Welcome!

You are about to embark on an amazing ministry project. The 12-Steps to Recovery is a potent form of outreach that will dramatically enhance your church spirit, sense of community and your own well-being.

You will discover the healing power of the Holy Spirit. You will see God’s amazing grace in action and lives change before your eyes. You will never be the same again.

We have been leading this 12-step Recovery ministry since 2007 and can testify of God’s power to change lives through it. This program is a leadership factory. You will see dramatic spiritual growth in some unlikely people and watch them grow to take up leading roles themselves. The ripples keep moving outward.

Recovery Road is a Christ-centred program based on the eight principles of the beatitudes in the book of Matthew, chapter five.

This program deals with life’s great issues and problems and not just a specific, single issue. The program is gender and issue specific. Confidentiality and anonymity are integral to the program’s success.

At Recovery Road, people are asked to leave their judgements at the door and this is one of it’s keys to success.

As you lead your team through this journey of setting up your own Recovery Road ministry, we pray that you will be led by the Spirit in ways that you have never imagined. If you continue on this program with prayerful diligence, you will change not only your own life, but the lives of many others.

May God be with you as you embark on an amazing journey of healing.

Graham Hood
Chapter One
The Foundation of Recovery Road

In this chapter we illustrate the spiritual foundation of the program describing the key elements of Recovery Road.

As a recipe has key ingredients Chapter One is a list with a description of the essential ingredients of Recovery.

The Serenity Prayer

The 12-step movement grew after the Great Depression with the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous. At the heart of all 12-step Groups is the Serenity Prayer.

There has always been the recognition of “a higher power” in Recovery as we accept that we have been powerless to change our own behaviours.

In the beginning it was universally accepted that God or Jesus Christ was the higher power. But as time passed and more people could see the advantages of the 12 steps, a broader approach was adopted to accommodate those who had different values around faith.

Recovery Road however is a Christ-centred program and we acknowledge unapologetically, that Jesus Christ is our higher power.

Because of the aforementioned history, the Serenity Prayer has previously been adapted in order to “de-God” it so as not to offend non Christian attendees. We see this as denying our Lord, so the prayer we offer and ask our Groups to follow is the original and it is reproduced here and elsewhere in Recovery Road literature.

The Serenity Prayer should be used in every Group meeting.
The Serenity Prayer

“God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time and enjoying one moment at a time.

Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace, taking as Jesus did, this sinful world as it and not as I would have it.

Trusting that You will make all things right if I surrender to Your will.

Knowing that I may be reasonably happy in this life, and supremely happy with You forever in the next.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

Reinhold Niebuhr

Eight Principles Based on The Beatitudes and Their Biblical Comparisons

1 Realise I’m not God. I admit that I am powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing and that my life is unmanageable.

“Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor” (Matthew 5:3).

2 Earnestly believe that God exists, that I matter to Him, and that He has the power to help me heal.
“Happy are those that mourn, for they shall be comforted” (Matthew 5:4).

3 Consciously choose to commit all my life and will to Christ’s care and control.

“Happy are the meek” (Matthew 5:5).

4 Openly examine and confess my faults to myself, to God, and to someone I trust.

“Happy are the pure in heart” (Matthew 5:8).

5 Voluntarily submit to every change God wants to make in my life and humbly ask Him to remove my character defects.

“Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires” (Matthew 5:6).

6 Evaluate all my relationships. Offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm I’ve done to others, except when to do so would harm them or others.

“Happy are the merciful.” (Matthew 5:7).

7 Reserve a daily time with God for self-examination, Bible reading, and prayer in order to know God and His will for my life and to gain the power to follow His will.

“Happy are the peacemakers” (Matthew 5:9).

8 Yield myself to God to be used to bring this Good News to others, both by my example and by my words.

“Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires” (Matthew 5:10).
1 We admitted we were powerless over our addictions and compulsive behaviours, that our lives had become unmanageable.

“I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out” (Romans 7:18).

Promise “God blesses those who are poor and realise their need for him” (Matthew 5:3 NLT).

Thought “The nearer we come to Jesus, and the more clearly we discern the purity of His character, the more clearly shall we see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the less shall we feel like exalting ourselves. There will be a continual reaching out of the soul after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the heart before Him. At every advance step in our Christian experience our repentance will deepen” (AA 561).

2 We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

“For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose” (Philippians 2:13).

Promise “God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted...” (Matthew 5:4 NLT).

Thought “Man cannot transform himself by the exercise of his will. He possesses no power by which this change may be affected. The renewing energy must come from God. The change can be made only by the Holy Spirit. He who would be saved, high or low, rich or poor, must submit to the working of this power” (IHP 20).

3 We made a decision to turn our lives and our wills over to the care of God.
“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship” (Romans 12:1).

Promise “God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth” (Matthew 5:5 NLT).

Thought “Every day of our lives we should surrender ourselves to God. Thus we may gain special help and daily victories. The cross is to be borne daily. Every word should be guarded, for we are responsible to God to represent in our lives as far as possible the character of God” (CG 483).

4 We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

“Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the LORD (Lamentations 3:40).

Promise “God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God” (Matthew 5:8).

Thought “What we want at the present time is to examine our own hearts, to discover if there is anything in them that is not right before God” (RH May 10, 1887).

5 We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed” (James 5:16).

Promise “God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God” (Matthew 5:8).

Thought “Confess your sins to God, who only can forgive them, and your faults to one another. If you have given offence to your friend or neighbour, you are to acknowledge your wrong, and it is his duty freely to forgive you. Then you are to seek the forgiveness of God, because the brother you have wounded is the property of God, and in injuring him you sinned against his Creator and Redeemer” (FLB 128).
6 We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

“Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up” (James 4:10).

Promise “God blesses those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied” (Matthew 5:6 NLT).

Thought “Those who accept Christ as their Saviour have promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. In surrendering ourselves to God to be moulded and trained by Him, we reap great advantages; for we have weaknesses of character, and we unite ourselves to One who is able to remove these defects” (BE January 29, 1894).

7 We humbly asked Him to remove all our shortcomings.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

Promise “But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all wickedness” (1 John 1:9 NLT).

Thought “If the deceptive covering which is about us could be removed so that we could see ourselves as God sees us, we would no longer seek to justify self but would fall all broken upon Christ, the only One who can remove the defects in our characters” (MCP 1977).

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

“Do to others as you would have them do to you” (Luke 6:31).

Promise “God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.” (Matthew 5:7 NLT).

Thought “We must brush out the corners with the dust-brush. We must not hide our evils. Of course we should not expose evils to the public that are matters to be confessed to God alone. But while it is a disgrace to sin, it is no disgrace to confess sins” (RH March 12, 1889).
9 We made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift” (Matthew 5:23-24).

**Promise** “God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God” (Matthew 5:9 NLT).

**Thought** “It is not...too late for wrongs to be righted. Show your repentance for past wrongs by redeeming the time. Where you have wronged anyone, make restitution as it comes to your mind” (T3 549-550).

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

“So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall.” (1 Corinthians 10:12).

**Promise** “God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.”(Matthew 5:7 NLT).

“God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be called the children of God” (Matthew 5:9 NLT).

**Thought** “The wisdom which God gives will lead men to self-examination. The truth will convict them of their errors and existing wrongs. The heart must open to see, realise, and acknowledge these wrongs, and then, through the help of Jesus, each must earnestly engage in the work of overcoming them” (T4 361).

11 We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and power to carry that out.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly” (Colossians 3:16).

**Promise** “But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your
Father, who sees everything, will reward you” (Matthew 6:6 NLT).

**Thought** “The only safety for the human agent who is striving for an immortal crown is to live in hourly contact, in conscious, loving communion with the highest principles God has set forth in His word. Truth and righteousness must be inscribed upon every action done for our fellow men. Mercy must constantly flow forth from the soul, revealing an abiding Christ. Sanctified judgment and purified reasoning will give strength and solidity and spiritual power. Then every cause that asks for our sympathy and co-operation will receive careful consideration” (Manuscript, December 1, 1905).

**I2** Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we try to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

“Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted” (Galatians 6:1).

**Promise** “God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs” (Matthew 5:10 NLT).

**Thought** “As food to the hungry and water to the thirsty, so is the doing of God’s work to those who obey His will because they love Him. Those who are engaged in the work of the ministry are to give evidence that God has a message for them to bear and a work for them to do. They are to labor in the spirit of meekness, showing that they have learned in the school of Christ His lowliness of heart. Those who are ever humble and contrite carry with them the evidence that they have been with Jesus and learned of Him” (Manuscript, December 1, 1905).
Chapter Two
The Mechanics of Recovery Road

In this chapter we provide a road map to meeting success. The key elements of meeting structure. The answer is to keep it simple. Remember it is the Holy Spirit that is running the program and you are facilitating. Follow the map and stay focused. Prayer is an essential part of Recovery outcomes.

Various Ways to Run This Program

Recovery Road has been designed using 12 different Lessons. However when Groups are finding the allocated time is not enough to cover all the Lesson then you can divide each Lesson into two separate sessions. This of course will then extend the length of time the program takes. However, doing it this way may be more beneficial for the Group members. You will find two distinct subtitles per Lesson which will enable easy separation of Lesson parts if this is the path you choose to take. You may also find some Lessons quicker to cover and others will take longer, so dividing the longer Lessons may be an option.

While Recovery Road is a set of Lessons, it is enhanced greatly by living testimony. Testimonies are available in DVD form or even in written form, or as your Group progresses with the live testimony of your own participants. However don’t rush into doing your own as there are strict guidelines as to how this is done. This is discussed later.

We suggest you arrange a testimony every fourth week or even (at your discretion) more often if you prefer. A testimony is always followed by the Small Group discussing the viewed testimony. No Lesson is done the week you present a testimony and discussion. You can start this particular Group by asking, “What did you see/get/think/feel about that testimony and how does it relate to your life?

Recovery Road is designed so all people attending the program get to mingle together before and after Group time.
The Large Group Lesson

The Large Group Lesson is presented to a combined Group of all attendees of both sexes.

At the end of the Large Group (Lesson time) the Group breaks up into gender-specific Groups (Small Groups) where numbers can range from 3 to a maximum size of 12. No relatives are to be in the same Group. And sometimes it is even beneficial if close friends are not in the same Group. If the Group reaches twelve and there are a few more people attending, then divide the Group into two separate Groups, rather than having one large and one small. A Group of eight is a good size.

How to begin the Group is discussed elsewhere as is how to end it.

The Participants’ Guide is a booklet of questions that is helpful to all participants and can be used as a personal journal. The Participants’ Guide is partially used in the Small Group and completely used in The Step Study Group.

You will find there are many questions at the end of each Lesson in the Participants’ Guide, and these questions can be quite confronting to a lot of people. This is where we face our own humanity and sometimes it is too hard to rush into these things.

The Small Group
A Beginner’s Pathway into Recovery

One way of running the Group is to do each Lesson and the first question you ask in the Group is, “What did that Lesson mean to you?” And then to go around letting everyone answer. This “breaks the ice”. Then I suggest you ask one or two of the Lesson questions which are in the Participants’ Guide, and have the Group members take turns answering. Group Leaders should pre select the questions for each week. Move on to the next Lesson the following week. See Small Group / Step Study outline on page 15.

Doing the study this way will be less confronting to people and after progressing through all the steps in this gentle way people are encouraged to continue on with their own Recovery by doing the more in-depth Step Study Group.
It is quite usual for participants to be reluctant to initially share about themselves to others as they don’t trust anyone. As this trust builds up their barriers break down and they begin to trust. This is the beauty of the program.

Recovery is also something that continues for life. The wonderful aspect of this program is that it can continually be run, over and over again with people getting more out of it each time they repeat it. It is awesome how God helps us heal. He allows us to deal with one issue at a time if necessary which helps us grow and gives us the strength and encouragement to keep going. It is like peeling an onion. One layer at a time. When you peel an onion there are always tears. Each layer is tearful and as we reveal our pain we are tearful. But the tears bring relief. And shared pain is healing. We talk out our pain. Our tears flow. Then they stop and we strength and are ready to unwrap another layer. That is the journey of Recovery.

**The Step Study Group**  
**A Deeper Journey into Recovery**

For an in-depth and honest look at ourselves it is important to answer all the questions in the Participants’ Guide. This gives us a clear understanding of the Lesson and of ourselves.

Doing the program using all the questions in the Participants’ Guides results in an amazing Bible study and really helps us heal from our wounds and pain and opens our lives to a full relationship with Jesus Christ.

As Recovery Road is a program that helps us for life and prepares us to be honest with ourselves, to others and to God, it is suggested that participants continue with the program by repeating it often. Each time it is repeated it heals us more. We find other things we have to deal with in our lives and we build a stronger, closer relationship with our Higher Power.

I (Michelle) have been involved in a ladies’ Group for nearly six years now. We ran it continuously for almost five years, just going through all the Lessons. Now we run a Step Study program once or twice a year. We have a wonderful, open, honest, transparent relationship with each other now. We are all aware of each other’s pain and trials from the past and
have helped each other heal and are able to trust each other implicitly. Running the program over again means we can all bring to the table new and current issues we have to deal with. Of course some people come and go and that is fine, but the Group goes on. It is a wonderful means of support and holds us all accountable to each other.

The format for the Step Study Group is the same as used for the Small Group.

**Large Group Lesson Outline**

This is the main Group where all attendees meet together to hear the Lesson each week prior to dividing into the gender specific Small Groups.

Welcome everyone to the Recovery Road program and always introduce yourself. “My name is ...................., I am a believer in Jesus and I struggle with ...................... (whatever it is — and it could be multiple problems).

Have someone read out either the 12 Steps or the eight Principles. Having two or more people share this task is good, as one can do the Principle or Step and the other can do the biblical comparison and the Thought or Promise. Alternate weekly between the eight Principles and I2 Steps.

The Lesson for the week is read out by one of the Program Leaders who prepares for each week. People can take turns doing this. You can enliven the Lesson by going over it in advance and personalising it where it may be appropriate.

While optional, we have found it to be very beneficial for someone to read a short “devotional” out of the Life Recovery Bible. We suggest this Bible as it has many such devotionals in it relevant to the I2 steps and to the Serenity Prayer. This can be shaped to the week’s topic.

At the end of the Lesson close with everyone reading the Serenity Prayer aloud.

Then announce and guide everyone to the Small Group rooms for the gender-specific share time. Announce also that everyone can
meet together after the Small Group Share Time in a designated area for refreshments.

If you would like to, and have the capability of so doing, you could start the Group with a couple of songs to break the ice. These must be of an uplifting nature. But only a couple.

**Small Group or Step Study Outline**

“Welcome to Recovery Road Small Group on Sexual Addiction, Abuse.” (Use whatever title is set for your Group.)

Always identify yourself in the following way: “My name is.............., I am a believer in Jesus and I struggle with.................................”

Ask each participant to go around in a circle and introduce themselves just as you have done. They may not feel comfortable initially to state whether they believe or what their struggle is. Leave it to their discretion.

“Let’s start with the Serenity Prayer.” Have all participants read it aloud together. It is in the front of their Participants’ Guides.

Take turns reading either The eight principles and their biblical comparisons or The 12 Steps, biblical comparisons and thoughts. Alternate these each week.

Read out The Small Group Guidelines and ask for everyone’s agreement before proceeding.

Then progress to the first question to the Group, going around in a circle where everyone is given an opportunity to speak. People can choose to “pass” if they do not wish to speak.

When each person has finished speaking they say “Thank you for letting me share.” This indicates to all in the Group that they have finished. The other members of the Group say, “Thank you for sharing.” This is positive acknowledgement.

When the sharing is complete you should close with a prayer.

Invite everyone to stay for refreshments and a chat with all the
other program’s participants (not just this Group) if they so wish and tell them where they can go to do so.

The Small Group Guidelines

The success of the program hinges on adherence to five, basic and rational, Small Group guidelines. These guidelines will ensure that your Small Group is a safe place.

The Guidelines are self-explanatory and must be read, understood and agreed to at the beginning of every Small Group meeting. The role of the Small Group Leader is to facilitate the meeting around these Guidelines. Remember, Small Group Leaders are not counsellors. They are to pose the topic for discussion and then manage the Group around the Small Group guidelines.

1 Keep your sharing focused on your own thoughts and feelings. Limit your sharing to three to five minutes. This gives every participant an opportunity to share if they wish. If time allows you may share more than once per session.

2 There is NO cross talk. Cross talk is when two individuals engage in conversation excluding all others. Each person is free to express his or her feelings without interruption. Other participants should avoid laughing or any other form of communication that breaks the share. Allow people to cry without touching them or handing them tissues etc.

3 We are here to support one another, not “fix” the others. Offering advice or making suggestions is not permitted inside the Group. This can be done outside the Group, but with discretion.

4 Anonymity and confidentiality are basic requirements. What is shared in the Group stays in the Group. The only exception is when someone threatens to injure themselves or others.

5 Offensive language has no place in a Christ-centred healing Group.

If the Group Leader believes one of the Group members needs to see a counsellor then referrals can be suggested. We suggest you have on hand details of professionals to whom you can
refer people for help. We also recommend you familiarise these professionals with the program you are running.

**Group Leader’s Checklist**

Pre-meeting preparation is essential.

- Always have copies of the Workbook and some Bibles at the ready.

- We recommend The Life Recovery Bible as it has The 12 Steps in it and many devotionals related to The 12 Steps. The Life Recovery Bible also contains testimonies of Recovery. The Concordance section has many related Bible references specific to the healing process.

- A secure, clean, and private room should be prepared with seats in a circle.

- A box of tissues must be on a small table or chair in the centre of the Group within easy reach of anyone needing them.

- Pre-read the week’s Lesson and build a style of your own for presenting it. Try to add your own personality to the reading and invite participation from the Group when reading it.

**Group Size and Structure**

Groups can be as few as three and should be no more than 12. Relatives should not share in the same Group. All Groups must be gender-and-issuespecific.

It is critical that participants and Group Leaders/volunteers confine their activities in Recovery to their own gender. If there is no alternative, it is required that another team member be present. Dealing with the opposite sex in Recovery is strictly avoided. Recovery Road is not a venue for dating or romantic relationships.

We may never know the reason for the pain of those who attend so physical contact should be avoided unless mutually agreed. If you feel that someone needs a hug after Group, always ask them for permission and don’t be offended if they refuse. Above all else
in this manual, the safety of all participants and team members is of the utmost importance. If the Recovery Group is not deemed a safe and watertight vessel it will sink.

It is important that each Group has a Group Leader and a co-leader. These positions can be alternated each week however it is important that the Leaders remain the Leaders for the duration of the course if at all possible. It is important to have a co leader each week to assist with an upset person if the need arises. This rarely happens but you need to have a strategy in place if it does. If there is an upset person that on the very odd occasion cannot settle down then the co leader can help by supporting the upset person to a quiet area. This allows the Group to continue effectively.

**Helpful Hints for Running the Small Group and the Step Study Groups**

The Small Groups and The Step Study Groups are always gender specific and issue specific. You may have a gambling Group, eating disorder or pornography Recovery Group and the list goes on. You can have a Group for all addictions or a Group for all forms of abuse or a Group for relationship problems if numbers are limited. It is vital that discretion is applied when assigning rooms and other facilities. The last thing you want is a notice announcing, “All sex addicts to go to room Two.” Confidentiality is of the utmost importance.

If you have a small number of attendees and time is limited, then go straight into your Small Group session and go over the Lesson there. It is always vital to share any testimony in the open forum and then the Group Leaders should ask participants to relate to the testimony just heard from their own experiences.

The weekly Recovery Road event has been planned to run for 90 minutes to 2 hours maximum. If the Group is small, the objectives of the Group may be accomplished in lesser time. If the Lesson for the week is going to take longer, we advise that you should do it in two parts. Completing each step is vital and participants should not skip over steps to complete later on.

Once in the Small Group the Leader should welcome everyone to the Group and open with prayer. If you feel it better, you may just
use the first three parts of the serenity prayer or pray something more specific to the Group.

The Group Leader then reads through the Small Group guidelines and asks everyone to accept these as the rules for the Group. Ask if anyone has a question and clarify before proceeding.

Then apply the rules for sharing. Sharing can start where the Leader is and work around the circle in a clockwise direction or you can do what we call ‘popcorn’.

Popcorn is allowing the sharers to start with the first one ready to share and then move at random based on who is ready to share next.

The completion of a share is signified by the sharer saying, “Thank you for letting me share.”

We must make it clear that some people may not share for some time. It’s okay for people not to share and just say, “pass” to signify their intention. If a person is reluctant to share over a couple of meetings, a good Group Leader will have a quiet chat with them after the Group to encourage them. The dynamic of the Group will change if one or more people never share. Be mindful of this as you progress.

Begin the Group by starting with the Group Leader, and moving around the circle, each person identifying him/herself. In Recovery we identify ourselves in the following way.

“Hi. My name is John and I’m a believer in Jesus Christ and I struggle with ...............” Everyone should reply, “Hi John.” Then we move on to the next person. People may be reluctant to acknowledge Jesus and or their sin addiction. Just allow them to do what they feel comfortable with. Do not let the identity phase of the session turn into a marathon share.

Why do we identify ourselves the way I have described? “My name is John” is self explanatory. “I am a believer in Jesus Christ” is my identity, and, “I struggle with................” is my issue.

We do not want the addiction to be your identity. This is your struggle. Your identity must always be in your Higher Power.
The Group Leader then poses the discussion question as found in the Participants’ Guide, or if you have a testimony, ask participants how they related to the testimony.

If time permits, participants may share more than once. Participants must only share on their own issues and not talk about others’ problems. The Group Leader and co leader must gently interject if someone does this and remind them of the Small Group Guidelines.

Once the topic has been discussed and the sharing is over, it is common practice to open discussion on how the week has been. This helps people to introduce their daily struggles. This part does not take long but enables participants to offload in a safe place. You may want to pray in a Group around one member of the Group who needs some extra attention. Common sense is the key here.

Make sure that you and your Group’s co leader take turns in presiding over the Group and support each other during the meeting. If a participant becomes overly upset, the co leader should remove them from the Group and take them to a safe place where the best support can be offered.

Remember that tears wash away the pain and if a participant is crying or emotional during the share, use your best judgement and let them go if it is bringing positive results. Touching, patting, hugging or offering tissues at a time like this may shut down the healing. Let them go without interruption unless it becomes uncontrollable.

It is up to you to apply common sense and good judgement around the running of your Group. Stay focused and remember you are a facilitator and not a counsellor. Your job is to keep the sharing going and stick to the Guidelines.

Use the post Group debrief time with other leaders to talk about strategies but remember always to maintain the strictest confidentiality.

If any participant or team member breaks the confidentiality rule they must be brought into line immediately and with love. Many Group Leaders inadvertently break confidentiality by praying for
a person’s problem outside prayer Groups. Avoid using prayer Groups as a form of gossip.

For the Step Study Group alone, it is not necessary to read or go over the complete Lesson as per the Workbook each week, however this is of course optional. There is a brief of each Lesson in the Participants’ Guide which is sufficient for those peoples who have done the program previously.

**Accountability**

Accountability is one of the greatest assets in 12-step Recovery. When a Recovery Group is formed and healing relationships build within the Group, accountability partnerships should also be formed. It is imperative that you have at least one accountability partner on your healing journey.

You must encourage your participants to seek out people whom they can hold accountable and by whom they can be held accountable. Your accountability partner is that person you call on when you feel you may be about to fall. You can call on them to pray with you, to encourage you to hold firm and support your decisions and commitments to the program. An accountability partner will call you if you haven’t been to your Group. They can be relied upon to ensure that you keep your Recovery deadlines.

They do this for mutual benefit because they will use you in the same way. It’s a two way street on Recovery Road.

Accountability partners are not there to give advice or fix your problems. They are there solely to listen and support.

It is a good idea to have more than one accountability partner in case one of them is not available when you need them. When approaching someone to be your accountability partner, it is important to understand that refusal from that person should not be taken the wrong way. Participants must always be careful not to take on too many accountability responsibilities. Quality is better than quantity.

Coaching and mentoring comes from having a Sponsor.
**Sponsorship**

Accountability partners are like team members on a sporting team. They should always support one another.

Sponsors however are like team coaches.

To be a Sponsor you have to have at least completed your own 12-step journey.

A Sponsor offers coaching and advice in a timely way when asked to do so. A good Sponsor will always ask questions in order to help his charge find their own answers. Sage and timely advice is the hallmark of a good Sponsor.

The Recovery journey must comprise accountability partnerships and a good Sponsor.

**Resources and Preparation**

Simplicity is the key. However if you have the manpower and resources, use them to best effect. You can lead an open Group around a Lesson prior to breaking for Small Group. Use any audio visual resources you may have and don’t be afraid to engage in some worship before your Group starts.

Recovery Road is designed however, to be simply run on a minimum of resources.

Please ensure that your room is set up in advance of the meeting. Make sure that you have name tags that participants can write on and place on their shirts. Have the Workbooks and other Recovery Road material on hand for new attendees to purchase. We also recommend a stock of Life Recovery Bibles be available for purchase.

Ensure that each room needed for the gender-specific Groups is set up as described elsewhere.

After the Group finishes it is good for the Group to socialise for a little while, so refreshments could be considered to aid this. Remember, eating together forms friendships.
Decide in advance if you will be showing a recorded DVD testimony or a live testimony and have your audio visual gear set up well in advance.

**A Venue for the Holy Spirit**

The best way to see the role of Recovery is to see yourself as creating an environment for The Holy Spirit to do His work. All glory should be directed straight to Heaven from whence it came and for Kingdom outcomes. By opening and closing in prayer and by continuing to call on The Holy Spirit during the meetings, you will be successful.

Your venue of choice should be set up around the following guidelines.

**Privacy** The room should be as soundproof as possible with curtains on the outside windows.

**Chairs in a Circle** Are for the small Groups or Step Study Groups. You should have enough chairs to accommodate your Group and these should form a circle. At the centre of the circle should be a small table with a box of tissues open and ready to use.

**Comfort** The room temperature should be at a comfortable level and not too stuffy as to encourage drowsiness during the share process. A quiet environment is always conducive to healing.

**Catering** Your main venue should have some light catering facilities to provide some hot and cold beverages. This encourages fellowship before and after the event. Fellowship is vital in order to establish sound accountability partnerships.

**The Power of Testimony**

Testimony is one of the most powerful tools of conversion and conviction on the journey of faith. It must never be underestimated. In Recovery Groups it provides evidence of victory over addiction and faith over adversity. Testimony is real church. There is nothing more powerful than, “Once I was blind and now I can see!”

Testimony is the perfect platform to launch the Small Group discussion in Recovery.
For best results, a testimony should come from someone who has overcome by attending the program. Live testimony from a member of the Group is ideal because not only does it provide hope for others attending, it also uplifts and encourages the person telling the story. It can be the icing on the Recovery cake. It is where the attendee gets to come clean and settle the score.

Your testimony also puts the sword through all gossip that exists about you. It sets you free. We strongly believe that your strength lies in your vulnerability. When you have told your story it is out in the open and can never be used as a weapon against you.

If you do not have any live testimony, there are a number of DVD testimonies available. We call these “canned testimonies”. Mission Serenity will be updating its library of canned testimonies on a regular basis and these will be available to Recovery Road Groups.

Groups should discuss a testimony at least every three out of four gatherings. When a testimony is scheduled from one of your participants, it is very important to have as many people there to witness as possible. It should be a ground breaking event in Recovery.

A testimony should be written out and follow the basic principles outlined in the chapter on writing a testimony. Once written it should be given in written form to the Ministry Leader who will vet the subject matter and coach the person who has written the testimony.

God never gives us anything that He does not want us to share. We don’t have a testimony unless we have a victory and that victory would not have happened were it not for our Higher Power, Jesus Christ. It is His testimony and He wants us to share in His glory.

**Writing Your Testimony**

Some people can ad lib in a public forum while others need to be prepared in advance. When giving a Recovery testimony, it is vital to be prepared. By writing your testimony out, it provides an opportunity to refresh and structure your thoughts. It’s a road map that will assist you greatly in your presentation. A good testimony should take no more than thirty to forty five minutes to deliver. It should include the following elements.
Where you grew up and the circumstances of your childhood.

An outline of your issues and where they started.

A summary of the ramifications of your behaviours.

The turning point that brought you to Recovery.

Your Recovery journey.

Your life in summary as it now stands and your future plans

The power of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in your life.

Once written you should share it with your accountability partner and you should both pray about it. Talk some of the points through and refine where necessary. When you are both happy with the end result hand it to your ministry Group Leader and he or she will vet it and provide feedback.

Group Leaders are understanding of the power of testimony and will always review it to make sure that it will be appropriately received by the target audience. They are mindful of the potential pitfalls of a poorly-planned testimony. Prayer should be the driver of your testimony and Kingdom outcomes the intention.

**Debriefing**

We cannot overstate the importance of a session debrief for the Leadership team after every meeting. This is to enhance the learning opportunities of the team and promote unity. There are always many opportunities to improve, and telling the truth efficiently, without judgement, is a wonderful tool for learning.

After your participants have departed your venue call your team together for an honest appraisal of the team’s performance. Remember to encourage honesty and constructive feedback. The debrief should be prayerful and always end on a positive note. The team debrief is a wonderful opportunity to encourage and support your team. The key to this and all other functions of leadership in Recovery ministry is Servant Leadership based on the WWJD (What Would Jesus Do) principle.
Leaders and co leaders of each specific Small Group should debrief on strategies for the next meeting and discuss various ways of supporting the attendees of their own specific Group. Be mindful of confidentiality at all times and make sure that your debrief is private.
Chapter Three
Ministry Structure and Management

In this chapter we outline the necessary components making up a victorious Recovery ministry. The set up, day-to-day management and continued viability of your Group depends on a proper understanding of what follows.

Nothing in this manual negates the need for common sense in resolving situations that may arise. WWJD (What Would Jesus Do?) will provide the right answers. If in doubt don’t hesitate to connect with your leadership team and/or Mission Serenity.

Teamwork

A successful Recovery Road ministry is based on team work and regular training/fellowship gatherings of the Leadership Group.

If you have sufficient members on your team it is wise to allocate different roles to those who have the spiritual gifts required.

Ministry Leader

A good ministry team must include a Ministry Leader – preferably not the church pastor. The Ministry Leader is responsible to the church board and the pastor. This person must liaise with the church leadership to coordinate promotion, sermon topics and administrative requirements of the ministry.

Autonomy of this ministry is essential. The Ministry Leader must only deal with the church board on matters pertaining to the venue. Content and delivery is strictly held within the Ministry Group and must not be interfered with by church boards or elders not functioning as a part of the team. Issues of doctrine and presentation are strictly autonomous for the sake of confidentiality and security of the program. This cannot be overstated and must be adhered to at all times.
Once the church has given its support to the running of the program and has satisfied itself with the material being used, it must remain at arm’s length.

Servant leadership principles are essential in this type of outreach. Statements based on the words “me”, “mine”, “my” should be replaced with “we”, “ours” and “us” statements. The real Leader is the Holy Spirit. The Ministry Leader is simply the coordinator. The ministry is doomed to fail if the Leader tries to take ownership of the program.

Training Coordinator

This position is a vital one. The Training Coordinator keeps abreast of the latest supplements offered by Mission Serenity and will organise regular Group Leader training events. These should focus on Group awareness, dealing with broken Guidelines and trend recognition. Improving awareness of the Groups needs and improving presentation skills etc.

This person will also organise shared training with other Recovery Road Groups in their area for regular training and sharing sessions.

Encouragement Coach

This person will organise fellowship events and will have excellent hospitality skills. They would often make reinforcing comments to regular attendees and move among the Group ensuring that accountability partnerships are forming and the people have all they need and know where they are going. This person is the go to person for participants and leaders alike.

Leadership

To God be the Glory.

Recovery Groups rely on open transparent leadership. The example of Christ was servant leadership. The Leader merely steers the Group and must be happy to delegate. Micro management in Recovery programs just doesn’t work.

You must be ready to accept criticism as an opportunity to grow. In Recovery, participants are encouraged to pray for the Holy Spirit to
show them their character defects. This is the same for all in the Leadership team. Remember there is no such thing as a “mistake”, only an “opportunity to learn”.

A good Ministry Leader should be responsive to team members’ comments and requests and never take anything personally. Remember that this is a place where broken people come to heal and they bring all their baggage with them.

I have always said that my strength lies in my vulnerability. Don’t be afraid to admit that you don’t know the answer and remember the only truly silly question is the one you don’t ask.

There will be times when the delegated Leader is having an off day. The most junior member of the team can rise to the occasion and save the day when this happens.

Always praise in public and criticise in private. It is always beneficial to start a debrief with an outline of the positives before dealing with any negatives. Always save a positive comment to finish on so you leave it on a high note.

**Leader Selections**

The most desirable Leaders in 12-step Recovery are those who have completed the 12 steps on their own journey. When a ministry first starts out however, this is not always possible. We recommend that new Groups run their own Recovery for the volunteers. Go throughout the whole Recovery Program yourselves as a team. When you have completed the program yourselves you are ready to open to the general public. By now you will have a full understanding of how the program operates.

This way you know what it’s really like for the participants you may be leading in the Small Groups. It is vital that all Group Leaders have their own victory in Recovery before leading the Group.

Remember that as your program continues week in and week out, you will start to see people shining in ways no one had ever imagined. You will find leaders-in-waiting amongst the broken and damaged people who attend.
Encourage them and remember that one of the greatest tools in Recovery is understanding that “God never wastes a hurt”. Once you have a victory in Recovery you now have a purpose to take that good news to others.

When appointing Recovery Small Group Leaders make sure that the Leadership team are of one accord. The potential candidate should be asked to co lead a Group for a while and be lead in gradually.

**Leadership Training**

*It Must be Regular and Interesting.*

There will be a lot of material coming from Mission Serenity by way of regular newsletters and update bulletins. This coupled with understanding each of the Lessons in the work book provides plenty of opportunities.

The most successful Groups meet weekly for training and fellowship events. It’s always a great idea to have mock Small Groups and introduce things that can go wrong. There is no better training than simulating a Recovery Group disaster. These can also be a lot of fun.

You should have a session on writing and presenting a testimony at least once a year.

Always share the training responsibilities. Ask for some of the other Leaders to run a training session on a particular topic.

It is important to make it fun as you all grow. Remember to leave your judgement at the door.
The Leadership Ten Commandments

1 Thou shalt not visit the opposite sex alone at home.

2 Thou shalt not counsel the opposite sex alone at the office.

3 Thou shalt not counsel the opposite sex more than once without that person’s partner. Refer them to others for assistance.

4 Thou shalt not go to lunch alone with the opposite sex. Singles who are already dating must use discretion publicly and in private.

5 Thou shalt not kiss any attender of the opposite sex.

6 Thou shalt not discuss detailed sexual problems with the opposite sex in counselling.

7 Thou shalt not discuss your marriage problems with an attender of the opposite sex.

8 Thou shalt be very careful in answering emails, cards, and letters from the opposite sex.

9 Thou shalt make your administrative support your protective ally.

10 Thou shalt pray for the integrity of other staff members.
Team Unity

Unity amongst the ministry team and volunteers is essential. The ministry will not survive unless the Leadership Group remains united. The following points must always be strictly adhered to.

 nunca entretengas chisme de otros miembros del equipo o participantes. Si eres abordado sobre otro miembro del equipo, debes asegurarte de que estás claramente que vas a referir la esencia de esta conversación al persona concerniente. La confidencialidad es muy importante pero los miembros del equipo nunca deben confiar cualquier cosa mantenida en confidencia y los secretos son destructivos en el ambiente de liderazgo. Si la situación continúa, avísale a la persona que vas a informar esta conversación al Líder del Ministerio. Los principios de Mateo 18 son fundamentales para todas estas situaciones y la resolución de conflictos.

 Prueba por uno al otro. La oración puede lograr mucho y el equipo no solo debe orar juntos, sino también por uno al otro.

 Si la verdad es más rápida. Es un herramienta importante. Nunca debemos guardar rencor y recordemos que en el Recuperación debemos orar para que el Espíritu Santo ilumine nuestros defectos de carácter. Si lo hacemos con amor por uno al otro y rezamos, luego buenos resultados prevalecerán.

 Da crédito a Dios por todo mientras siempre alabas y animas uno al otro.

 Revises regularmente y sesiones de entrenamiento son componentes vitales de un ministerio de Recuperación saludable.

 Disfruta de la regularidad de la felicidad. Los amigos hechos en la Recuperación son los mejores amigos porque ocultan nada. Las amistades de la Recuperación suelen durar para siempre.

 Covenant of Unity

 Todas las miembros del Equipo del Ministerio deben suscribirse el Covenant of Unity que está incluido en su kit del ministerio. Copia el Líder’s Covenant and have all members understand the importance of the covenant and then sign it knowing they are fully accountable.
The Leaders’ Covenant of Unity

- I have read and agree to follow the Leader’s Guide.
- I will attend monthly Recovery Leaders’ meetings.
- I will uphold Recovery Road’s Small Group Guidelines in my Small Group meetings.
- I will pray for each person in my Group.
- I will pray for the unity, health, and growth of Recovery Road.
- I will squelch gossip and resolve conflict with the truth by applying Matthew 18:15–17.
- I will continue working on my personal Recovery and support team.
- I will foster another person to be my Co-Leader.

Leader

Ministry Leader

Date
Conflict Resolution

Recovery Group Leaders must always strive for unity and conflict resolution. The principles of Matthew18 are the biblical answer to issues that may arise.

Grace is the foundation of Recovery and Christlike approaches to situations will always bring healing outcomes. We must always love beyond self and ask ourselves what Jesus would do in this situation.

It is vital to know the issue before jumping to any plan for resolution. Mission Serenity has written a communication strategy called “The Heart Talk Manual”. This book is a simple-to-read listening strategy designed for positive win-win outcomes.

Conflict can lead to gossip and ultimately destroy the credibility of the Group. The good of the Group must always comes before personal interest.

In Defence of The 12-steps

Any ministry that is spiritually successful usually has its fair share of attack. You should not be surprised if this attack comes from within. Issues relating to doctrine and protocol often arise in any community of faith Group. Don't be discouraged by this and see it as a good sign of the effectiveness of the work God has given you to do.

Some will say we are not meant to share our battles with others and we should leave it all to God. We lean heavily on the texts of James 5:16 in dealing with this. “Confess your sins to God, yourself and someone you trust so that all may be healed.”

The work books are studded with the written thoughts of prolific Christian authors including Ellen G White and Marvin Moore. These quotes support the 12-steps that have been successfully healing broken lives since the 1930s.

The essential strategy here is to keep going, and continue the grace that has nourished Christ-centred Recovery for decades.
Marvin Moore has stated in *Conquering The Dragon Within*, that many Christians have found the 12-steps provide an excellent way to overcome besetting and cherished sins. Moore also points out that there is no contradiction between the 12 steps and the biblical principles for victory over sin.

Character development is the work of a life time, and one may wonder how God was going to develop the necessary character strengths in those who accept the truths we proclaim during “the loud cry” and the final warning. Marvin Moore believes that God is using the 12-steps to accomplish this purpose right now in the lives of millions of honest-hearted people, both Christian and non-Christian. Ultimately they will add the finishing touch of doctrine they will need to pass through Earth’s final crisis.

The 12-step program is a wonderful way for people to see and feel the love of Jesus and to begin to have a relationship with Him.

**Promoting Your Ministry**

The best friend of your Recovery Ministry is your local church pastor. It is vital to have his support. Regular Recovery sermons and testimony is a wonderful way to promote your ministry. Nothing sells Recovery like victory in Christ. It won’t take long for the good news to spread.

Inviting the local community into Recovery meetings requires the creation of a safe and confidential environment where judgement is left at the door.

Do not get caught up by the numbers of the people who attend your Group. The Spirit will lead those He knows you can handle.

A brochure outlining your ministry should be created for circulation in the secular environment. These must not be overtly religious in content but focus on the results of the program. These can be left at local Government buildings, doctors’ surgeries, school offices and perhaps letter box dropped in your local community.

It is often a good idea to set up a stall at the local shopping centre with some volunteers to speak to passers by.
We feel it better to avoid costly radio or print media advertising as the results are often not worth the expense. Prayer will lead to successful promotional campaigns so allow your ministry to be totally Spirit lead.

Postscript

Recovery Road is one of the most satisfying opportunities to serve others. At Mission Serenity we believe that the only time we should ever look down on anyone is if we are helping them up.

As you engage in this Recovery process you will be amazed how many people will comment about the sense of serenity you seem to have in your life. Doors will open that you thought closed.

The local church always benefits greatly from this kind of outreach. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is often the outcome for many who participate.

Mission Serenity is here to support you. We look forward to meeting you on Recovery Road and being involved with you at your venue from time to time and at our regular training summits.

May God bless you and your team.

Graham and Michelle Hood and the Mission Serenity Team.
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