

BESAFE 12STEP PROGRAM WORKSHEETS (adapted):

This is a list of questions for working the 12 Step program for recovery from being in a **Coercive Control relationship**. You are invited to pick those questions that seem most relevant to your recovery and answer them to the best of your ability. In this way, you can better keep track of truly *working* your 12 Step program. And in truly *working the program*, then you can gain the benefits of 12 Step recovery.

Note that this does not claim to be a definitive list of questions or replace a therapist, good friend or sponsor in any way. In fact, this has started out from only one recovering addict's attempt to help you in your recovery process. It is hoped that this questionnaire will help you gain more insight, strength, and sense of closure as you work the program. You are invited to use it only as it works well for you.

Note also that the process of recovery can be a very delicate process. It may be one of the most important and difficult things that you ever do in your life, so you are admonished to be gentle with yourself, get outside help when you need it and make time for nurturing activities in this process. This is not to say that you should not be diligent (that is the purpose of these questions, to help you actually *work the program*). But in finding the right balance between diligence and gentleness, you will hopefully greatly enhance your process of recovery.

Step 1 - I admit that I am powerless over the coercive control abuse and that my life has become unmanageable

- *Have you seriously damaged your life because of your coercive control relationship? If so, list how, what and the relationships were damaged. How has your life changed*
- *If other people have told you how you are not acting like you and your emotions and needs are too much, then write down what they said.*
- *Describe any how your life has change since the coercive abuse relationship: less social, afraid to go places or avoid certain situations.*
- *Describe any memory lapses, confusions about what is going on, how to deal with your life and cannot handle basic care and actions in your own life.*
- *Describe any times that you cannot recall how things became such a mess or so upsetting.*
- *Describe times and ways that you have significantly neglected or damaged relationships with your loved ones and friends because you felt trapped in a relationship and feared outcomes or effects of that relationship in other parts of your life.*
- *Describe any illnesses that have resulted from the coercive control relationship.*
- *If your behavior contributed to excessive spending or lack of spending, describe the situations and why you did it.*
- *Describe times that you have withdrawn from social interaction and isolated yourself to an extreme degree and why.*

- *Describe incidents where you expressed inappropriate anger towards other people.*
- *Describe embarrassing or humiliating incidents in your life. Were they related to the abuser or to your reactivity to the abuse? If so, how were they related?*
- *Describe attempts that you have made in the past to control your abuser or get away from your abuser. How successful have they been? Do these attempts show the powerlessness that you have abuser, the behavior of the abuser and your response of the abuser?*
- *Do you feel any remorse from the ways that you have acted in your life? If so, explain that in detail.*
- *Describe any irrational or crazy set of events that have happened since you began your relationship with the person that uses coercive control. Did you see that the controller sets you up to rationalize your behavior to appear the problem in the situation? If so, in what way?*
- *Have you avoided people because they did not share in or approve of your relationship with your abuser and behavior of that person? If so, list these people and situations.*
- *Describe any dreams that you have had that exhibit the unmanageability or chaos of your life.*
- *Can you pinpoint one time period in your life when your life began to become extremely unmanageable? If so, describe that period of time and what was happening.*
- *Is there one incident or insight that made you realize that your life was unmanageable? If so, describe it in detail.*
- *How would you summarize the powerlessness and unmanageability of your life in the face of your relationship with someone that uses coercive control over you and your life?*

Step 2 - I come to believe that a power greater than myself can restore me to sanity

- *What was the religion that your family of origin practiced or claimed to be a part of?*
- *List the positive and negative aspects as you see it of your family's religion.*
- *Have you made a break with your family's religion or have you stayed with it? Explain why you have taken your particular course of action.*
- *What other people have helped you to see the unmanageability of your life? Do they believe in a Higher Power and if so describe their belief as far as you know of it.*
- *Recall some of your best friends from childhood or adolescence. Describe what you liked best about them and what they liked best about you? Do you think that these qualities have any relationship to a Higher Power? Explain.*
- *From the following list of groups, write Yes or No according to whether you could share in their values or not?*

Group	Share Values?
Twelve Step Group	
Conservative Christian church	
Liberal Christian church	
Synagogue	
Mosque	
Hindu temple	
Buddhist temple	
Unitarian or non-Christian church	
Non-religious ethical organization	
Activist Humanitarian group (a.g. Amnesty Intl)	
Environmental Organization (e.g., Sierra Club)	

- *Describe events, situations or people who have helped you to understand what a "Higher Power" or God is all about.*

- *Describe any dreams that you have had about a "Higher Power" or God, and what they mean to you.*
- *What have been your previous experiences with religion? How do think that this does or does not relate to your experience with God as you understand God.*

Step 3 - I make a decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand God

- *What are your greatest fears about giving up control over your life to God as you understand God?*
- *What things, people or circumstances have you tried to control in the past and how has that turned out? Do you think that God will be able to handle your life better than you have?*
- *How do you feel in general about turning your life over to God?*
- *In what ways will you keep up the process of turning your life over to God? Possibilities include going to religious services, 12 Step meetings, meeting with others in recovery, writing a journal, service to others, meditation, reading, physical exercise, contacting your sponsor or engaging in therapy.*
- *How would you answer the question "Who am I"?*
- *How would you answer the question "Who is God"? In other words, describe God as you understand God.*
- *Describe who or what you trust and to what degree.*

- *In what do you find meaning now or think that you can find meaning in the future?*
- *How do you think that you should live your life after giving your life over to the care of God as you understand God? What changes do you expect to make and how will this look in specific detail?*
- *How do you plan to celebrate or honor this step of turning your life over to the care of God?*
- *Describe any celebration or honoring activity that you have actually made in turning your life over to the care of God.*

Step 4 - I make a searching and fearless moral inventory of myself

- *Have you had any broken relationships? If so, describe them and how they hurt others or yourself. Describe any grudges, anger or resentment that you have over these relationships.*
- *Have you ever felt self-righteous? Explain when and the circumstances. Was this justified? Elaborate.*
- *What events or triggers have caused you to repeat relationships of the past and put yourself into abusive relationships like in the past? Describe situations, feelings, events, food or people that you seem to be a part of your life just before or during these cycles of abuse.*
- *Have you ever held a grudge? Did you try to get revenge? If so, explain the situation and how it played out, including whether or not someone else was hurt.*

- Describe times that you have been oversensitive. Did this ever damage your relationship with others, or were you just trying to keep your own boundaries?
- Describe the faults that you most detest in others. Do you have any of these traits yourself?
- Put a checkmark beside any of the following traits that you despise in others. Also check whether you see these traits in yourself.

Traits that I Despise in Others					
Trait	In Others	In Myself	Trait	In Others	In Myself
Selfishness			Greedy		
Cowardice			Snobbish		
Dishonesty			Sarcastic		
Fearfulness			Hypercritical		
Controlling			Gossip		
Manipulative			Tightwad		
Intimidating			Harsh		
Power-hungry			Unforgiving		
Possessive			Verbally abusive		
Prejudiced			Physically abusive		
Overly dependent			Sexually abusive		
Procrastinating			Impatient		
Judgmental			Adulterous		
Preoccupied			Sneakiness		
Lying			Ungrateful		
Cheating			Cynical		
Intolerant			Bitter		
Self-Pitying			Full of Rage		
Jealous			Envious		
Insecure					

- Have you failed to do things that you KNOW that you should have done? If so, then explain in detail.
- What are your fears? How have they caused you difficulty in your life?

- *Describe your relationship with your friends, co-workers or neighbors. Is there something that you wish that you could do over again? If so, explain in detail.*
- *Describe your relationships with your family of origin. Do you have conflicts with any siblings or with your parents? Are you avoiding these matters in your family?*
- *Describe the earliest memories of your life. Did you share a similar personality with those in your family or were they very different than you? Do you think that these similarities or differences caused problems in your life? If so, explain.*
- *If you were to describe your family's major themes, what would they be?*
- *Describe your relationships with your nuclear family (spouse and children) if that is different now from your family of origin. Is there anything that you wish that you could erase from this part of your life?*
- *Describe in detail any major experiences in your life that you believe changed your life forever afterwards (good or bad).*
- *What decisions have you made in your life that made a significant impact on your life? How did you go about making those decisions?*
- *How much of your life have you used up already? If you drew a time line of your life, where would you be now?*
- *Put your major experiences and major decisions on a timeline. Is there a pattern of any kind?*
- *What are you most ashamed of in your life?*
- *Do you see any patterns in your abusive relationships and those abusive behaviors? How*

do you see yourself fitting into those patterns. If so, explain them in detail.

- *What have you done to cover and conceal your abusive relationship and the behaviors of that relationship? What other deceptions did this lead to?*
- *What kind of personality do you or your qualifier exhibit at home? At school? At work? When no-one is around?*
- *What is so shameful in your life that you would not want to tell anyone? Who would you hurt if you told this?*
- *Write a summary of the highlights of your fourth step.*
- *How would you like to share your fourth step summary? What details would you like to make sure that are known? Write these details down in your summary and prepare the summary for presentation in your fifth step.*
- *Describe any celebrations or honoring activities that you have done to honor the completion of your 4th step.*

Step 5 - I admit to God, to myself and to another human being the exact nature of my wrongs

- *After working through the fourth step questions, what do you realize about your limitations and capabilities?*
- *Describe any person who has helped you to see yourself more clearly and objectively in your process of recovery and of life.*
- *What qualities would you like to have in a Survivor Advocate Coach? How do the people in the list of possible sponsors measure up to these criteria?*

- Write down the names of the most trustworthy people that you know. If they are Survivors and are working on living an empowered life free of abuse, do you think that they would be willing or interested in being a Survivor Advocate Coach for you?
- Describe your feelings and expectations about sharing your fifth step with your Survivor Advocate Coach.
- List people that you can think of that you might share your story with. Write whether you think that they are a safe, risky or a bad choice to work your 5th step with.

Person	Safe, Risky or Bad choice

- Describe who you have chosen to be your Survivor Advocate Coach and how they reacted when you approached them.
- Describe what it was like in sharing the fifth step. How did you feel before, after and during the process? Are you glad that you have done this?
- Describe any celebrations or activities that you have done in honor of completing the fifth step.

Step 6 - I become entirely ready to have God remove all of these defects of character

- Do you have any fairy tales or myths that you feel a special affinity with? Why?
- Describe situations and events where you have been full of pride. What has this brought into your life that you like or enjoy? What problems has it caused you?

- *Describe the kind of activities do you really enjoy (of course, NOT your abusive relationship and the behavior of that relationship).*
- *What are some healthy eating or exercise habits that you could start?*
- *What are some unhealthy eating habits that you could give up?*
- *Describe some secret GOOD deeds that you have done or would like to do.*
- *Describe situations and events where you have been greedy, overly needy or materialistic. What has this brought into your life that you like or enjoy? What problems has it caused you? Are you ready to give these attitudes over to the care of God?*
- *Describe situations and events where you have given in to lust without regard for others or any morality. What has this brought into your life that you like or enjoy? What problems has it caused you? Are you ready to give these lustful feelings over to the power of God?*
- *Describe situations and events where you have been dishonest. What has this brought into your life that you like or enjoy? What problems has it caused you? Are you ready to depend upon God to keep you from dishonesty?*
- *Describe situations and events where you have given into excessive eating, drinking, shopping or covetousness. What has this brought into your life that you like or enjoy? What problems has it caused you? Are you ready to let God take control of these behaviors and attitudes?*
- *Describe situations and events where you have been very envious or jealous of others. What has this brought into your life that you like or enjoy? What problems has it caused you? Are your ready to turn these situations over to God?*

- *Describe situations and events where you have avoided responsibility for your actions or lack of actions. What has this brought into your life that you like or enjoy? What problems has it caused you? Are you ready to allow God to help you take responsibility for your actions?*
- *List your major defects of character.*
- *What do you plan to do when these major defects of character begin to become evident? List each defect individually along with the proposed preventative behavior and how you will allow God to help you in your battle against these defects.*

Step 7 - I humbly ask God to remove my shortcomings

- *What defects will be most difficult to give up? In what order do you plan to give them up?*
- *What kind of situations, stressors or pressures cause you to regress back into your defects of character? What can you do to lessen the likelihood of that stress occurring?*
- *Where do you feel most supported and helped in your strivings for recovery?*
- *What makes you lose hope? Can you avoid such situations? If so, then how?*
- *What (person, situation, event, thought) restores your hope? Is there a way to maximize those influences? If so, then how?*
- *What would you like to recapture in your life?*
- *Describe in detail what you think that your life will be like with your defects of character removed from you.*

- *What are you grateful for?*
- *When do you think that life has been especially good for you? When did you have the greatest joy?*
- *Describe your typical day's activities in terms of how much time you spend on each type of activity.*
- *Describe your typical day's activities if you knew that you had only one year to live.*
- *Have you made the correct decisions about how to spend time with loved ones, in solitude and with your discretionary time? If not, how would you like to change it?*
- *What would you do if you were granted three wishes?*
- *What do you think that you can do to leave the world a better place and accomplish your mission in life?*

Step 8 - I make a list of persons that I have harmed and become willing to make amends to them all

- *How have you hurt yourself by being in an abusive relationship and trapped under the control of another?*
- *What important relationships did you destroy or damage because of your behaviors resulting from being in an abusive relationship?*
- *How much time and energy have you lost from being in an abusive relationship? What do*

you think you would have done or become had it not been for the abuse in your life? What would that life look like? Describe.

- *Make a list of all those that you have possibly harmed by being in a coercive control relationship and repeating the cycles of abuse over your life. List the effect on them as individuals and on your relationship.*
- *Take the list of people that you have harmed and make a list of possible amends for each one of them.*
- *From the list of possible amends, choose the ones that seem most appropriate, and mark them according to level of difficulty.*
- *What consequences do you fear in making amends? What is the worst thing that can happen? What is the best thing that can happen? What is likely to happen?*
- *Do you feel angry or resentful towards any people on your amends list? If so, write them a letter of anger, but don't send it to them. Describe here any other ways that you have used to get rid of the anger and resentment towards anyone on your list.*
- *Describe any dreams that relate to making amends to others.*

Step 9 - I make direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others

- *What amends do you think that you have already made? These can include apologies already made, helpful tasks for those that you have hurt, changed attitudes and so forth.*
- *From your list of amends, if there are apologies that you need to make, write them down here first.*

- *Read your apologies to a friend or a Survivor Advocate Coach and ask them if it sounds sincere or if it sounds defensive or like an attack on the other person. Record here what response they have about them.*
- *Role play with your Survivor Advocate Coach or friends for anything that you are going to say when making amends. Record here how these practice sessions went and what you learned.*
- *After you have had your first encounter with making amends, record what happened here. How did you feel about it? How did the other person respond? What have you learned from this? What would you do differently next time?*
- *After you have done your first several encounters for making amends (for example, after 5 times of making amends), record your overall impressions here. Is there anything common? Has anything surprised you? Has anything disappointed you? How do you feel about the process and how has it affected you?*
- *What amends do you have the most difficulty making? What do you need to do to be able to make these amends?*
- *How has making amends affected your relationship with others?*
- *How are you dealing with the feedback from others after making amends? How are you feeling? How are you dealing with the desire to defend yourself?*
- *Write down any other amends that you found that you needed to make after starting the process of making amends.*
- *How can you celebrate or honor the completion of your making amends (step 9)?*
- *Have you had any dreams about making amends? If so, describe them in detail.*

- *Describe any celebrations or activities that you have done to honor the completion of your making amends.*

Step 10 - I continue to take personal inventory and when I am wrong I promptly admit it

- *What is your plan to allow time for reflection each day?*
- *What new behaviors would you like to try to make your program more effective? How would you go about implementing these?*
- *What kind of behaviors and attitudes do you need to be most vigilant against to keep from being in the triangle of abuse and return to the victim cycle?*
- *What are your triggers for your victimization? How can you guard against them or prepare for them? What is your fear, shame, weakness that keeps you defensive? What have you not received, and what, that others can use against you to trick you back into relationships? Identify that and you can see it for what it is worth. Watch for your triggers. See them, label them and choose not to return to abusive relationships.*
- *What are some amends or remedies that you should make when you find out that you are wrong?*

Step 11 - Through prayer and meditation I seek to improve my conscious contact with God as I understand God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for my life and the power to carry that out

- *Can you recall anytime that your life was heading in the wrong direction? If so, what brought you back? Describe this in detail.*
- *How would you describe your beliefs about God and a Higher Power to a child?*

- *What are your favorite sources of wisdom and knowledge about healthy values?*
- *Has anything you ever read convinced you to change in some fundamental or deep way?*
- *If you were stranded on a desert island with only one book, which book would you take? Why?*
- *If you had only one week to live and unlimited resources, who would you gather around you and how would you pass the time?*
- *Write out a complete form of what you would like your obituary to say.*
- *What do you believe will happen to you after you die?*

Step 12 - Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, I try to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all of my life

- *Have you been able to reach out to another trapped in coercive control relationships and stuck in the victim cycle? If so, describe the situation and how it feels to you.*
- *What kind of approach would you like to have had when you first started the program? How can you implement that type of approach in your life to others now?*
- *What you say if someone asked how the 12 Step program has worked for you?*

- *How do you usually handle conflict? Do you know of any way to be more effective in conflict resolution? If so, how would you become more effective? What would be the steps?*
- *How much time do you want to and are able to allow for working with others on their program? How will you go about setting that time aside?*
- *What outside resources can you call on when you need help as a Survivor Advocate Coach?*
- *How do you know if you are suited to helping another person work a 12 Step program?*