

## Twelve Steps To Your Win-Win Success

All personal change has these four stages: I am; I want; I do; I become. Each of these is included within these 12 steps.

While each of these 12 steps may be a familiar principle, this is the first time they have been combined in this way within one single program. Here, they work synergistically to produce results even greater than the sum of their individual powers.

ACCEPT these twelve steps and your success is assured.

1 &ndash; A ccept (your truth)

2 &ndash; A ccept (responsibility)

3 &ndash; C hoose (your character)

4 &ndash; C ommit (to a vision)

5 &ndash; C reate (a good plan)

6 &ndash; C ontrol (harmful thoughts)

7 &ndash; E mpower (yourself)

8 &ndash; E njoy (yourself)

9 &ndash; P ay (the price)

10 &ndash; P ersist (being proactive)

11 &ndash; T rust (your Inner Power)

12 &ndash; T hank (with gratitude)

**STEP 1 &ndash; Accept Your Truth&ndash;** Here, you will search for and accept the truth about you, particularly as it relates to a problem in your life (one that you are willing to work on) that is impeding your relationship with others or yourself. Whether that is obesity, stress, depression, alcoholism, self-esteem, or something else, accepting the truth about you may take real courage. What if, when you do a searching personal inventory of your weaknesses and strengths, the truth hurts, what then? The answer is it must be done anyway - even if that's painful - because you can't change what you don't acknowledge. You will need to paint as accurate a picture of you, for you, as possible. No delusions. Just as knowledge is power, knowledge of self is self-empowerment. (Remember to acknowledge your assets, your positive points too.) It's all about self-awareness, really knowing yourself. Only when you really know who you are, can you be genuine and authentic in relating to others.

**STEP 2 &ndash; Accept Responsibility &ndash;** Accepting appropriate responsibility for the part you played in creating your truth is very important, (The fact is your present life reflects all the choices you have made in your past - good and bad.) But notice the word "appropriate," because it's possible to accept too much responsibility (example, children blaming themselves for their parents' unhappiness). Much more frequently, however, we

accept too little responsibility (example: It's not my fault I did it, I was drunk at the time).

NOTE: When you have acknowledged your truth, and fully accepted appropriate responsibility for it, any guilt you feel will no longer serve you. Taking responsibility doesn't mean we must crucify ourselves forever. So forgive yourself for your past mistakes. Free yourself to focus on your present to form your future.

STEP 3 - Choose Your Character. Your character comes from the values you hold. Nothing is more important to your personal success than your character. It determines the choices you make moment to moment. Yes, whether you are courageous or fearful, noble or ignoble, ambitious or slothful, genuine or fake, loving or hateful, cheerful or miserable - it's all within your power of choice (which is the greatest power you have). Intelligence has nothing to do with character - there is zero correlation. Wisdom has everything to do with it.

The character principle that the Win-Win Club teaches is win-win. (In any relationship or negotiation, while you want to win, you want the other to win also.) Our society operates primarily on the principle of win-lose (for me to win, I must make you lose). While win-lose may be fine in competitive sports, when it carries over to our personal relationships it can be ruinous. "Who's winning in your marriage?" is a crazy question. Whether in marriage, business or parenting, many people try hard to win at the other's expense, instead of looking for ways to engender trust and loyalty by finding win-win solutions so both parties can feel good.

NOTE: These first three steps create the foundation you need to continue. And while you may proceed to Step 4, please realize that you should never consider Step 3 entirely complete. Choosing your character must be ongoing.

STEP 4 &dash; Commit To A Vision &dash; Remember, a vision is what you see as possible in a person or project. Perhaps your vision is to improve a specific relationship, or lose fat and get fit, or earn more money, or improve something else like your self-esteem. Whatever it is, the question is this: On a scale of 1 to 10 what is the level of your commitment? Obviously a 3 is not likely to end in success; a 7 or 8, maybe. (Don't choose too many visions to commit to at one time. One is good; two are O.K., but don't try more than three. (That's because the more you choose the more your focus will be scattered, and the less likelihood success will ensue.) Envision your vision. See it as already accomplished. When you vividly imagine that, and feel the feeling associated with the achievement, your subconscious mind will be impressed and inclined to lead you in the desired direction.

STEP 5 &dash; Create A Good Plan &dash; Remember no-one plans to fail, but many fail to plan. (The difference between a wish and a goal is a good plan.) The more specific your plan is the better, but don't write it in stone as you must be flexible and prepared to adjust your plan as you proceed. Your plan needs to have an evaluative component so you can gauge your progress or lack thereof. For example, if your vision is to lose weight, stepping on a scale every week will tell the tale.

STEP 6 &dash; Control Harmful Thoughts &dash; This means that when you realize you are having a thought that is toxic, you don't dwell on it and give it safe harbour. Instead, you release it, let it go, and focus on something different. That's important because your feelings flow from your thoughts. Most people assume it's the things that happen to you &dash; the events in your life &dash; that cause your feelings (as depicted in the diagram below, which is wrong).

If events cause feelings, only when you have a positive event (you are praised, for example), can you have a positive feeling. And when you suffer a negative event (like an insult) you'll suffer a negative feeling like rage, or humiliation, or embarrassment. All this is erroneous because it's not the events that cause your feelings, it's your

thoughts about the events that matter.

Often, you can't control the events in your life, but you can choose your thoughts about the events and, therefore, control your feelings. Yes, you can choose your reactions. And life is 10% what happens to you, and 90% how you respond to it. In fact, your ability to choose your response to any situation or event is your ultimate power. So, for example, if you do something dumb, and someone insults you by calling you an idiot (a negative event), instead of raging, or feeling upset and embarrassed, you can use some self-talk to control your thoughts and consequent feelings:

"What I did may have been dumb, but I'm certainly no idiot. I'm great in so many ways, and I refuse to allow that person to control how I feel. He can't spoil my day. I'm in charge of how I think and feel and I choose to feel fine."

Yes, you can turn negative events into neutral feelings (even positive feelings when you know how).

NOTE; Countering an insult with positive self-talk like, "I'm great in so many ways" can fail unless you know that it's true. Poor self-esteem will sabotage you if you haven't spent enough time or effort on Step 3 (Choose your character). Self-esteem is part of your character, since it's a value you adopt (in this case, the value you place on yourself). And self-esteem is foundational to your happiness both in your personal life, and in your interpersonal relationships.

STEP 7 &ndash; Empower Yourself&ndash; If you lack the knowledge you need to do what it is you want, you will need to further educate yourself to acquire it. But Step 7 is not just about head knowledge, it's about your heart too, and the power of emotions, emotions like enthusiasm. Emotion will provide the drive you need to enact your plan - especially when it's tough going. Yes, feeling enthusiastic can make all the difference.

A caveat however: You may instruct your conscious mind to produce enthusiasm, but that won't happen if your subconscious mind has programming to contradict it. Yes, if the subconscious is telling you something about yourself that runs counter to the desire of the conscious mind, special help may be required to overcome this major impediment to success. Yes, a win-win relationship between the two parts of your mind - the conscious and the subconscious - is vital so one doesn't sabotage the other.

STEP 8 - Enjoy Yourself. Life is to be enjoyed, so if your level of happiness is not as high as you want it, don't settle for that. By increasing the quantity and quality of your relationships using the win-win principle, you can enhance your happiness exponentially.

STEP 9 &ndash; Pay The Price &ndash; "Oh, oh," you say, "Is my goal going to cost me? Do I really have to sacrifice something? This step sounds like a bummer." The answer is yes &ndash; there is a price to pay - there's no free ride - and if you are not prepared to pay the price &ndash; whether that be time, effort, self-discipline, whatever &ndash; you may as well surrender now because you can't reach your goal. But here's some encouragement. Paying for anything just means you sacrifice something you have (like money, or a harmful habit) to obtain what it is you want. So sacrifice is when you give up something you possess for something better. Using that definition, any sacrifice is worthwhile.

STEP 10 &ndash; Persist Being Proactive &ndash; To be proactive means not sitting on your seat wasting time wishing for it, but taking the necessary initiative to go out and make it happen. (Remember, if it's going to be, it's up to me.) To persist means hanging in there, not giving up at the first obstacle. Or the second, or the third. The human spirit is not defeated by failure, only surrender.

STEP 11 &ndash; Trust Your Inner Power To Help - Whatever your vision, you don't need to struggle alone.

Probably you can't accomplish it alone anyway, or you would have done so before now &ndash; without these 12 steps. Help is certain when your plan is worthy, and your intention is sincere and honourable. And provided the connection between you and your Inner Power isn't polluted by garbage thinking. (If it is, the best vision you could possibly commit to in Step 4 is to clean up the crap and clear that connection.) People who are spiritual may think of their Inner Power as God, or Source, or Creator or Universe etc., and the most important relationship to them is their relationship to that Power. Those who are not spiritual can think of their inner power as their untapped human potential which is both vast and available.

STEP 12 &ndash; Thank With Gratitude &ndash; Electricity is something we usually take for granted &ndash; until we lose it. Our health too. A perpetual attitude of gratitude is not only becoming, it's beneficial in so many ways. You may know of people who seem to have a lot, but constantly complain about their lives. And others who, on the surface, have very little &ndash; plus serious challenges possibly &ndash; yet not only don't complain, but exude happiness. These are the noble spirits who deserve our admiration (not that they need it for they are already fulfilled). In this final step, you fuel your faith in both your Inner Power and your outer self by becoming thankful for your vision fulfilled &ndash; even before it has been fully realized. Yes, having an attitude of gratitude is absolutely essential for your happiness.

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