WHAT ARE THE TOOLS OF RECOVERY? WHEN DO WE USE THEM? HOW DO THEY WORK?
Most of us first learned how to practice these simple, commonsense strategies for staying sober (and sane) when we first came into the rooms. All of these healthy habits are part of working a thorough First Step.

Thirty-two fellows of Crystal Meth Anonymous explain what the tools mean to them—and why they still work today.

ABSTINENCE
It’s a word we frequently used around Lent in my Catholic upbringing. Abstinence implied something sacrificed. It meant giving up something I liked—like candy or meat on Fridays. In early sobriety, abstinence from drugs felt exactly like that, and on some level I was hoping it would only last forty days—like Lent.

Then I learned that I only had to abstain for today. I could do that. I could always pick up tomorrow. And tomorrow came and I thought, I can abstain for another day. And days kept coming and going like that. Somewhere along the way a shift occurred—abstinence became a gift. Maybe I never have to use again. Maybe the nightmare I was living in is over for good. And there was a bold promise made to me: “If you never pick up, you will never get high.” (Makes sense in hindsight, but it was eye-opening at the time.) The implication there was that if I never got high, I never had to relive the horrors that were tied to it. And now, for nearly five years, I have made a daily choice to abstain...just for today. —Michael A.

ACCEPTANCE
Acceptance is a simple and amazing tool that has made every area of my life more manageable. In the face of all of life’s challenges, I am able to practice this tool in order to gain peace and serenity. It’s one of the most practical solutions in my toolbox.

Once I become willing, it’s as simple as making a decision and allowing my higher power to take over the results of any situation. When I exercise acceptance, it spares me from the need to control the outcome of every situation—good and bad. Most of all, it allows me to get out of the way long enough to relish all the rewards life has to offer. —Harley M.

ACTING AS IF
One week at fellowship after a Tuesday meeting, I remembered that it was my father’s birthday and had no desire to do anything about it. I nonchalantly mentioned to my CMA fellows at the table what day it was. They strongly “suggested” that I call him then and there to offer birthday wishes. I balked at this. My resentment toward the man is a part of my very fiber and to make even a quick call would feel like “defeat” on my part—nearly an act of conceding ground. “Act as if,” my fellows urged me. “Just call him to say ‘Happy Birthday,’” they said, as cell phones appeared in front of me. Not altogether willing, I used my own cell to wish my father a happy birthday. Thankfully, no one answered and I left my greetings (as sincerely as I could possibly muster) as a message. I felt relief having done something I absolutely did not want to do.

When I returned home from fellowship, my mother called. She was elated at my last-minute “concession” to my father, and he was
also very happy to have heard from me. As my sponsor told me that meeting helped me feel "forever," and I would be the one who would ultimately feel awful if I'd let that opportunity go by--on."

**BOOKENDING** When I got the call, I knew I had to pay my respects. After all, we were all in the same boat. A fellow in the program recently told me,"I don’t have the strength to talk about. But I was CMA, there was a lot in my head and in my chest that I needed to talk about."

COUNTING DAYS I didn’t announce my day count at my first meeting, but I remember thinking, I have 90 days today. I’m going to come back next week and say I have ten. Counting days kept me sober that first week and got me back to another meeting. Having ninety days as my goal helped me to stay focused and keep things simple. All I have to do is stay sober, I thought. If I don’t pick up, today is a success.

This tool helped me acknowledge what a great challenge it was to stay sober just for one more day. --Bruce C.

**HIGHPER** "God is a Verb," the Higher Power in my sponsor’s rooms recently told me, "An Understanding that grows as I grow; an Action that I take." That stopped me in my tracks. Literally, I was crossing Atlantic Avenue in the rain, and I stopped. I was on the median. The statement rang true in my soul. I have a soul now, the program led me to. I knew of a soul was always in me, but the program has made hearing it and feeling it respond so much clearer, so much easier.

When I came in to CMA, it was coming to believe in a Higher Power that stopped me in my tracks. And I came across Higher Power a lot. Six of the steps mention it, using those radiant capital letters. And there were even more capital in the “Big Book.” I heard about Higher Power in meetings, where fellows would talk about God. But each time I read, heard, or talked about Higher Power, there was a big red stop sign. I used to think of those words as being so hard for me to understand. I used to think they were so simple, and I just couldn’t understand. I could do it. Not even alone in my bedroom. It felt weird. Then I realized what was helping me hold. My ego was so BIG that I was embarrassed to pray all by myself. I thought, If praying doesn’t mean anything, why do I care? I do it? When I was a kid, my dad told me, “Don’t die of embarrassment.” So I took action in the place I felt most at ease and at one with myself. I tried praying, on my knees, in the shower. I said the Serenity Prayer, the Third Step Prayer, and the Seventeen Step Prayer.

Very quickly, serenity began seeping into my everyday life. I learned to turn things over. I learned humility. I learned to accept the many things I cannot change. I found the courage to change myself as I could. This power to learn, and act on it, was the Higher Power that everyone was talking about. A Higher Power I found by praying every day, on my knees, in the shower.

Finding my Higher Power was like learning to ride a bike. I didn’t understand balance before I tried. I just got on and pedaled. It took a while, but I got it. Now I ride without thinking, I still really don’t understand balance, but I know what it is and that I have it. I didn’t understand God before I started to pray. I still don’t understand Higher Power, but I know what it is and that I found it.

I still take showers every day, and I still pray every day. I can’t define my Higher Power for you; I can only describe what it feels like today. And right now Higher Power is the act of pursuing through procrastination and fear to write this. Right now God is the next right action. God is a Verb. --Jim F.

**FELLOWSHIP** For me, going to fellowship is almost as important as attending the meeting itself. My sponsor told me, “the meeting after the meeting” is essential, because I had isolated myself for years using crystal meth. Though I’m able to both give and get phone numbers before and after meetings, there isn’t really enough time for meaningful conversation and during the actual meeting, of course, there are no conversations at all. In the beginning, fellowship provided a safe place for me to practice reintegrating into the real world, and it still gives me a chance to develop relationships with fellows, which makes phone calls afterward much more natural and comfortable.

When I first got sober, I didn’t have much money, so instead of skipping fellowship because I thought I couldn’t afford it or was embarrassed, I’d eat before the meeting and have coffee and maybe dessert after. On weekends, I often go to the movies after dinner, which is a fellowship of its own. I know that meeting helps me feel lighter, and perhaps even peaceful. These new feelings comforting encouraged me to take other burning desires during my first few months when I needed to. Today I am sober for 10 months, and I’m grateful for having CMA and this useful tool in meetings. --Ricardo S.

**WHAT IS CRYSTAL METH ANONYMOUS?**

WHAT: Crystal Meth Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share our experience, strength, and hope with each other that we may gain strength through sharing our experience of addiction to crystal meth. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.

There are no dues or fees for CMA membership, we are self-supporting through our own contributions. CMA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution, or does it wish to engage in any propaganda. We are not engaged in opposition to any cause. Our primary purpose is to help the Sobriety life by sharing the message of recovery to the crystal meth addict who still suffers.--The CMA General Service Preamble "What is Crystal Meth Anonymous?"

**SOME SUGGESTIONS THAT SEEMED OFF-THE-WALL ACTUALLY WORKED."**

Halt, hungry, angry, lonely, tired. I first heard about these tools—Don’t let yourself get too hungry, angry, lonely or tired—in a meeting. I was a broken soul, counting days, days that had been in the program maybe two weeks, hearing but almost unable to comprehend; my approach to others and to life’s problems, and taking my recovery “one day at a time.” When I became willing to take even a few of these suggestions, my life started to change. More important, my mind started to change. Suddenly, what others were saying had worked for them started to work for me, too. I could see that this Twelve Step program might actually help me. Today I take better care of myself. I’ll come home after a long day of working, a social activity, and the gym. By around 11pm, I feel tired, but if I push myself to stay up later I start to become melancholy. So I turn off the lights and go to bed. It’s really that simple! For some reason anger and loneliness are tricker for me. My sponsor has suggested I take time out to breathe when I get angry. Meditation and writing it out are good, too. Early on in recovery I had a few relapses. I was working a lot, so I started to feel surrounded myself with other people with addictions. Loneliness played a large part in those relapses, along with anger that I couldn’t use anymore. Later, I made the connection that meetings, fellowships, and staying in touch with my new sober friends—this was the way to overcome this loneliness. It was taking the contrary action that led me to an amazing

Someone said, “When you’re hungry, eat,” and suddenly something clicked. Hunger, anger, tiredness, loneliness—these things underlie a lot of my moods. But back then, my moods fluctuated so much, along with my spacy mood, I’d be eating, chewing, breathing, and analyzing how I felt. I used this tool the next time I felt scattered and said to myself, “Oh my god! I’m just hungry!” Then I acted simply--I had a meal and felt better.

I’m still very aware of hunger and tiredness. Especially tiredness. Back when I used crystal meth, coming down, I’d feel exhausted. But not now, I was unable to fall asleep. So my moods were just insane. It was horrible. Well, today I take better care of myself. I’ll come home after a long day of working, a social activity, and the gym. By around 11pm, I feel tired, but if I push myself to stay up later I start to become melancholy. So I turn off the lights and go to bed. It’s really that simple! For some reason anger and loneliness are tricker for me. My sponsor has suggested I take time out to breathe when I get angry. Meditation and writing it out are good, too. Early on in recovery I had a few relapses. I was working a lot, so I started to feel surrounded myself with other people with addictions. Loneliness played a large part in those relapses, along with anger that I couldn’t use anymore. Later, I made the connection that meetings, fellowships, and staying in touch with my new sober friends—this was the way to overcome this loneliness. It was taking the contrary action that led me to an amazing

Some members of CMA are encouraged to attend, SO PLEASE JOIN US!

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**SAVING THE DATE**

Share a Day: October 2, 2010

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**GET READY FOR THE 2010 NYCMA SHARE-A-DAY**

This year’s conference will be held from OCTOBER 2, 2010, 9AM to 5PM in New York City at the 15TH STREET MEETING HOUSE

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

15 Rutherford Place, New York, NY 10003-3705

All members of CMA are encouraged to attend.
So please join us!

Click here to contact a member of the NYCMA Literature Committee.

What if I want to write an article for the newsletter? Contact a member of the NYCMA Literature Committee.

 Incredible text is here.
When I first got sober, I didn’t have much money, so instead of skipping fellowship because I thought I couldn’t afford it or was embarrassed. I thought, “If I don’t pick up, today is a success.” So I took action. If I do it? When I was a kid, my dad told me, “Don’t die of embarrassment.” So I took action. If I don’t pick up, today is a success. Knowing this, I knew I had to pay my respects. And I also knew I would be the one who would ultimately feel awful if I’d let that opportunity go by.

Some suggestions that seemed off-the-wall at the time actually worked—“easy does it” in my approach to others and to life’s problems, and taking my recovery “one day at a time.” When I became willing to take even a few of these suggestions, my life started to change. More important, my mind started to change. Suddenly, what others were saying had worked for them started to work for me, too. I could see that this Twelve Step program might actually work, but only if people had said it helped them. —John H.

HALT: HUNgry, ANgry, LONely, TiRED
I first heard about this tool—“Don’t let yourself get too hungry, angry, lonely or tired”—in a meeting. I was a broken soul, counting days, but I thought it was me. I had no idea that I was hollow and empty inside. I didn’t understand god before I started to pray. I still don’t understand Higher Power, but I know what it is and that I found it. I still take showers every day, and I still pray every day. I can’t define my Higher Power or god, someone suggested I consider honesty, openness, and willingness as a path to understand god. I trusted this, and I found god. I have a soul now; the program led me to find god. Someone was always in me, but I didn’t understand god before I started to pray. I still don’t understand Higher Power, but I know what it is and that I found it.

FELLOWSHIP For me, going to fellowship is almost as important as attending the meeting itself. My sponsor told me “the meeting after the meeting” is essential, because I had isolated myself for years using crystal meth. Though I’m able to both give and get phone numbers before and after meetings, there’s not really enough time to have meaningful conversations during the actual meeting, of course, there are no conversations at all. In the beginning, fellowship provided a safe place for me to practice reintegrating into the real world, and it still gives me a chance to develop relationships with fellows, which makes phone calls afterward much more natural and comforting.

BURNING DESIRES When I first came to CMA, there was a lot in my head and in my chest that I needed to deal with. I was too ashamed and didn’t have the strength to express what I was dealing with. When they called for a burning desire in meetings, I almost felt as if they were telling me to express to them what I needed to say to stay sober. When I took one for the first time, I discovered what I needed to stay sober, what I needed to say to stay sober. When I expressed what I was dealing with. When they listened and helped me deal with the pain and other triggers, I discovered “the meeting after the meeting” consistently—after every meeting—I’ve gotten a chance to make lifelong sober friends. —Bob B.

COUNTING DAYS I didn’t announce my day count at my first meeting, but I remember thinking, “I have to make it to the next day.” I kept on coming back each week and say I have ten. Counting days kept me sober that first week and got me back to another meeting. Having ninety days as my goal helped me to stay focused and keep things simple. All I have to do is stay sober, I thought. If I don’t pick up, today is a success. This tool helped me acknowledge what a great challenge it was to stay sober for just one more day. —Bruce C.

HIGH POWER “God is a Verb,” a book recently told me. “I understand that grows as I grow, an Action that I take.” That stopped me in my tracks. Literally, I was crossing Atlantic Avenue in a red stop sign inside. I’m not one of those well-meaning, meaning but misguided saps.

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Making the Bed. Basically I was a very disciplined person. I couldn’t show up without knowing I had something to do, but I lost the ability to do it. I was so undisciplined I couldn’t do it. This was a by-product of my unmanageable illness. I was in detox—they wouldn’t let you out of your room unless you made your bed. And so, the best thing I learned in rehab was to make my bed every day. I made my bed every single day of sobriety since March 1, 1988. I might not have done without doing it—just not something I enjoyed. If you want to change your life, making the bed is an amazing thing to do. Because then you build on that. It was a contrarian activity, the first tangible one I took. I could see the results. I learned that it works. I learned listening is important. I learned that I can do something—make a bed.”

METTLE. The tools of the program not only help keep me sober, they also allow me to find a place within myself to go when the world around me is spinning uncontrollably. One of the gifts I’ve found in sobriety is meditation. In early sobriety I went to a meditation workshop led by a CMA fellow. I changed my life and the way I handle it. I learned to create a daily practice called a 5/5 and 5. Five minutes of reading a book relating to spirituality, five minutes of meditation, and five minutes of journal writing. When I first started, I found my mind making many excuses why I shouldn’t do it or how I could put it off. I was too busy, didn’t have enough time, I was too tired to worry about, and so on and so on. I convinced myself to practice and made time to do a 5/5 and 5 every morning before my day started. I slowly found that I looked at things that frustrated me differently. I started to find a center within me that was calming and serene.

Every morning, I set the timer on my cell phone for 5 minutes. At Day 12, I was back in the rooms, just an unseasoned yet another rehab. Still paranoid. I was willing to do anything, and that included attending ninety meetings in ninety days. Not having much work at the time, most days I attended two a day, a morning meeting and an evening meeting. Doing this relieved me of the loneliness I felt, and helped me foster new friendships where there had been none. By the first five weeks of sobriety I had attended many meetings helped me develop a structure and “smart feet.” I’ll never forget Day 67. I was going through some things, and wasn’t doing so well. I was not feeling great. I know I’ve never stayed sober if I hadn’t been so committed to showing up at a meeting. But Day 73, I was not going to let it work, it really does!—Anonymous

Ninety in Ninety. My first thought when I heard this suggested was, I will try my best, but I did not want to worry about the time. Truth be told, doing anything consistently for ninety days was a foreign concept to me when I joined the fellowship. I fought the time. Day 10, my first relapse, in the nursery station, I screamed. Today I smile, knowing I have found the peace and happiness that eluded me then.—Fabrice C.

Other Fellowships. Like many of my fellows in CMA, I identify myself as both an addict and alcoholic. Although crystal was a huge part of my story—fourteen years of episodic binge use, and one year of daily use—I was introduced to AA first, by my sister and two other friends. They were also addicts, but had found a solution in those rooms. I had the gift of desperation and desired what they had. I like to think that my first eight months in AA cemented the foundation of my sobriety. I immediately related and realized there was a solution to what they called my “soul sickness.” Despite this, I wasn’t always comfortable sharing my experience, because much of it revolved around drugs, specifically crystal. Soon, I met a fellow who told me about CMA.

One Day at a Time. I’m not a worrier, nor a master builder, by nature. There was never enough drama and apocalyptic thoughts to fill one day, so I used to burrow into future years’ worth of creepy nightmares. At 24 years old, I was convinced I had destroyed my life beyond repair. It was an opportunity to face it honestly and learn more about my own nature.

The first time (in the United States) my admissions to the hospital, Bobby McFerrin had just won a Grammy, and every time I heard “don’t worry, be happy,” from the nurse’s station, I screamed. Today I smile, knowing I have found the peace and happiness that eluded me then.—Rick S.

Times I walk gracefully, at times I have to be gently dragged back to the moment. As long as I live in this one day, the mohollin doesn’t become Mil. Everest—I am safer in this instant than I can ever be inside my own head. The first time (in the United States) my addiction took to the hospital, Bobby McFerrin had just won a Grammy, and every time I heard “don’t worry, be happy,” from the nurse’s station, I screamed. Today I smile, knowing I have found the peace and happiness that eluded me then.—Rick S.

One way I’ve learned is that every relapse is an intentional step—removing the “train wheels” between the drugs and myself in order to stay sober. People, Obviously, as the phone facilitated my relapses, it was the first thing I sought to change. I immediately began taking my phone off the hook at night to avoid being placed in that vulnerable situation ever again. For at least the first five years of sobriety I did that. (Only recently have I begun to leave my phone on at night, fearing I might miss a call from my parents or an emergency.) Doing that simple, yet difficult, task of taking the phone off the hook helped me stay sober by inhibiting the contact I had to a tool which facilitated active addiction. I could have accomplished the same thing by changing my phone number—in hindsight, that might have been easier! Places. I didn’t go to places where I’d used (such as bathrooms) during early sobriety. I recall not even walking down the streets they were on—I thought even proximity was threatening. Meanwhile, I created new places to spend my time (meetings and church). I also “reclaimed” my apartment, which felt very tainted to me when I was still a cripple addict. A priest friend came over and blessed each room with holy water and prayers. It was very heal- ing for me and helped me feel more re- lax at home. I made sure to turn out the lights and treat myself to things that make my space more comfortable. I buy nice soaps, good candles, and fresh flowers periodically. In addition, I make sure to go to meetings and personal growth experiences that make me feel good about myself. I meditate when I feel like I need to. I made sure to turn out the lights and treat myself to things that make my space more comfortable. I buy nice soaps, good candles, and fresh flowers periodically. In addition, I make sure to go to meetings and personal growth experiences that make me feel good about myself. I meditate when I feel like I need to.
It all starts with making the bed. And maybe you build on that. It was a contrary action, the not move without doing it—it’s nonnegotiable. single day of sobriety since March 1, 1988. I do your room unless you made your bed. And so, I was so undisciplined I couldn’t do it. This known what to do, but I’d lost the ability to do

Meeting played a huge part in this practice. I increased the time—to 10/10 and 10, and when I was ready, to a 20/20 and 20. Meeting has not only helped me stay sober; I’ve been none. And practically, going to so many meetings helped me develop a structure and cemented the foundation of my sobriety. I immediately related and realized there was a solution to what they called my “soul sickness.” Despite this, I wasn’t always comfortable sharing my experience, because so much of it revolved around drugs, specifically crystal. Soon, I met a fellow who told me about CMA.

Back to Basics

MY MAKING THE BED Bascically, I was a very undisciplined person. I couldn’t show up for meetings. I know what I meant, and I had decided that I was not responsible or accountable in any way. I didn’t go to meetings. I was in detox—they wouldn’t let you out of your room unless you made your bed. And so, the best thing I learned in rehab was to make my bed every day. I have made my bed every single day of sobriety since March 1, 1988. I do not move without doing it—so it’s nonnegotiable. If you want to change your life, making the bed is an amazing thing to do. Because then you build on that. It was a contrary action, the first tangible one I took. I could see the effect. I learned that it works. It creates a new energy when you take a contrary action. And it all starts with making bed. And maybe changing the toothpaste. —Tony S.

MEETINGs Meetings have played an essential and evolving role in my recovery. I still remember that feeling of complete wonder and amazement which accompanied my first meeting, when I began to realize the story I told about my life was actually mine alone, and I was a smart guy. Smart didn’t keep me from destructive drug use, and it didn’t do much for me trying to grasp the usefulness of the literature. I needed help with that. I’m continuing to learn from it today. —Rick S.

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If you want to change your life, making the bed is an amazing thing to do. Every morning, I set the timer on my cell phone and did my fives. At first I found it difficult to meditate for five minutes. My mind would not shut off, my thoughts seemed to just keep going. The distraction took me to the hospital, Bobby McFerrin had just won a Grammy, and every time I heard “don’t worry, be happy” from the nurse’s station, I screamed. Today I smile, knowing I have found the peace and happiness that eluded me then. —Fabrice C.

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One day at a time is an intentional step—removing the “training wheels” as I began to take greater personal responsibility, opening myself up to a level of intimacy with friends and family I never thought I could do. Meanwhile, I created new places to belong. At a certain time, I was not at all unique. There were other fellowships to help lead a healthy sober life, and while I was quite special, I still recovered

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One day at a time is an intentional step—removing the “training wheels” as I began to take greater personal responsibility, opening myself up to a level of intimacy with friends and family I never thought I could do. Meanwhile, I created new places to belong. At a certain time, I was not at all unique. There were other fellowships to help lead a healthy sober life, and while I was quite special, I still recovered

MEETings Meetings have played an essential and evolving role in my recovery. I still remember that feeling of complete wonder and amazement which accompanied my first meeting, when I began to realize the story I told about my life was actually mine alone, and I was a smart guy. Smart didn’t keep me from destructive drug use, and it didn’t do much for me trying to grasp the usefulness of the literature. I needed help with that. I’m continuing to learn from it today. —Rick S.

Making the bed Basically, I was a very undisciplined person. I couldn’t show up for meetings. I know what I meant, and I had decided that I was not responsible or accountable in any way. I didn’t go to meetings. I was in detox—they wouldn’t let you out of your room unless you made your bed. And so, the best thing I learned in rehab was to make my bed every day. I have made my bed every single day of sobriety since March 1, 1988. I do not move without doing it—so it’s nonnegotiable. If you want to change your life, making the bed is an amazing thing to do. Because then you build on that. It was a contrary action, the first tangible one I took. I could see the effect. I learned that it works. It creates a new energy when you take a contrary action. And it all starts with making bed. And maybe changing the toothpaste. —Tony S.

Medication The tools of the program not only help keep me sober, they also allow me to find a place within myself to go when the world around me is spinning uncontrollably. One of the gifts I’ve found in sobriety is meditation. In early sobriety I went to a meditation workshop led by a MIA fellow. I changed my life and the way I handle it. I learned to create a daily practice called a 5/5. Five minutes of
The Twelve Steps of CMA

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol, that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of god as we understood him.
4. Made a searching and fearless admission of our wrongs.
5. Admitted to god, to ourselves and to another human being our shortcomings.
6. Were entirely ready to have god take full control of our lives.
7. Humbly asked god to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a decision to carry god’s will to the sick and suffering, to help other alcoholics.
9. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood him, praying only for knowledge of His will.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to crystal meth addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Crystal Clear

Continued on Page 10
The Twelve Steps of CMA

1. We admitted that we were powerless over crystal meth and our lives had become unmanageable.

2. Came to believe that there was a power greater than ourselves who could restore us to sanity.

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

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

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

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

7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

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

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

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

11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, asking Him to restore us to sanity.

12. Continued, as we had gained strength, to take the Twelve Steps in responsible groups meeting in person or by other means.

I was attracted to him—his sobriety. What had I wanted!

I realize that the computer was a people-place-and thing that I needed to get away from to stay clean. The literature speaks about “going to any length,” but I was just willing that I choose a computer program that did not harm my spirit. I was able to continue using a computer for background music and music while I worked. I began to think of the consequences of moving from the path of the Twelve Step life instead of only trying to remember the pain. As I said, remembering the pain would only go so far. Now when I thought of relapse, I didn’t think of the act of hitting the pips as the first part of a slip. I thought instead of the absurdity of my connection to the twists. I was only able to do the work of recovery and the isolation that must surely precede using. I began to believe taking a hit was the last thing I would do in my way to relapse. I also formed the idea that, if I did nothing to reconnect to the program when I was in trouble, then at some level I was embracing the program. I put the reconnection into place and I would be the last one I’d tell the truth to.

My “tape” now (what happened to digital?) sounds something like this: Track 1. I’m losing my grip on the program—when I feel good or when I feel bad. I didn’t even think about it, I just put the quarter in the phone and called my sponsor. Of course I woke her up, but she was glad I knew she had to stop. I’d tried growing up to get going, but then I went to my morning meeting.

More than a decade later, I still walk by that old pay phone every day. It’s a constant reminder that using the number of another addict in recovery really can help me stay sober! —Craig S.

PLAYING THE TAPE

Playing the tape—all the way through to the end—means something different to me now than it did when I first became sober. Early in sobriety, it meant the horror and powerlessness of my last trip. It meant the urges and self-hate and shame and when I came into the rooms, I obviously remembered my last trip quite well. The words carried great meaning for me then.

After several months, I began to understand that the purpose of the program offered might be organic.”

The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Alcoholic Anonymous, “What Are They For,” 1955 edition, adapted and adapted with the permission of Alcoholic Anonymous World Services, Inc. (A.A.W.S.) Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps of AA, and A.A.W.S. Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous does not mean that Alcoholics Anonymous is affiliated with this organization or with its programs, slogans, or traditions in any way. The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in common use in the Fellowship of Crystal Meth Anonymous are patterned after AA, but which address other problems, or in any personal context, do not imply otherwise.

The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. We admitted that we were powerless over crystal meth and our lives had become unmanageable. I came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

2. Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

3. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

4. Admitted to God, as well as to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

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

6. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

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

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

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

10. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, asking Him to restore us to sanity.

11. Continued, as we had gained strength, to take the Twelve Steps in responsible groups meeting in person or by other means.

12. Continued on Page 10
I WAS A COMPLETE FAILURE AS A DRUG ADDICT.

When I hear people come in to the motel, and share these long drawn out sagas of addiction to this chemical or that, I'm mystified. I couldn't drink more than four beers before I was desperately searching for someone--anyone--to take me home. Martinis and margaritas were worse: two or three and I would be collapsed in your lap, pawing at your crotch while you wanted me there or not. A few tokes of pot and I was the “biggest hobo” on the street. I was too self-centered for an orgy. I found guys on the phone lines or the club was a shi-shi restaurant and I'm sober over ten years. I cannot do this again, and, Where can I get some more? Now the money was good. Soon I was getting the first full-time job I could find, as a financial editor on Wall Street. (If you know Melville's story "Bartleby Scrivener," where the author, when he has failed as an actor. Who cares? I temped and tutored and spent my nights at various bars. 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my coke/crack/crystal career was relatively short-lived. May-
be three years. Like I said, I was bad at it. I was a classic weekend
binger, doing a share on Fire Island and drinking again and smoking a lot of
“rock.” He had done his own high. I was back to hanging out with M. and smoking crystal. The
next was a “fabulous” person who worked for a leading cosmet-
cics company), and the three of us stayed up every night for days
snorting plate after plate of coke. It wasn’t crack, it wasn’t crys-
tics, rooming with a middle-aged Army NCO named Willy. I
hated, barely showing up to the gym, to dinners with friends,
ment. I surrendered completely one Monday morning. The sec-
to therapy, to clean my room, then shutting myself away in some
dark room for the weekend with one or two other lonely, angry
people, and getting as high as possible with whatever you had.
Things began to fall apart around the millennium. I started to
unravel, had a harder and harder time getting through Monday-
Tuesday, and Wednesday. I started my way through therapy ses-
sions, saying at the end, “But I’ll be fine, I’m just fine, things
will be fine,” and running off. My shrink offered to check me in to a
top dual-diagnosis ward in the city, but I begged off. I was close to
suicidal, unable to make it through a few hours without a crying
jag—but I had friends coming in from California for the
Big Night, so I was going to muscle through.
In the end, though my two boot pals had crossed the
continent to hang out with me, I passed the mil-
leum with hustler P., alone in my apartment beg-
ing for sexual punishment. Once again, failure. Even my
trinket fantasizer was less than impressed. P. had done his
own high—he spent the night (the whole weekend) talking and talking and talking, about his family,
about his plans, about his regrets. He was the chatty type of
friend, I was the pale, drug-addicted friend, my attention was all on
him that really moved me: He was helpless before alcohol (be-
sounded like kind of a mess, but there were two things about
who had been sober about nine months came in and talked to
problems and given us his time.
He had me check in to the ER. They kept me overnight,
diagnosing cocaine psychosis. It was maybe two weeks before
I was back to hanging out with M. and smoking crystal. The
cocaine was a lot more fun.
In March of that year I quit my job. Someone I worked with
had started talking to me about possibly joining his Internet start-
up. He called me in for some talks—but it was during one of
my boss’s office and quit in a huff! I wasn’t thinking clearly by this
time. Without a job, I was basically just home at my computer
smoking, smoking, smoking. Hour after hour tugging on the pipe.
Who gives a damn? The last man I parted with finally introduced
me to a dealer of my own, after cautioning me that “I was sound-
ing a little bit like a junkie…” And within a week of at long last
being able to smoke crystal, I was at it again. Do I need more evidence
do I need of my total ineptitude as a drug addict?
I’d reached that awful point where nothing I understood—sex,
crystal, Clompin, Rolling Rock—could fix me anymore. I couldn’t
lie with people, couldn’t be alone, couldn’t stop crying, couldn’t
imagine how it was going to end. One night toward the very end
I was masturbating mechanistically, staring in a mirror and thinking,
This can’t be happening to me. So I landed in the ER again, but
this time it was just the right mo-
ment. I surrendered completely one Monday morning. The sec-
ond I lay down on the hard little hospital bed, my crying stopped,
my shaking stopped, and I slept. Within a few weeks I had been
transferred upstairs to the psych ward. That day was possibly the
first successful day of my adult life.
I spent five days there. A very kind counselor, John, handed me
the “Big Book” of Alcoholics Anonymous and said, “Just read
the stories…” I had kind of been knocked clear—it really was a
spiritual awakening, though I wouldn’t understand it as such for
many weeks. It did everything a professional Morose Titan
liked best: I was home, and there was no more sexual, rooming with a middle-aged Army NCO named Willy. I
knew I had a problem, but in this context, the meetings (we went
every night or one came to us) seemed like a clique for ignorant
Jesus freaks. I was just at the point of leaving for yin, fading
place; I was in touch with my folks, and they had offered to spend
their all of their savings if they had to. I had one outbreak of
tekers, and I was there. I was near to my shaking stopped, and I slept. Within a few
weeks I had been transferred upstairs to the psych ward. That day was possibly the
first successful day of my adult life.
I didn’t need much. Just all of your drugs, all of your
attention, and all of your time.
From the hospital I went to a rehab in Pennsylvania. I detoxed
for one week at one facility, and then spent another two weeks in
a halfway house in another town. I felt extremely unique
there. My ego started to rebel a bit—the facility was full of
teenagers in ondride, alcoholics and inner city crack addicts. I
didn’t need much. Just all of your drugs, all of your
attention, and all of your time. I couldn’t be with people,
couldn’t be alone, couldn’t stop crying, couldn’t
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I didn’t need much. Just all of your drugs, all of your
attention, and all of your time.
CRystal Clear ▶ Back to Basics

At my sponsor’s suggestion, I looked up the definitions of the words trusted and servant. A trusted servant is a person relied upon to be of assistance to, or to promote the interests of—in order for it to work for me, it has to be something that everyone liked and had respect for, which was impossible. Gladly, I’ve learned not to judge other people’s spiritual lives that may not agree with that. Lesson in acceptance has been great for the growth of my spiritual life. Recently, my spirituality helped me get through the stress of losing my apartment while I was barely working and trying to obtain rental assistance. This brought on a lot of fear that made me want to give up on life and to give up on spiritually. I'm glad I remember saying the Serenity Prayer often, especially after things would go wrong, which they continually did. The prayer calmed my fears, and helped me have faith that I would be taken care of in the future. This experience was extremely rough for me—realized how powerless I was, and I continually prayed. I began to see the situation with a different mind-set; and even though the things I had tried to make happen fell through, I was ultimately successful.
IT'S NICE TO KNOW I CAN DO THAT TODAY, BE GENTLE ON MYSELF.

At my sponsor’s suggestion, I looked up the definitions of the words trusted and servant. A trusted servant is a person relied upon to be of service to, or to promote the interests of, another—in this case, the group. This is in contrast to being a leader, or one who directs. I’ve always had faith that a Higher Power was looking over me. Spirituality to me is the connection to that Power through daily living. I come from a deeply religious and spiritual background, so it’s something that has always been important to me, but at the same time very painful. There were times when I felt abandoned and alone, especially when I would get high. I wanted to put my trust in something greater than me. My views of a Higher Power were constantly evolving, and I was always on the lookout for a program. I was trying to connect with a Power that everyone liked and had respect for, which was impossible. Gladly, I’ve learned that it’s not about what anybody likes or disapproves of—in order for it to work for me, it has to be something I have faith in. I’ve also learned not to judge other people’s spiritual lives that I may not agree with. That lesson in acceptance has been great for the growth of my spiritual life.

Recently, my spiritual helplessness led me through the process of losing my apartment while I was barely working and trying to obtain rent assistance. This brought on a lot of fear that made me want to give up on life and to judge my spiritual life. I remember saying the Serenity Prayer often, which continually did the prayer calmed my fears, and helped me have faith that I would be taken care of. This experience was extremely rough for me—I realized how powerless I was and how much I needed help. I began to see the situation with a different mind-set; even though the things I had to do to make things happen fell through, I was ultimately taken care of and my spiritual connection to life has grown stronger.
And pain it was. The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions are suggested tools of recovery. Without taking these Steps, I was going to stay in pain. So when it was suggested to me to do some “work,” I did, but only out of spite—to prove that it wouldn’t work for me. I guess I didn’t hear “work it,” it works” at the end of every meeting. By taking suggestions, I got out of my way and out of pain.

When my actions changed, my feelings changed. Suggestions are vital to my recovery and spiritual condition. Some suggestions are more powerful than others, I had to find the ones that worked for me. I once heard in a meeting, “Everything we need to know to stay sober we learn in the first thirty days. Get a sponsor and call them, go to meetings, do the Steps, fellowship, get numbers, do service…” These are suggestions, but they are the big ones, they teach me life. I thought the sayings around the rooms were common at first, then I found them comforting. Many come from the “Big Book.” These suggestions are universal, and the readings at meetings are the things that have the most impact on my life and sobriety. If I am open, I can hear them. —Jeny H.

SURRENDER

My understanding of what it has meant to surrender in the program has certainly evolved over the years, as I have evolved in sobriety. In my first week in CMA, a little over five years ago, I made what I thought was my formal surrender to the program. This was a crucial commitment to the process, but little did I realize the action of walking through the doors of that first meeting had been my first big surrender. I had the gift of desperation and was willing to do what it took to end the chaos of drugs and alcohol. I was able to make it to four months without using or drinking but couldn’t get it off the fantasy of getting high, and stopped. I am grateful for that nine-day re-lapse—it showed me the party was really over. I walked into the Monday night Delapre Prevention meeting with one day back and again had the gift of desperation. But this time, I understood more and found myself more committed. Fortunately, I haven’t used since.

As the years went on, I learned that surrendering is not a one-time event. I can practice surrendering to whatever my obstacle may be whenever I have awareness and am willing to take action. Two and a half years into sobriety, I was in a crucial time. I realized I needed to redress my definition of my higher power—the God issue. All my adult life I had refused to believe in God because I had issues with organized religion. But I was not happy in sobriety and realized that it had a lot to do with my struggling spiritual program. I needed to set aside my head-hand, know-it-all thinking, essentially my will. Again I found myself with that gift of desperation and wanted a change. I told my sponsor that I saw the importance of believing in God and wanted to—but didn’t know how to believe in some-thing that I didn’t know if I believed in. He sug-gested that maybe I should start “developing a relationship” with my higher power. I said to myself, “A relationship?” Hmm… Well, I have talked to myself all my life. Why don’t I just say I’m talking to God? And that was the beginning of that.

My entire life I’d been needing to surren-der to the “God issue,” and life in sobriety since has done nothing but get better and better. The greatest liberation I experience is when I practice surrendering to something greater than myself. Today when I notice that gift of desperation for change I know what action to do next. Turn it over. I can tell you from my experience, it works. —Jamie M.

THE TWELVE STEPS

In almost nine years as a member of CMA, I’ve been given the gift of having two sponsors who believed the solution was the practice of the Steps and living by their principles. I came in to get away from using drugs and wasting my life, and found a program of recovery that changed my world. The Steps lay the foundation for a new way of thinking and acting.

In the very beginning, like most of us, I didn’t understand what the Steps meant—or really cared—I just went along so I wouldn’t have to use anymore. But as time went by, and with the help of my sponsor, that new design for living which is mentioned in the “Big Book” started to take shape, without me even notic-ing. The Steps are very simple and clear, and our sponsors’ directions are usually clear, too, so why do so many of us find them difficult? The problem for me didn’t lie with the Step work, but with my resistance to do it. The first three Steps were easy. At the beginning, I was done, I needed to let go. But the rest of them required a little more work and a hard look at what I had done to myself and others. The last three describe a whole new way of facing life on life’s terms.

In the literature, I found a list of the princi-ples of the Steps, and it has been a great help to me for them. In the list I read, Step One corresponds to honesty; Two, hope; Three, faith, Four, courage; Five, integrity. Six, prophet-ic. Seven, humility. Eight, brotherliness. Nine, justice. Ten, perseverance. Eleven, spiritual awareness; and Twelve, service. When I’m in pain, it is without a doubt because I am not practicing these principles in all of my af-fairs. How many times a day do I do the exact opposite? And how much pain and discomfort does this cause to myself and others? More than anything, it is when I’m not practicing the Steps, than carrying the message of recovery and re-maining sober myself. Living these principles to the best of my ability is what makes the dif-ference between just being dry or being a new man. —Feiris R.

The Third Tradition: When I first came into CMA and all the other As, I could just barely comprehend the Steps. As for the Traditions—who cared? In reality, the most valuable tool I had was the Third Tradition, that new design for living. In almost eight years in the Third Tradition: “The only requirement for CMA membership is a desire to stop using.” I was worried a lot at the beginning that I hadn’t sunk low enough to stop. I’d been in jail yet—that my story wasn’t sad enough to make me a real addict. Someone explained this simple principle to me in the plainest words imaginable, asking, “Was it bad enough for you to get you? Do you really want to stop?” The answers were yes and yes.

Another important tool throughout my recovery was the Twelve Traditions. “Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personal desires.” The Twelve Traditions guide us along to this one long before they know where it comes from. It is my goal to use it all the time, because, hard as it may be to believe, I don’t al-ways live up to all of my fellows. Sometimes you bug the shit out of me! (And I’m sure I bug some of you.) A few people—including a couple of my sponsors—told me that maybe I should start “developing a relationship” with my higher power. I never doubted the Steps. And I’ve learned that even someone who works my last nerve, if he sincerely has a desire to stop using, probably has something to teach me. —Mark L.
SPONSORS I walked into my first CMA meet-
ing having had no experience with recovery or rehab and was confused about many things I heard, including the word sponsor. Who was this person and why did some people rely on them? Was it like a patron of the arts or something along those lines? Going to more meet-
ings, I began to hear about the concept of a real alcoholic in recovery, that sponsorship is two ad-
dicts working their program together, and that a sponsor could help me through the “Steps” of the program, like a friend for life.

Everyone’s experience of finding a sponsor is different. It took me about sixty days to have the nerve to ask somebody. He was the one person I introduced to CMA and the person I had become the most connected to. But that wasn’t saying much! In my early days of sobriety I was shy and quiet. I felt fearful, confused, and said, and my self-esteem was very low. It was not easy to open up to people, although I tried to take suggestions, including sharing at meetings. Somewhere deep inside was the willingness to open up to people and come out of my shell. I feared rejection, so asking Mark to be my sponsor felt like a huge risk. I was drawn to his confidence, his happiness and sense of humor, his serenity, and the ease with which he seemed to handle himself (these were things I wanted!). And his one year of clean time spoke to my past which seemed like an eternity. I was relieved that he said yes! We began talking on the phone each night and I gradually opened up to Mark more and more. I shared what I was feeling. This in-
cluded some doubts that I was really an addict, and that I felt phony for having one foot in the door and one foot out the door. He helped me through this period.

He guided me through my First Step—in which I gained greater acceptance of my ac-
diction—and my Second Step, in which I came to believe more firmly that the program could help me. Over the next year we went on to work Steps Three, Four, and Five—all part of my journey in recovery.

Geographical circumstances created the need to change sponsors, and I’ve had several since Mark. But my first year of sobriety was the true turning point of my life, and working with Mark was a huge part of that. I learned to trust him, to share, and to ask for help. This was a whole new way of having a relationship with another person. I learned how to let many qualities into my life that hadn’t been there in years: gratitude, open-mindedness, and ac-
ceptance, just to name a few. None of this felt like a “white light experience” at the time it was happening. But I realize now that through the tool of sponsorship I really did experience a spiritual awakening—Mike L.

SUGGESTIONS When I was asked to write about suggestions, my first thought was, Don’t tell me what to write about! This has been my knee-jerk response to suggestions 90 per-
cent of the time since beginning my sober journey (seven years, eleven months ago, and still counting, to give you an idea of how fast I changed). When I came in, I was thrilled if the only requirement for membership in CMA was a desire not to use. I interpreted this as not hav-
ing to do anything except bitch that I couldn’t use anymore. Finally, people who understood my pain!

And pain it was. The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions are suggested tools of recov-
ery. Without taking these Steps, I was going to stay in pain. So when it was suggested to me to do some “work,” I did, but only out of spite—to prove that it wouldn’t work for me. I guess I didn’t hear “work it, it works” at the end of every meeting. By taking suggestions, I got out of my way and out of pain.

When my actions changed, my feelings changed. Suggestions are vital to my recovery and spiritual condition. Some suggestions are more powerful than others, I had to find the ones that worked for me.

My entire life I’d been needing to surren-
der to the “God issue,” and in sobriety since has done nothing but get better and better. The greatest liberation I experience is when I practice surrendering to something greater than myself. Today when I notice that gift of desperation for change I know what ac-
tion to do next. Turn it over. I can tell you from my experience, it works. —Jamie M.

THE TWELVE STEPS In almost nine years as a member of CMA, I’ve been given the gift of having two sponsors who believed the solution was the practice of the Steps and living by their principles. I came in to get away from using drugs and wasting my life, and found a program of recovery that changed my world. The Steps lay the foundation for a new way of thinking and acting.

In the very beginning, like most of us, I didn’t understand what the Steps meant—or really cared—I just went along so I wouldn’t have to use anymore and at the end of the day I wanted to do more for others. The greatest value I’ve gained from the Steps is the opportunity to get out of my head and into my heart to reach my heart and soul.

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The Twelve Steps are easy. At the beginning, I was done, I needed to let go. But the rest of them required a little more work and a hard look at what I had done to myself and others. The last three describe a whole new way of facing life on life’s terms.

In the literature, I found a list of the princi-
ple of sponsorship. I really did experience a spiritual awakening!—Mike L.

THE TWELVE STEPS When I first came into CMA and all the other As, I could just barely comprehend the Steps. As for the Traditions—who cared? In reality, the most valuable tool I had as a newcomer was the Third Tradition: “The only requirement for CMA membership is a desire to stop using.” I worried a lot at the beginning that I hadn’t sunk low enough, hadn’t lost enough, hadn’t been in jail yet—that my story wasn’t sad enough to make me a real addict. Someone explained this simple principle to me in the plainest words imaginable, asking, “Was it bad enough for you to get into jail? Do you really want to stop?” The answers were yes and yes.

Another important tool throughout my recov-
ey has been Tradition Twelve. “Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personal gain. When I was working the Steps along to this one long before they know where it comes from, I have to use it all the time, be-
cause, hard as it may be to believe, I don’t al-
ways live up to my full potential. Sometimes you bug the shit out of me! (And I’m sure you bug some of you.) A few people—including a couple of my sponsors—mentioned that maybe I should start “developing a relationship” with my higher power. I said to myself, “A relationship? Hmm… Well, I have talked to myself all my life. Why don’t I just say I’m talking to the God?” And that was the be-

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Reflections on Step One

By Lee L. and Paul B.

CRystal Meth Thoroughly Defeated Us.* With all our power of will we attempted to regulate our drug use but inevitably wound up still using—feeling even less in control and more hopeless than ever. With heads hung low and egos shattered, we were baffled by the realization that drugs controlled us. Suffering from an existence devoid of dignity, our lives became a vicious and terrifying cycle: living to use and using to live. We failed to understand that we were not cursed with moral weakness or flawed ethics. We were afflicted with a disease, an obsession, a compulsion of the body, marked by a phenomenon of craving. In the end we sacrificed almost everything to crystal meth with unquestioning devotion—our health and homes, our families and friends, our professions and finances, and our sanity and spirit.

Our every instinct demanded that we try and try again to control our using. Every vain attempt ultimately led only to failure, our old familiar nemesis. We dared to believe that one day we would “figure it out.” But this abnormal existence became our everyday experience. Rationalization, justification, and obsession were our reality; darkness, desperation, and violence overcame our spirit; misery, loneliness, and isolation were our constant companions.

We were often physically compromised by run-down, sleep-deprived, and undernourished bodies; infectious diseases; lost or disfigured teeth; mutilated and scarred skin; or psychopathic brains. Remorse, regret, shame, guilt, despair, and everpresent hopelessness—this was our mental and emotional landscape.

Reaching this point, however, bullied and battered us into a state of reason. Shaken to the core, we enjoyed no pretense of power or choice about our using. We could no longer manage our own affairs and carry out our responsibilities. We were finally convinced that we had to consider other solutions to our seemingly unsolvable problems. Consumed by self-centeredness, we saw that our own willpower had completely failed us. Self-knowledge availed us nothing. Fear of consequences offered us no benefit. We had been overwhelmed. Crystal meth, a one-time friend, had become our master. Perhaps for the first time, we acknowledged the damage, injury, disappointment, and sorrow that we created in ourselves and in the lives of those around us. With new eyes, we could at last concede the wreckage of our meager existence. In utter humiliation, our denial was transformed into honesty. ■

* Verbatim in this essay refers to the authors, not the fellowship of CMA as a whole.
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MEETINGS

THIS LIST IS UPDATED REGULARLY AT NYCMCA.ORG

SUNDAY
11:30 AM Sunday Solutions (C) Lesbian & Gay Community Center
6:00 PM Step Meeting† (C) Lesbian & Gay Community Center
7:30 PM Beginner’s Basics (C) Lesbian & Gay Community Center

MONDAY
7:45 AM Good Morning, Higher Power (C) Gay Men’s Health Crisis
6:00 PM Relapse Prevention (C) Lesbian & Gay Community Center
8:00 PM NA Book Study (C) Realization Center
8:00 PM 59th Street Bridge Back to Life (C) 2061 32nd Street, Astoria, Queens

TUESDAY
7:45 AM Good Morning, Higher Power (C) Gay Men’s Health Crisis
12:15 PM Step-Writing/Discussion Workshop (C) Roosevelt Hospital
6:00 PM Recovering Together (C) Gay Men’s Health Crisis
7:30 PM Beginners Meeting†† (C) Lesbian & Gay Community Center
8:00 PM Long-Term Sobriety (C) Gay Men’s Health Crisis

WEDNESDAY
7:45 AM Good Morning, Higher Power (C) Gay Men’s Health Crisis
7:45 AM Solutions in Recovery (C) Lesbian & Gay Community Center
8:00 PM Conscious Contact/11th Step (C) Gay Men’s Health Crisis

THURSDAY
7:45 AM Good Morning, Higher Power (C) Gay Men’s Health Crisis
12:30 PM Serenity on Tenth (C) Roosevelt Hospital
6:30 PM CMA Agnostics (C) Gay Men’s Health Crisis
8:00 PM Big Book Study (C) Gay Men’s Health Crisis

FRIDAY
7:45 AM Good Morning, Higher Power (C) Gay Men’s Health Crisis
6:15 PM Living With HIV (C) Hudson Guild Fulton Center
8:00 PM Crystal Clear††† (C) Gay Men’s Health Crisis
8:30 PM The O’Toole Meeting (C) French Church

SATURDAY
8:30 AM Saturday Morning Peir Meeting††††† (C) End of Christopher Street Pier
11:15 AM Saturday Solutions†††† (C) Lesbian & Gay Community Center
5:00 PM CMA Promises Meeting (C) Manhattan Plaza Health Club
8:00 PM Meditation Meeting†††† (C) Lesbian & Gay Community Center
9:30 PM Intimacy, Relationships & Sex in Sobriety (C) Lesbian & Gay Community Center

MEETING DETAILS
• Open Meeting: Welcomes anyone interested in the CMA program. In addition to regular CMA members, this can include friends and family members seeking information for a loved one, or those curious about the program and not sure it is right for them. (C) Closed meeting: Welcomes anyone who has, or thinks he or she might have, a problem with crystal meth.
†The last Sunday of every month is a Traditions meeting. ††Meeting lasts 1½ hours. †††Meetings run until end of October. ††††Meeting lasts 1hr 15min. †††††Please try to arrive on time so as not to interrupt the silent-meditation portion of the meeting.

DIRECTIONS
• French Church 128 W. 16th St., Ground Floor
• Gay Men’s Health Crisis 119 West 24th Street, between 6th and 7th avenues. Check at front desk for room number.
• The Hudson Guild Fulton Center 119 9th Avenue, between 17th & 18th Streets. Check at front desk for room number.
• Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Community Services Center 208 West 13th Street, between 7th and 8th avenues. Check listings at front desk for room number.
• Manhattan Plaza Health Club 482 West 43rd Street, Conference Room Minnesota 1
• Realization Center 25 East 15th Street, 7th Floor
• Roosevelt Hospital 1000 Tenth Avenue, Room 6-G-41, 8th Floor

How is CMA different than other Twelve Step programs?

We have found that we relate best to other crystal meth addicts because they understand the darkness, paranoia and compulsions of this particular addiction. The Twelve Steps of CMA were adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous. We do not believe we are better or worse than those in other Twelve Step programs. At the same time, many of us fail to fully identify with “a falling-down drunk” or, in the case of a heroin addict, “a nodding-off junkie.” The hyper-extended length and intensity of crystal meth’s effects, be it compulsive cleaning or sexual activity, were unique. Many of us have attended other Twelve Step programs, but the feeling of identification in the Rooms of CMA has helped us to keep coming back. After all, who but another meth addict understands the insanity that accompanies the high and, finally, that seemingly bottomless drop into depression that makes us desperate to use still more?

—Excerpted from the new CMA General Service pamphlet titled “What Is Crystal Meth Anonymous?” Copies may be downloaded free of charge at crystalmeth.org.