Th Step Morning Prayer:

"God, should I find myself agitated, doubtful or indecisive today, please give me inspiration, help me to have an intuitive thought or a decision about this problem I face. Help me not to struggle, instead, help me to relax and take it easy. Help me know what I should do and keep me mindful, that you are running the show. Free me from my bondage of self. Thy will be done always." (86:3)

Twelfth Step Prayer

Dear God, Having had a spiritual experience, I must now remember that "faith without works is dead." And PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. So, God, please help me to carry this message to other alcoholics! Provide me with the guidance and wisdom to talk with another alcoholic because I can help when no one else can. Help me secure his confidence and remember he is ill. (89:1)

The numbers in parenthesis at the end of each prayer indicate the page and paragraph where the wording was used from the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous to create the prayer.

Miscellaneous Material

Detailed Descriptions (LONG VERSION) of CLA 12 STEPS

Step 1. We admitted we were powerless over clutter—that our lives had become unmanageable.

To admit powerlessness over clutter, we mean that we can't solve our clutter problem by ourselves. We begin to realize the cost of clutter: uncompleted goals; damaged relationships; a non-supportive environment; and a waste of our time, energy, talents, and money.

Step 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

This Step gives us hope: we don't have to solve the problem alone. We can rely on a Power greater than ourselves. This Higher Power may be God, the universe—anything from which we derive strength.

Once we have come to believe in a Higher Power, the next part is accepting that this Power is ready, willing, and able to take the burden of clutter from us—to empower us.

The last part of this Step is “restore us to sanity.” Insanity is living in unhealthy places where we are unable to breathe and move freely; being ashamed to let repair persons in; having so many possessions that we can’t find vital documents, yet unable to resist bringing in even more items.

Step 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood God.

Step Three is deciding to let our Higher Power come into our lives and help us with our clutter problem. By taking this Step, we show increased willingness. We let God do for us what we could not do for ourselves. We rely on our Higher Power to guide us and give us strength.

Step 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

This Step has a double meaning for us in CLA. The traditional meaning is to make a written inventory of ourselves to discover our assets and character defects. Here are some questions to write about:

What areas of my life are cluttered? In what way? How has it harmed my relationships? How have I tried to control my clutter, and how successful has this been?

Another meaning of Step Four is to physically sort through our stuff: What have I not used in a year? What things are broken or useless? What am I keeping for others? What things do I truly treasure? What things do I no longer love? This is a good time to total up the true cost of keeping things (extra car insurance and fees, storage space rental, lost relationships, emotional pain).

Once we increase our awareness of the impact of clutter on our lives and why we find the need to clutter, we gain insight and strength to declutter.

Step 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Step Five helps us deal with our shame about being a clutterer. By sharing our written inventory with someone we trust, we no longer have to carry the burden of our secrets.

During the process of sorting through our physical clutter, we may ask this person to be there. By letting another person hear our story and see our “stuff,” we gain a new perspective. Once we take this Step, we may feel enormous relief.

Step 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

After taking the first five Steps, we have increased our willingness to release our character defects. These might include: people pleasing, overscheduling, hoarding, procrastination, perfectionism, and resentment. All of these may underlie our cluttering.

We have also increased our willingness to let go of the excess “stuff” that is cluttering our lives. By taking Step Six, we affirm that we are willing to let go of anything that stands in the way of our healing.

Step 7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.

Now we are asking our Higher Power to remove anything that interferes with our recovery from cluttering. We are requesting that God (or our Higher Power) remove our resentments, fears, envy, dishonesty. Once this change happens, we will feel more able to deal with our clutter.

Step 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

With this Step, we become stronger by facing our wrongs and the guilt we feel about them. The first person on our list would be ourselves. Others might be family, significant others, friends, roommates, neighbors—anyone whom we have harmed, no matter how or how much.

Step 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

This Step really refers to mending, or making something whole, rather than simply apologizing. It may mean: decluttering and cleaning our homes, respecting the space of others, reimbursing others for damage, buying only what we truly want or need (and have space for), learning to say no.

It may seem a daunting task, and may take some time, but if we are painstaking with Step Nine, we will surely see amazing results.

Step 10. Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

This Step maintains the progress accomplished in the earlier Steps by helping us stay in touch with ourselves and others. As challenges arise, we can return to Step Three and turn the problem over to our Higher Power. If resentments arise, we can use Step Seven and ask God to remove these shortcomings. If we become aware of more people we have harmed, we can return to Step Nine and make amends.

Step 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.

In order to maintain our progress, we need to keep in contact with our Higher Power and to call on that Power for guidance whenever needed. Step Eleven reminds us to put God first, not clutter and busyness.

The second part of this Step is “praying only for the knowledge of God's will for us...” The problem is interpreting what that will is. We believe God wants us to live useful and joyous lives and not be burdened by clutter.

Once we understand God's will for us, we can ask for the power to carry it out. When we are tempted to collect unneeded items, we can ask that our compulsion be removed. God's help is always available. Our part is then to do the footwork: using the Tools and the support of our CLA group.

Step 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Upon reaching Step Twelve, we find that we have had a spiritual awakening to the possibilities within us.

The compulsion to clutter has been lifted by a power greater than ourselves. We are able to create a loving environment and an orderly life.

One of the best ways to maintain a clutter-free life is by being a good example and passing on what we've learned. With the experience, strength, and hope we have gained in the program, we can know the joy of helping others become clutter free.

As we practice these principles in all our affairs, we will discover the serenity, freedom, and fulfillment we have sought.

The Twelve Rewards Of Sobriety

Originally by Ann C. (sober April 1, 1948) of Niles, Ohio and presented at
the 1985 International Convention in Montreal, Canada

These are twelve attributes of personal character that continued practice of the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and our continued Spiritual Fitness will bring to us, the "Recovered" Alcoholic" ***

**** Or any addictive person such as "CLUTTERER."

1. Faith instead of despair.
2. Courage instead of fear.
3. Hope instead of desperation.
4. Peace of mind instead of confusion.
5. Real friendships instead of loneliness.
6. Self-respect instead of self-contempt.
7. Self-confidence instead of helplessness.
8. A clean conscience instead of a sense of guilt.
9. The respect of others instead of their pity and contempt.
10. A clean pattern of living instead of a hopeless existence.
11. The love and understanding of our families instead of their doubts and fears.
12. The freedom of a happy life instead of the bondage of an alcoholic obsession.