



THÉRÈSE JACOBS-STEWART

mindfulness

and the 12 steps

*Living
recovery
in the
present
moment*

Mindfulness and the 12 Steps

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Thérèse Jacobs-Stewart

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Editor's note

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Paths Are Made by Walking:
Practical Steps for Attaining Serenity

I dedicate this book to the people who attend the Twelve Steps and Mindfulness meetings at Mind Roads Meditation Center in Saint Paul, Minnesota. We were inspired by the Meditation in Recovery group at San Francisco Zen Center, which in turn rests upon the awakening of countless beings going all the way back to the Buddha. In each moment of the unfolding conversation about recovery and mindfulness, we are supported by them. May wisdom, compassion, and serenity arise in all.

AS A BLIND MAN FEELS
WHEN HE FINDS A PEARL IN THE DUST-BIN,
SO AM I AMAZED BY THE MIRACLE OF AWAKENING
RISING IN MY CONSCIOUSNESS.

From the "Bodhicharyavatara" by Shantideva¹

CONTENTS



Preface	xv
Acknowledgments	xvii
1. Joining the Great We	1
Four Pure Insights	4
Releasing the Delusion of Separateness	6
Admitting Our Suffering, Opening to Community	9
Entering the Field in the Fellowship of Others	10
Mindfulness Practice for Step One: Resting in the Field of Awakened Ones	11
2. Coming To	15
Seeing Our Internal Response to Events	17
Awakened Beings Are Just like You and Me	20
Restored to Sanity by Touching Our “True Face”	21
Accessing Our True Nature through a Still Mind	22
Mindfulness Practice for Step Two: Prepare for Sitting	24
Mindfulness Practice for Step Two: Breathing and Noting Meditation	25
3. Taking Refuge	27
Step Three as Taking Refuge in the “Three Gems”	29
Taking Refuge in Awakening (Buddha)	31
Taking Refuge in the Path of Mindfulness, Understanding, and Love (Dharma)	34
Taking Refuge in Community (Sangha)	36
Mindfulness Practice for Step Three: Three Refuges Prayer	40
4. Entering the Green Dragon’s Cave	43
Three Sources of Shame	45
Entering the Dragon’s Cave—a Path beyond Shame	48

Facing Our Ambivalence about Step Four	49
The Eightfold Path as a Moral Inventory	53
Mindfulness Practice for Step Four: Inventory of the Eight Gates	55
5. Placing Ourselves in the Cradle of Kindness	63
A Release from the Burden of Self	65
Step Five as Loving Kindness	67
Growing Loving Kindness through Meditation	70
The Ancient Structure of Call-and-Response	71
Mindfulness Practice for Step Five: Loving Kindness Meditation	72
6. Turning Over a New Leaf	77
Cutting through Confusion with Awareness	78
Seeing the Anatomy of a Character Defect	79
Defects as Delusions—the “Daughters of Mara”	82
The Delusion of Skandha-Mara—a Distorted Sense of Self	83
The Delusion of Klesha-Mara—Unskillful Responses to Emotions	84
The Delusion of Devaputra-Mara—Escaping into Pleasure	87
The Delusion of Yama-Mara—Thinking We’re in Control	88
Recognizing Our Delusions	89
Asking God to Remove Defects Starts with Mindfulness	93
Mindfulness Practice for Step Six: How Does Mara Hook You?	93
7. Vowing with the Help of All Beings	97
Hitting the Pause Button	98
Step Seven as Touching Our Buddha Nature	99
The Power of Aspiration	100
Aspiration and Determination Create Our Vow	102
Releasing Shortcomings through Vows	103
Examples of Vows	104
Mindfulness Practice for Step Seven: Write a Personal Vow	106
8. Finding Pearls in the Dust-Bin	109
Seeing Our Shadow, Ending Our Isolation	111
Just the Right Amount of Remorse	113

Starting with the Smallest Desire to Make Amends	116
Making Direct Amends Wherever Possible	118
Making Amends by Speaking Up	120
Experiencing the Grace of Forgiveness	121
Mindfulness Practice for Steps Eight and Nine	122
9. Standing on the Ground of Our Deeds	125
Three Times to Reflect on Our Actions	126
Taking an Evening Inventory with Naikan Practice	132
Mindfulness Practice for Step Ten: Taking a Naikan Inventory . .	139
10. Making Conscious Contact	143
Breathing into Prayer and Meditation	145
Going against the Grain of Unmindful Living	146
Watering the Seeds of Our Buddha Nature	147
Living from a Full Cup	148
No Striving—Just Sit	152
Conscious Contact Lets Our True Self Emerge	153
Mindfulness Practice for Step Eleven	155
11. Remembering Our True Face	163
Awakening the Mind of Love	164
Two Levels of Bodhichitta	166
Awakening in the Space between Thoughts	167
Notes	171
About the Author	183

PREFACE



We meet Monday evenings at Mind Roads Meditation Center in Saint Paul, Minnesota, one chapter in a nationwide community of Twelve Steps and Mindfulness meetings. The room is soft with candlelight, scented by burning incense, and lined with black cushions on the polished oak floor. Our addictions are widespread: drugs, alcohol, food, gambling, cigarettes, or codependency. Everyone is welcome.

We introduce ourselves by going around the circle, saying our first name and Twelve Step affiliation. We have a common interest in meditation practices and how they can inform our recovery from addiction. Each month, we discuss one of the Twelve Steps and how Buddhist thought, meditation, and mindfulness practice can be applied to our life in recovery. We sit in silent meditation together, hear a talk by one of our members, and share our reflections.

As with many Twelve Step meetings, we are a diverse group of people, tall and short, wide and thin, black and white and brown. BMW sedans are parked next to rusty pickup trucks in the parking lot.

Yet we are part of the great stream of beings seeking deeper serenity in our lives, grounded in sobriety by the Twelve Step program, inspired to awaken and live in the present by the practices of mindfulness meditation. In our addictions, we were never here in the moment. We *wanted* to be gone. Now we are learning to wake up to the joy of being alive.

Once a month for the past five years, I have given a talk to our Monday night group. The following chapters are your virtual seat in our meeting. Please make yourself at home.

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The mind, hearts, and energy of many people contributed to the seeding of this book in me and its manifestation in the written form you now hold in your hands.

Bowing in thanksgiving to:

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May the merits of this book be of benefit to them.

In keeping with the tradition of anonymity and confidentiality in the Twelve Step program, names of people mentioned in this book have been changed, along with details that would identify them.

1

Joining the Great We

Step One



We admitted we were powerless
over alcohol that our lives had
become unmanageable.

I WOKE UP in the isolation ward.

Doctor Schultz, tall, lean, and wrinkled with time, squinted through thick glasses. When he treated my grandmother, he used to make house calls. Now, he poked and prodded with gloved hands, head to toe in surgical blue, grunting monosyllabic comments.

“What’s wrong with me?” I asked.

“You are very ill.”

“Can you make me better?”

“I’m trying.”

The initial diagnosis was spinal meningitis, and the treatment was several days lying on a bed of ice to lower the 104-degree fever. Later, the diagnosis was revised to a severe case of mononucleosis. The old-school Doctor Schultz never asked if I had run myself into the ground by using drugs, and I didn’t whisper a word. Not until week four of the hospital stay did it inkle through my mind, *Could it be that I collapsed because of taking all that speed?*

The moment of awareness stands still in time. Two years and then some of nearly daily use, popping white crosses and other street junk to keep going, working three jobs to make grades and tuition and rent. I went to a private college I didn't want to go to, kept up a high grade-point average because I had to. My father expected no less. But amphetamines erased all limitations. I could do anything, never had to sleep, was the life of the party. It was marvelous, magnificent, drug-induced bliss.

Doctor Schultz told me to take a semester off from college. He said I had to put some weight back on, get eight hours of sleep every night, and take vitamins. I was burned out at twenty-two years old. I didn't want to stop using, but I was scared of dying. On the other hand, it wasn't exactly like I wanted to live.

My girlfriend's guy friend, Skip, went to Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings. I asked him what he thought I should do. He said maybe meet up with him at AA sometime; most people stop their drug use before they end up in the hospital for a month, their health in shambles.

I said I'd think about it.

I LOVED THAT GOLD CAMARO but the tires were jinxed. They slid on the black ice hidden beneath the snow, bumping the curbside and blowing a tire. The cold weakened the seal, leaking air. Even the new radial tires didn't help. It was the sixth flat tire so far that year, and it was still cold as a bitch. Bummer. If not for that tire, I might have sat in front of the church for a while and then driven away. But I had to go in and ask for help to put on the spare. The bitter windchill made my hands too stiff to manage it alone.

Saint Matt's Episcopal Church is on the north side of Lake of the Isles, warm and bright and hung with colored lights. "Tis the season," December 27, 1975. The sting of cigarette smoke hits as I walk in, hazy, stinky air. Voices jingling with laughter, underscored by raspy, hacking smokers' coughs. A stranger comes up, right hand extended.

"Hi, are you new? Is it your first time here? Grab a cup of java over there by the kitchen window."

Friendly, happy people are hugging and slapping each other on the back. Lots of friendly, happy people. *What the hell is wrong with them?* But it's kind of nice, comforting. Maybe I will stay for the meeting after all.

There's the little flat tire problem to deal with. Skip said he'd meet me here, and I don't want to stand him up.

Six months after my health breakdown, I'd made it to my first Twelve Step meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous.

I kept going, at first because hanging with people and having coffee after the meeting was fun. And I loved the anonymous part of the meetings. Nobody had to know anything about me. I was safe. I could just come in, sit down, and belong. People were accepting, encouraging, and inspiring. They weren't the losers I thought they would be. It was surprising, unsettling really, to hear people talk openly about their struggles and fears. I had a place with this group of other misfits.

I kept coming back, hoping it would somehow do some good, yearning for the serenity others seemed to have. I wanted to change but didn't know how. People didn't change in my family.

I COME FROM, I NOW KNOW, generations of Irish alcoholics. At least four generations of alcoholics, way back to the "old country." On my first visit to Ireland, when I was piecing together my family tree for a project in graduate school, I tracked down my father's second cousins. I learned that dear old Grandpa didn't come to the United States because of the potato famine after all. He was in trouble with the law, sloppy drunk and knocking over gravestones, getting into brawls at the pubs. He fled the country, bringing his temper with him. His father before him was an alcoholic. Half the family in the old country was alcoholic. Half the family in this country is alcoholic.

And there it is: a whole painful, lonely, shame-based, violent family tree. "We" meant being doomed—genetically wired to self-destruct. Walking into that first meeting was an admission that I needed help, couldn't do it alone anymore. Had there been any other way, I would have passed.

Now, thirty-five years later, I owe the programs of Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon my life. I've stayed straight and can say I am genuinely happy. My wake-up call at the age of twenty-two was a life-changing "failure." The migraines, ulcerative colitis, and dependency on pills are gone. I confess that abstinence from drugs, in and of itself, was not all that difficult. The much harder part has been learning how to live sober.

The Twelve Step program opened access to an inner spiritual life—a

part of me sealed shut, bitter and hard from my Catholic upbringing. After several years in recovery, I became keenly interested in mindfulness and meditation. By chance, I read Lillian Roth's biography, *I'll Cry Tomorrow*, the story of her decline and recovery from alcoholism. She mentions an Inter-Group pamphlet published in the 1950s, which outlined similarities between the Twelve Steps and a set of contemplative practices from the sixteenth century, the Ignatian Exercises. These are a set of prayers, visualizations, and "thought experiments" to be carried out in a retreat setting under the guidance of a spiritual director. The exercises are based on the experiences of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, who offered them as a way to discover God's will and carry it out in our daily lives. I had never heard of them, despite decades of Catholic education. None of my friends in the program had heard of them either.

Eventually I discovered the Cenacle House in Wayzata, Minnesota, a local contemplative center offering a yearlong retreat on the Ignatian Exercises. I signed up in an instant, motivated by what I thought was sheer curiosity. I think now there might have been something more to it, perhaps a deep thirst, a need to find lasting happiness.

The Ignatian retreat started a spiritual journey that has taken me to many places and has inspired practice and study with many people. I continued to train at the Cenacle House during the next ten years, gaining a certificate in spiritual direction. Also, I was interested in Eastern contemplative practices and traveled to study meditation in India, Nepal, and Zen Buddhist monasteries in the United States. I completed graduate studies in psychology and became licensed to practice as a psychotherapist.

These threads, together with the Twelve Steps, wove my recovery from drug dependency and helped mend the effects of growing up in a violent, chaotic, alcoholic family.

Four Pure Insights

In recovery, I grappled with the reality of suffering, the thing I hated about life and sought to escape with drug use. I wondered: What's wrong with me? How did I end up addicted to drugs, despite never wanting to be like my alcoholic father? Why do I hurt so bad and feel like I have a hole in my heart that will never heal?

In meditation classes I was introduced to the Four Pure Insights into the Way Things Are, a Buddhist teaching that shed light on these questions.¹ Sometimes called the Four Noble Truths, the text became an important source of comfort and relief in my recovery.

Four Pure Insights into the Way Things Are, among Gautama Buddha's earliest teachings, were given shortly after his monumental awakening under a bodhi tree. He had spent his entire adult life roaming the countryside, trying to come to grips with the reality of suffering in the world. He abandoned his family's wealth, kept no earthly possessions, fasted, meditated, and pursued understanding truth. Once enlightened, the Buddha taught about four principal realities of suffering.

The First Insight: Suffering

The first insight is that suffering is an intrinsic part of life. (The Pali word for suffering is *dukkha*, translated as a "thirst" or "unsatisfactoriness" that does not go away.) Life serves it up in one form or another. *Dukkha* isn't anybody's fault. It just is. Attempting to push away or control the uncontrollable is folly.

In hearing this insight, I have an image of the Buddha looking and sounding like a counselor from the PharmHouse treatment center in the 1970s, in plaid shirt, torn blue jeans, and a long ponytail, saying "So, deal with it!"

We face the truth of Gautama Buddha's first teaching in the First Step of the Twelve Step program, admitting we are powerless over alcohol (and alcoholics)—that denying and trying to manage our addictive mind is unmanageable. Buddha says this too: *dukkha*, or thirst, is inexhaustible. For Twelve Steppers, our *dukkha* is addiction and codependency. For others it may come in other forms, such as change, illness, loss, or death. But it comes.

The Second Insight: Our Response to Suffering

The second reality, or "truth," is that we have an internal response to the *dukkha* we encounter. For every external event that arises, we have an internal reaction that co-arises. Some of our reactions cause or compound the suffering already there. Examples include numbing out with drugs or alcohol, blaming ourselves or others, and trying to manage and control

another person. We have our own personal brand of insanity, alive and well and inside of us, not “done to us” by others.

Buddha, like the founders of the Twelve Step program of recovery, encourages rigorous personal honesty and self-observation. He taught practices of mindfulness meditation to develop greater self-knowledge and self-control.

The Third Insight: Transforming Our Response

Third, we aren’t doomed or stuck; we don’t have to keep on suffering. Buddha says it is possible to transform our internal responses to the outside events we cannot control. Western neuroscience has confirmed this noble truth, showing in before-and-after brain scans that an ongoing practice of mindfulness and loving kindness meditation changes our brain chemistry and activates our left prefrontal lobe, the brain’s “happiness center.”² If we are willing to deeply engage in spiritual practice, we will change, even down to the cellular level.

The Fourth Insight: A Path to Transformation

The final insight is that there is a path out of suffering. The concrete practices of mindfulness, loving kindness meditations, and ethical living open the way to a life of greater peace and happiness.³ The Twelve Step recovery program gives us specific steps to follow, practices that are amazingly similar, in spirit if not in language, to those of Buddhism.

Further, the Buddha says it is noble to stay with our human experience of suffering. Through it we connect with the all other beings, a great joy.

What? Usually, suffering shrinks our world, occupied only by me and my misery, thank-you-very-much. When dukkhas (“thirsts”) such as loneliness, addictive cravings, or angry feelings take hold, we get lost in our own bubble of pain and separateness. Buddha’s insight was that believing we are unique and alone is a basic human delusion.

Releasing the Delusion of Separateness

The double life of my addiction created a wall between me and others. Between the ages of sixteen and twenty-two, I used regularly, but secretly,

and was proud of it. I maintained an honor-roll grade-point average, never missed a payment for my Camaro, and worked three part-time jobs to pay my college tuition. (Okay, so I was late to work a few times. Maybe more than a few times. Maybe I didn't show up once in a while . . .) Outside, solid citizen. Inside, jumbled-up head case. Ulcerative colitis, migraine headaches, anxiety, and a closet amphetamine user. No one had a clue until I broke down and landed in the hospital. It had been a quiet, hidden path of utter self-destruction.

When I heard the First Step of Alcoholics Anonymous, "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol [and drugs]—that our lives had become unmanageable," the *we* word was like the sound of a foreign tongue. Strange. Unfamiliar. Like a pungent, tart lemon drop: your eyes water from the sour taste. Then you want another one. Although I recoiled from the idea of being part of a "we," I yearned for it too.

In Twelve Step meetings, I was surprised to hear how many others felt cut off and alone too. Even the delusion of separateness is a shared delusion. Tenshin-roshi Reb Anderson, senior dharma teacher at San Francisco Zen Center, says it like this: "You think that everybody's in the whole big world out there, and then there's this little separate bump over here and that's you."⁴

I first heard him talk about this nearly fifteen years ago. At that time I thought, "You bet that's the way it is. No doubt about it." In my family, I felt not only separate but more grown-up than my parents.

WE, MEANING MY SISTERS AND ME, were attempting to get my father recommitted for alcohol treatment. It would be the eleventh time.

My younger sister, Anne, called in the middle of the night, sobbing in fear and anger. "He's pounding on the door, hollering and swearing at me. The lock is going to give. Mother is in bed with a headache."

The usual story. She was in danger; he would hurt her. He was violent when he was drunk, funny and charming when sober. A pillar of the church community.

"Crawl out the window and run to the corner of the block, next to the Sims's house," I said. "Bring your clothes and stuff for school. Watch for my gold Camaro. I'll be there to pick you up in about thirty minutes. Don't try to talk Mother into coming with you. Just leave."

I lived in an apartment by Lake Calhoun with my sister Cecile, two years my senior, both of us under twenty. That weekend, as the three of us talked, we decided it had to be done. Our plan was to call the social worker in charge of his case and sign papers to have the court send my father back to Anoka State Hospital. It was a wrenching decision.

Anoka State Hospital stunk with all the crazies peeing in their pants and not enough staff to take care of them. The food was gross. The court had sent Dad there for his tenth treatment, because he was violent, had threatened us, and then tried to kill himself with his gun. The judge could bounce him back in with the stroke of a pen. We all three swore to stand together, no matter how tough it got.

After a few days, Anne insisted on going back home. She wanted to sleep in her own bed, see her friends at school. She promised not to tell Mom what we were planning. Once the judge signed the papers, the sheriff's department would "escort" my father to the hospital. No doubt it would be another ugly scene. Last time they dragged him away in a straitjacket, hollering like a wounded wolf. All the neighbors heard, I'm sure.

The following Friday afternoon the social worker called. Cecile had chickened out, refused to sign the commitment papers. Anne was legally still a minor, so I was it. The woman informed me that no one was home when the sheriff arrived at my parents' home that morning. I would later find out that Anne, feeling bad for Dad and scared of the possible repercussions of our plan, had spilled the works. My mother drove my father to Canada for the weekend to escape.

The social worker enunciated slowly, each word firm and to the point: "I don't think there is anything more you can do. It's obvious your father doesn't want to get treatment, your mother's enabling him, and your sisters do not agree with what you are doing. You need to give it up. *Get a life*. Go to Al-Anon."

I hung up, numb. Then I lay on the floor of the living room, unable to get up—cocooned in despair, alone, a bump on the side of the road while the rest of life passed by.

Admitting Our Suffering, Opening to Community

Perhaps many of us have dragged ourselves through the door of our first Twelve Step meeting, frustrated, impotent to change the addicts or alcoholics we love, admitting by our very presence that going it alone had failed us. Humiliated, perhaps, to let our hurt show, or to disclose we are out of control—powerless to handle our own drug or alcohol use, powerless to cure our alcoholic loved ones, powerless to manage others in any way. Striving for perfection, hiding our real self from others, or putting on a false face keeps us separate and alone.

But in the act of admitting our pain and suffering, we open up to a community. When we admit our failures, weaknesses, hurts, and needs, we find out we are not alone. A portal to connecting with others is opened.

Thích Nhất Hạnh—a Vietnamese monk and, I believe, a holy person on this earth—describes it this way: “We have to recognize and acknowledge the presence of suffering and touch it. Please don’t run away from suffering. Embrace it and cherish it. To do so, we need the help of friends in the practice.”⁵

A fundamental teaching of mindfulness and Buddhism is that we are interconnected with all beings, all life forces. Believing we are separate, that I do not affect you and you do not affect me, is a delusion.

This is depicted in the story of Gautama Buddha’s moment of enlightenment, which goes something like this: Gautama is sitting under a beautiful bodhi tree, meditating and maybe chanting “Ohm” after years of wandering, searching, and nearly starving to death. He is wrestling with his inner demons, watching them torture his mind. He touches the ground with his fingers, and as he does, the earth rumbles, rising to meet him. All of his suffering and distress falls away. In that moment he is awakened. He avows, “I, together with the great earth and all living beings, attain the way at the same time.”

Buddha’s enlightenment happens in concert with all beings, not alone. He declares his understanding that we are part of the “Great We,” alive in a world of “interbeing,” meaning that our existence is a shared experience. When we walk into a Twelve Step meeting and take Step One, we, too, touch the ground and experience the fellowship there to meet us. Realizing we are

no longer separate and on our own, the veil of delusion is torn open.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (also known as the *Twelve by Twelve*) is the core text of Alcoholics Anonymous. It describes the experience of joining the Twelve Step community like this: “Through it we begin to learn right relationships with people who understand us; we don’t have to be alone anymore.”⁶

Even by myself in my room, I’m part of the Twelve Step fellowship. When I sit in mindfulness meditation, noticing breath, the texture of the cushion, and the sounds of the room, I begin by thinking about being part of the Great We.

Entering the Field in the Fellowship of Others

Tenshin-roshi Reb Anderson asked us to imagine ourselves in a great field with all of the buddhas and bodhisattvas (enlightened beings and spiritual seekers) that have come before us. The picture that popped into my mind was one of a giant football field, an expanse of meditators filling every inch. I imagined that I was surrounded by beings who understood my suffering and shared in my joys.

I never sat in meditation alone again. I started visualizing the “football field” filled with all kinds of people, ancestors, and practitioners going back to the time of Buddha, all meditating together. They breathed *in* as I breathed *in*; they breathed *out* as I breathed *out*. I could almost hear them chanting softly in my mind, the air filled with the scent of cedar incense. It was soothing, sweet. My body began to unwind, release. I was held in their grace.

Thích Nhất Hạnh says he imagines all kinds of spiritual beings, even spiritual superstars, sitting in the great field with him when he meditates. Even though he is a Buddhist practitioner, he sees Jesus, Mother Mary, Martin Luther King Jr., and Mother Teresa. He has photos of each of them on the altar next to his meditation cushion. His grandfather is there on the altar, and other good friends.

This sparked me to call to my maternal grandmother and imagine her sitting in the field. I can see her face, smell the lavender scent of her perfume. She was big and plump, and I felt safe in her arms. I would run away to her house when things got really bad at home. When I imagine her

sitting in the field, I can sense her smiling at me with a twinkling grin.

Now there are many more people from the here-and-now in the field. One is Jim, my husband of thirty years and dearest friend. I see his gentle, tender, wise face. I feel the presence of my sister Anne and the warmth of her generous, giving nature. My stepchildren, who have taught me how to love in ways I didn't know were possible, are also present. I recognize that they are my teachers. And there are the smiling faces of my granddaughters, Grace, Julia, and Olivia. I hear their giggles, sense the lightness of their innocent hearts. They helped me remember joy. Friends in sobriety are there, people who have become family, models of honesty and courage. There are many others.

The pain of admitting our failures and the unmanageability of what the world gives us opens the door to joining the Great We. I entered it at the moment of walking into Saint Matthew's Church, numbed from the cold, enfolded by warmth and the sound of laughter. There are hundreds and thousands of recovering people, in the past and in the present, all holding us in their kindness. There is no separation. We are them and they are us. Gradually, the sense of being separate has fallen away. This is a fruit of the Twelve Step fellowship, and an awakening that deepens with the practice of mindfulness and meditation.

Mindfulness Practice for Step One: Resting in the Field of Awakened Ones

When we are mindful that we share both the suffering and grace of others, we can face what seems unbearable. By opening our hearts, admitting our powerlessness over alcohol, drugs, and other people's choices, we are able to remember we are part of the great stream of We. If we let our mind rest for a moment or two (meditation), there is space for this awareness to arise.

Try this:

*Take a few minutes to sit, be quiet, and rest the mind. Just rest, and let yourself notice whatever is passing through your mind without doing anything about it. Just rest . . . relax with whatever arises.⁷ Notice what it's like to breathe *in* and*

breathe *out* . . . Just rest . . . Observe your thoughts, feelings, or sensations as they arise and pass through . . . letting them be . . . watching them pass through.

After a few moments of sitting with your breath in this way, place yourself in a great, expansive field with all the most loving people you've ever known or wish to know, surrounding you. All the enlightened people of old are sitting with you in this field, great buddhas and meditation practitioners. Imagine there is no separation of time and space, with all the energy and strength of those beings breathing with you, in each breath.

Call upon any of the buddhas, past or present, for help.⁸ Maybe you would even say, "Grandmother, grandmother, I am here . . . right here . . . remember me?" In your own way, let yourself see these benefactors in your mind's eye, or sense the warmth of their kindness, or notice the sweet fragrance of their presence.

Now imagine you are part of a great stream of recovering alcoholics and addicts, members of the Twelve Step program, through seven generations in the past and seven generations in the future. Follow the cascade of anonymous faces, anonymous stories through many generations. Sense their understanding of your struggles, their ability to know what it's like inside your skin. Allow the strength of their recovery to hold you up, to support you like the cushion or chair you are sitting upon.

If you wish, in your mind, call to someone in the present: a loving person in your life, your sponsor, or a person who attends your Twelve Step meeting. Imagine this person's response of recognition and kindness. Allow yourself to feel your connection to him or her, and to all enlightened beings past and present, through all of time. Draw in the strength and wisdom of these beings, joining the Great We with each breath in, and each breath out.



Continue this meditation for several minutes, one or two breaths longer than you think you can stand. In a pinch, you can use the short version from Thích Nhất Hạnh: “I am not alone. Thank you.”

2

Coming To

Step Two



We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.¹

HOPE CAME TO ME in the guise of failure.

If it was Friday night, it was Mrs. Paul's frozen fish sticks for dinner. On Saturday, Swanson chicken pot pie. By the time I turned ten, I could heat them up in the oven, preparing dinner for my younger brother and sister. Mom and Dad ate out, usually at the American Legion or the VFW Post, because Dad said they had excellent steaks, grilled just right. Translation: They serve liquor. Lots of it. Cheap.

I'd go to sleep with half an ear on alert for their return, restless. I could hear them arguing out on the driveway, as soon as the engine shut down. The more he drank, the louder it got, with him swearing, slamming the cupboards, smashing the dining room chairs, and shattering Mom's curios against the wall. I had seen him punch my mother in the stomach and pull my sister Cecile's hair until she screamed for him to stop.

I knew all the places he hid his bottles: behind the draperies in the living room, between bottles of mouthwash in the back of the bathroom closet, inside his shoeshine kit in the basement. On Sunday mornings

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Thérèse Jacobs-Stewart, M.A., L.P., has been a practicing psychotherapist, meditation teacher, and international consultant for more than twenty-five years. In 2004, she founded Mind Roads Meditation Center, a neighborhood practice center integrating contemplative practices from both East and West and home of the Saint Paul, Minnesota, chapter of Twelve Steps and Mindfulness meetings.

Jacobs-Stewart has studied with Tibetan Buddhist monks in Nepal and India, Carmelite contemplatives in a monastery in Arizona, and the Soto Zen community at Green Gulch Farm Zen Center, San Francisco, California.

For more information about Thérèse Jacobs-Stewart and her teaching schedule, see www.mindroads.com.

Hazelden, a national nonprofit organization founded in 1949, helps people reclaim their lives from the disease of addiction. Built on decades of knowledge and experience, Hazelden offers a comprehensive approach to addiction that addresses the full range of patient, family, and professional needs, including treatment and continuing care for youth and adults, research, higher learning, public education and advocacy, and publishing.

A life of recovery is lived “one day at a time.” Hazelden publications, both educational and inspirational, support and strengthen lifelong recovery. In 1954, Hazelden published *Twenty-Four Hours a Day*, the first daily meditation book for recovering alcoholics, and Hazelden continues to publish works to inspire and guide individuals in treatment and recovery, and their loved ones. Professionals who work to prevent and treat addiction also turn to Hazelden for evidence-based curricula, informational materials, and videos for use in schools, treatment programs, and correctional programs.

Through published works, Hazelden extends the reach of hope, encouragement, help, and support to individuals, families, and communities affected by addiction and related issues.

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With the artistry of a memoirist, Thérèse Jacobs-Stewart draws on her personal story and an impressive range of knowledge in psychology, spirituality, and the Twelve Steps to show us the way out of the morass of pain and confusion that addiction creates. *Mindfulness and the 12 Steps* is moving and inspiring, full of practical guidance.

—**KEVIN GRIFFIN**, author of *One Breath at a Time: Buddhism and the Twelve Steps* and *A Burning Desire: Dharma God and the Path of Recovery*



FOR THOSE OF US IN RECOVERY, *Mindfulness and the 12 Steps* offers a fresh approach to developing our own spiritual path through the Buddhist practice of mindfulness, or bringing one's awareness to focus on the present moment. We can revisit each of the Twelve Steps, exploring the interplay of ideas between mindfulness and Twelve Step traditions—from the idea of living “one day at a time” to the emphasis on prayer and meditation—and learn to incorporate mindfulness into our path toward lifelong sobriety.

Through reflections, questions for inquiry, and stories from Buddhist teachers and others who practice mindfulness in recovery, *Mindfulness and the 12 Steps* will help us awaken new thinking and insights into what it means to live fully—body, mind, and spirit—in the here and now.

A counselor and woman in recovery, **THÉRÈSE JACOBS-STEWART** is the founder of Mind Roads Meditation Center, which integrates contemplative practices from both East and West and is home of the Saint Paul, Minnesota, chapter of Twelve Steps and Mindfulness meetings. She is also the author of *Paths Are Made by Walking: Practical Steps for Attaining Serenity*.

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