

ACA Step Study Meeting Guide



ACA Step Study Meeting Guide

A support tool for those working the twelve steps with a group.

Please note that this document is not official ACA literature. It has been prepared from a hard copy document dated 2009 that was used in a previous Step Study Meeting Group of ACA Narraweena. It is provided “as is” errors and omissions excepted.

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Introduction

This guide document provides a suggested approach to working the twelve steps of the ACA program, within a group meeting environment. It is assumed that the group is a separate group meeting to the standard ACA meeting as its focus is specifically on step work. This requires group members to complete study work between the group meetings. The guide suggests a meeting format as well as a study format for each meeting. The group conscience will determine what works best for any given group.

Suggested meeting format

Frequency:	Determined by the group conscience – weekly, fortnightly, etc.
Venue:	Determined by the group conscience – should be safe and quiet.
Duration:	2 hours.
Opening:	Set aside prayer.
Main:	Sharing from each member on their responses to step study work.
General:	Group discussion on step study content.
Heads Up:	Review of step work to be completed before next step study meeting.
Closing:	Serenity prayer

The meeting can be moderated by a member who is able to guide the group through the suggested or agreed format. A timekeeper can be selected by the group to assist in managing time boundaries.

Suggested study format

Each of the twelve steps is broken into a number of studies. Each study has:

1. Topic - a focus area for the study.
2. Reading - to be completed as context for the topic and to support the writing.
3. Writing – the actual work to be done as part of the study.

These are completed in a members own personal time between the step study meetings. Each member comes prepared to share their work at the next meeting.

Suggested support material

It is recommended that each member has the following books in order to get the most out of the step study:

1. Adult Children of Alcoholics (Big Red Book)
2. Adult Children of Alcoholics Step Study Guide (Yellow Book)

Additional books and material are referenced within this guide. Please see Appendix 1 for a complete list. It is not necessary that each member purchase these. The group moderator will determine if these references are available through existing members prior to the specific study session. The group conscience may determine to acquire some or all of these references.

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Step One

Study One – Getting started

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 4-7 and 20-22

Writing: First six Step One questions on workbook pages 27-28

Suggested: Read the first 100 pages of the ACA Red Book during Step One work

Study Two – Powerlessness vs. learned helplessness

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 7-9 or Red Book pages 101-104

Writing: Powerlessness questions 1-12 on workbook pages 28-29

Study Three – Unmanageability

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 9-10 or Red Book pages 104-106

Writing: Unmanageable questions 1-14 on workbook pages 30-31

Study Four – Denial

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 26-27 or Red Book pages 22-23, 27-34

Writing: Denial questions 1-8 on workbook pages 31-32

Study Five – Powerlessness and surrender

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 22-25

Writing: Powerlessness and Surrender questions 1-5 on workbook page 33

Suggested: Workbook exercises on pages 34-43.

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Step Two

Study One – Insanity

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 46-50 or Red Book pages 133-135

Writing: Workbook Step Two questions 1-17 on workbook pages 50-52

Study Two – Dependence and codependence

Reading: Red Book pages 5-9

Coda.org printout “Patterns and Characteristics of Codependence”

Writing: Dependence & Codependence questions 1-10 on wb pages 52-53

Study Three – Came to believe

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 10-11 and 44-45

Melody Beattie, “Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” pages 37-40

Writing: Came to believe and Sanity/Higher Power questions wb pages 53-54

Study Four – Openmindedness and clarity

Reading: Red Book pages 135-137

Melody Beattie, “Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” pages 40-45

Writing: Openmindedness and Clarity questions 1-8 on workbook page 55

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Step Three

Study One – Questions and information

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 59-62

Writing: Questions and Information questions 1-9 on workbook pages 65-66

Suggested: ACA Red Book pages 106-108 and Chapter 8

Study Two – Made a decision

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 62-64

Melody Beattie, “Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” pages 46-48

Writing: Made a Decision questions 1-6 on workbook page 66

Suggested: ACA Red Book pages 39-43

Study Three – As we understand God

Reading: John Bradshaw, “Healing the Shame that Binds You,” pages 160-161

Tim Sledge, “Making Peace With Your Past” page 74

Writing: As We Understand God questions 1-6 on workbook page 67

Suggested: ACA Red Book, Chapter 5

Study Four – Willingness and accepting help

Reading: Melody Beattie, “Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” pages 52-58

Writing: Willingness and Accepting Help questions on workbook pages 67-68

Closing: Third Step Prayer on workbook page 69

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Step Four

Study One – Laundry list traits and worksheet

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 72-74 and Laundry List Handout

Writing: Laundry List questions and exercises on workbook pages 79-81

Study Two – Family secrets inventory

Reading: Step Study Workbook page 82, Exercise 2

Friel, "Adult Children: The Secrets of Dysfunctional Families" pgs.82-83

Writing: Family Secrets Inventory exercises on workbook page 82

Study Three – Shame and abandonment

Reading: Step Study Workbook page 82-83, Exercise 3 (Shame)

John Bradshaw, "Bradshaw on The Family," pages 2-3 (Shame)

Step Study Workbook page 83-84, Exercise 4 (Abandonment)

Bradshaw, "Bradshaw on The Family," pgs 103-106 (Abandonment)

Beverly Engel, "Healing Your Emotional Self," pages 35-40

Writing: Shame & Abandonment Inventory exercises on wb pages 82-84

Study Four – Harms and resentments

Reading: Step Study Workbook page 84

Friel, "An Adult Child's Guide To What's Normal," pages 124-127 (H)

Pia Mellody, "Facing Codependence," pages 49-51 (Resentments)

Writing: Harms and Resentments Inventories on workbook pages 84-87

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Step Four continued...

Study Five – Relationships

Reading: Friel, "Adult Children: The Secrets of Dysfunctional Families", p 134-137
Beattie, "Codependent No More," pages 209-211

Writing: Relationship Inventory on workbook pages 88-89

Suggested: ACA Red Book, Chapter 13

Study Six – Denial and Abuse

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 92 and 94 (Denial)
Whitfield, "Healing The Child Within," pages 40-42 (Denial)
Pia Mellody, "Facing Codependence," pages 121-127 (Abuse)

Writing: Abuse and Denial Inventories on workbook pages 89-95

Study Seven – PTSD and Trauma/Neglect

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 96-100

Writing: PTSD Worksheet questions on workbook page 101

Study Eight – Feelings

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 102-104
Friel, "An Adult Child's Guide to What's Normal" pages 53-56
Friel, "Adult Children: The Secrets of Dysfunctional Families" p107-109

Writing: Feelings and Praise exercises on workbook pages 102-104

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Step Five

Over a number of weeks members share 4th Step

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 106-116 and 184-190 (18 pages total)

Writing: Completing our Inventories: Finish writing and sharing our 4th Steps

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Steps Six and Seven

Study One – Entirely ready part 1

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 117-119

Melody Beattie, "Codependents' Guide to the 12 Steps" pages 98-102

Connie Zweig & Steven Wolf, "Romancing The Shadow," pages 3-6

Writing: Patrick Carnes, "A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps" page 210

Melody Beattie, "Codependents' Guide to the 12 Steps" page 106

Study Two – Entirely ready part 2

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 120-123

Melody Beattie, "A Codependents' Guide to the 12 Steps" pp. 103-106

Connie Zweig & Steven Wolf, "Romancing The Shadow," pages 39-41

Writing: Patrick Carnes, "A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps" page 210

Melody Beattie, "A Codependents' Guide to the 12 Steps" page 106

Zweig & Wolf, questions on pages 39-41

Study Three – Humbly asked our Higher Power part 1

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 124-127

Melody Beattie, "A Codependents' Guide to the 12 Steps" pp. 107-114

Writing: Melody Beattie, "A Codependents' Guide to the 12 Steps" pp. 114-115

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Steps Six and Seven continued...

Study Four – Humbly asked our Higher Power part 2

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 127-130

Patrick Carnes, "A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps" pages 214-219
and pages 224-225

Writing: Patrick Carnes, "A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps" pages 214-225

Balancing Attributes exercise on page 129

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Steps Eight and Nine

Study One – Became willing part 1

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 131-133
Melody Beattie, “A Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” pp. 116-123

Writing: Patrick Carnes, “A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps” pp. 229-236
Hazelden booklet, pages 4-12
Review sample 8th step amends list on workbook page 188

Study Two – Became willing part 2

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 133-136
Melody Beattie, “A Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” pp.123-129

Writing: Melody Beattie, “Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” page 129
Patrick Carnes, “A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps” pp. 229-236
Hazelden booklet, pages 4-12

Study Three – Made amends part 1

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 138-142
Melody Beattie, “A Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” pp. 134-145

Writing: Melody Beattie, “A Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” pp. 151-152
Hazelden booklet, pages 13-18

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Steps Eight and Nine continued...

Study Four – Made amends part 2

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 143-146

Melody Beattie, "A Codependents' Guide to the 12 Steps" pp. 145-151

Writing: Melody Beattie, "A Codependents' Guide to the 12 Steps" pp.151-152

Hazelden booklet, pages 13-18

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Step Ten

Study One – Continued to take inventory part 1

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 147-150
Patrick Carnes, "A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps" pp. 251-253

Writing: Traits One and Two on workbook pages 152-153
Patrick Carnes, "A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps" pp. 254-273
Hazelden booklet, pages 19-22

Study Two – Continued to take inventory part 2

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 150-152
Patrick Carnes, "A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps" p. 254,256,258

Writing: Traits Three through Six on workbook pages 153-155
Patrick Carnes, "A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps" pp. 254-273
Hazelden booklet, pages 19-22

Study Three – Continued to take inventory part 3

Reading: Melody Beattie, "A Codependents' Guide to the 12 Steps" pp. 153-157
Patrick Carnes, "A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps" p. 260,262,264

Writing: Traits Seven through Ten on workbook pages 155-156
Patrick Carnes, "A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps" pp. 254-273
Melody Beattie, "A Codependents' Guide to the 12 Steps" pp. 166-167
Hazelden booklet, pages 19-22

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Step Ten continued...

Study Four – Continued to take inventory part 4

Reading: Melody Beattie, “A Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” pp. 157-161
Patrick Carnes, “A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps” p. 266,268,270

Writing: Traits Eleven through Fourteen on workbook pages 156-157
Patrick Carnes, “A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps” pp. 254-273
Melody Beattie, “A Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” pp. 166-167
Hazelden booklet, pages 19-22

Study Five – Step Ten guide

Reading: Melody Beattie, “A Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” pp. 161-166
Patrick Carnes, “A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps” p. 272,274-276

Writing: Exercises 1 through 5 on workbook pages 158-161
Patrick Carnes, “A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps” pp. 254-273
Melody Beattie, “A Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” pp. 166-167

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Step Eleven

Study One – Sought through prayer part 1

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 162-166

Melody Beattie, “A Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” page 181

Patrick Carnes, “A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps” pp. 281-283

Hazelden, pages 24-29

Recording: Step Study Workbook pages 170-171

Study Two – Sought through prayer part 2

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 167-171

Melody Beattie, “A Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” page 181

Patrick Carnes, “A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps” pp. 281-283

Hazelden, pages 24-29

Recording: Step Study Workbook pages 170-171

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Step Twelve

Study One – Spiritual awakening part 1

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 173-178

Writing: Melody Beattie, “A Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” page 198
Patrick Carnes, “A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps” page 288
Hazelden booklet, pages 30-33

Study Two – Spiritual awakening part 2

Reading: Step Study Workbook pages 178-183

Writing: Melody Beattie, “A Codependents’ Guide to the 12 Steps” page 198
Patrick Carnes, “A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps” page 288
Hazelden booklet, pages 30-33

Congratulations on completing the 12 Steps!

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Appendix 1 – Reference material

Melody Beattie, "Codependent No More,"

Melody Beattie, "A Codependents' Guide to the 12 Steps"

John Bradshaw, "Bradshaw on The Family,"

John Bradshaw, "Healing the Shame that Binds You,"

Patrick Carnes, "A Gentle Path Through the 12 Steps"

Beverly Engel, "Healing Your Emotional Self,"

Friel, "An Adult Child's Guide to What's Normal"

Friel, "Adult Children: The Secrets of Dysfunctional Families"

Hazelden booklet

Pia Mellody, "Facing Codependence,"

Tim Sledge, "Making Peace With Your Past"

Whitfield, "Healing The Child Within,"

Connie Zweig & Steven Wolf, "Romancing The Shadow,"

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