

A.R.T.S. Step Eleven Study Workshop Agenda

Note: The suggested timing adds up to about 2 hours and 30 minutes.

Opening

Leader/Facilitator: Welcome everyone. My name is _____ and I am a _____. I will be leading this workshop today. Also serving today are:

(Tech person and any others helping to run the workshop introduce themselves.)

Thank you for participating in today's workshop on Step Eleven. This is an opportunity for more intensive study than you might experience in a meeting. The workshop is designed to go for about 2 ½ hours with a ten-minute break.

The Twelve Steps of A.R.T.S. Anonymous are the program of recovery. The book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, where the Twelve Steps first appear, states, "Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery." Through the Twelve Steps it is possible to dismantle and move through the blocks that prevent us from fully engaging in our creative expression. It is possible to find freedom from what holds us back.

We invite those who participate in these workshops to share them with others. The scripts are available on the artsanonymous.org website. By sharing experience, strength and hope, all who participate benefit. It is also possible that those who submit writing to the Literature Committee could have it included in future A.R.T.S. Literature.

All who wish to join me, let's begin with the Serenity Prayer.

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

We will now read the Steps of A.R.T.S. Anonymous. Are there volunteers willing to help read?

(Tech screenshares the Twelve Steps of A.R.T.S. Anonymous)

Leader/Facilitator: I will now give a brief overview of today's workshop.

- We will have a speaker for about 7-10 minutes.
- This will be followed by introductions.
- We will then present questions for writing on Step Eleven.
- Writing for about 20 minutes, followed by a ten-minute break.
- Then we will go into breakout rooms to share in a small group.
- When we come out of the Breakout rooms there will be some additional questions for about 10 more minutes of writing.
- After that we will have an open sharing of what people wrote, or what they wish to share about the Step, or their experience at today's workshop.

Are there any questions before we go on? Much of this will become clearer as we go.

Speaker

Leader/Facilitator: Please allow me to introduce the Speaker for today, _____, who will be sharing personal experience, strength and hope with Step Eleven.

(Allow up to 10 minutes for the Speaker. Tech gives a warning of time remaining if the Speaker wants it)

Leader/Facilitator: Thank you_____.

Round Robin/Introductions

We will now go into a round robin session. In one minute or less, please introduce yourself by your first name and your art, what you hope to get from the workshop today, or anything you wish to say about what you just heard from the speaker. I will go in the order of who I see on the screen until everyone has had their minute.

(Up to 20 minutes; it depends on the number present. Tech times)

Questions and Writing

Leader/Facilitator:

Step 11: Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Step 11 asks us to continue seeking a conscious relationship with a Higher Power. At this point in the Steps, it may be becoming clearer that something greater than us is operating in our lives.

There are many spiritual practices for prayer and meditation. How we choose to improve our conscience contact is up to us. Asking others or a sponsor how they do it can be helpful. Most guidance suggests starting with a quiet time and place in which the mind has a chance to relax and allow the presence of a Higher Power. The important thing is to make a beginning, however awkward. This is a practice that probably will never be perfected and requires patience and persistence.

Seeking the will of a Higher Power can feed and nurture us. Perhaps this comes in the form of silent and peaceful calm. Difficult circumstances can soften and melt away. Maybe we learn to quiet the noise in our heads that would have us running from the past or anticipating the future. If we find ourselves trying to find a specific solution or worrying about a problem, we can gently turn our attention back to the present moment. Sometimes the right action is revealed, and in time our intuition may strengthen. A sense of joy, contentment, love and the grace of a Higher Power can be felt and acknowledged. New responses to the world around us can bring about a new reality.

Those who pray and meditate on a regular basis can find that the channel between themselves and a Higher Power is a resource in their creative lives. When in the creative process, the practice of asking for a Higher Power's will can be significant. Some of us believe that we were created to be creative beings; that each of us has a unique contribution to make to the world. Perhaps it is through us that a particular idea, expression, or solution will be shared with the world. Seeking to be a channel for what God created us to be can bring an appreciation of our nature and our purpose. Seeking knowledge of God's will for us, and the power to carry that out, can serve to deepen and strengthen our lives, the world, and our art.

(Tech screenshares Step Eleven and the two sets of questions in the box below)

Step Eleven: Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Experience: What does Step Eleven mean to me?

- What do I think of prayer and meditation, and why?
- What does "conscious contact" mean to me?
- What does it mean to me to pray for knowledge of God's will?

- What is the difference between God’s will and my will?

Strength: How do I feel about Step Eleven?

- What feelings emerge at the thought of seeking God’s will?
- Are there times when I was mistaken about God’s will, and what difficulties did this cause?
- Is there anything blocking me from taking Step Eleven, and how might the other Steps help?

Leader/Facilitator: These questions are offered as prompts to choose from for writing on Step Eleven. The questions are loosely divided by an emphasis on what we think and how we feel. They are optional, and you may have other ways to explore Step Eleven.

Is there a volunteer willing to read the questions aloud?
Are there any questions before we begin writing?

(Allow 20 minutes to write. Tech times)

Break

Leader/Facilitator: We will now take a 10-minute break. Please everyone, mute yourself. If you are doing anything distracting, please turn off your video. Some of you may wish to continue writing during this time. We will all come back together at _____ o’clock.

(Break for 10 minutes. Tech times)

Breakout Rooms

Leader/Facilitator: Welcome back everyone. Some of you may feel you have things to talk about. We will now be putting everyone into a breakout room of 4-5 people for sharing on the Step for about 25-30 minutes. There are suggested guidelines and a format for the breakout rooms posted in the chat. Breakout rooms will be given a 5-minute warning before closing.

(Tech person first puts the breakout room format and guidelines below in the chat. They then assign and open the breakout rooms. Use the "broadcast" feature to give a warning for when the breakout rooms will close)

Breakout Room Format:

- Everyone briefly introduces themselves by their name and art
- The group selects a volunteer to read the guidelines
- The group selects a volunteer to be the Timer
- The group decides how much time to give each person to share, and may include a warning for when time is up

Guidelines:

- Each participant may share their writing or what they are learning about the Step
- Please mute your microphone while others are sharing or reading
- Please avoid engaging in crosstalk or asking questions about what another is sharing

Final Questions and More Writing

Leader/Facilitator: Welcome back, everyone. A final set of questions will now be introduced to explore the hope that can be found in this Step. You have the option to use any one or all of these questions, or another question. Is there a volunteer to read the questions?

(Tech person screenshares the set of questions in the box below)

Hope: How does Step Eleven relate to me and my creative expression?

- In what ways might a conscious contact with a Higher Power help my art?
- What are the ways is seeking the will of a Higher Power the same or different from seeking my creative expression?
- What can I gain or strengthen in my creativity by seeking the power to carry out the will of my Higher Power?

Leader/Facilitator: We now have ten more minutes to write.

(Allow ten minutes to write. Tech times)

Open Sharing and Wrap Up

Leader/Facilitator: In the time we have left, we will take a show of hands to hear from those who wish to share something they wrote, or any breakthroughs or "aha" moments they experienced today.

(Allow about 20 minutes depending on time. Tech times)

Closing

Leader/Facilitator: Are there any announcements related to A.R.T.S. or to this series of workshops?

(Tech person screen-shares the Closing Prayer)

Leader/Facilitator: We will end with the Serenity Prayer, but first, may I ask someone to read the Closing Prayer of A.R.T.S. Anonymous?

In closing, I would like to say that no matter how distanced we may feel from our creative sources, no matter how long it has been since we were in touch with our creative spirit, or how feeble may seem our creative impulses, they are reawakening in our Higher Power's time, through this program and through our actions, no matter how small or how simple, a day at a time. I may not be able to see my own growth, or even to see my creations as beautiful, but I am able to see yours as inspiring and enriching my emotional, spiritual and physical world. We are not recovering merely to hide our light under a bushel; our creative gifts are a gift. To celebrate them, we humbly apply ourselves, sometimes to the work of art, and sometimes to play. May A.R.T.S. Anonymous teach us that our art, celebrated, will benefit and feed our own souls first, and the world's second, for the world hungers as much for this beauty as for food. We meet here together to feed this deeper hunger.

Leader/Facilitator: Please join me in the Serenity Prayer

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