

## **A.R.T.S. Step Nine 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 Nine. 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](http://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 screen shares 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 Nine.

-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 share personal experience, strength and hope with Step Nine.

*(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 9: Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.**

In Step 8 we make a list of all we have harmed and became willing to offer amends to them all. Step 9 is about finding the best way to make amends, and to do so in a way that does not cause further harm.

Making amends may include an apology. Yet making amends can also be about doing our best to make things right, and this can take many forms. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines the word "amends" in two ways. As a noun, it means, "Compensation for a loss or injury, or something done to make up for a loss or injury." As a verb, it means "To make better, try to improve a situation, remove errors, or change one's behavior or character for the better." There are many possibilities for how amends are made.

Sharing our Step 8 list with a sponsor, counselor, or some other mentor can help sort out what is ours to "make right" and what is not. Listening to the experience,

strength, and hope of others can help determine to whom we owe direct amends and the best way to make those amends.

In making direct amends, it might be best if we let go of what the other person did and focus on taking responsibility for our own words and actions. We can ask God to help us change where we need to, and avoid defending, explaining, or justifying our behaviors. Maybe we can ask the person what we can do to make things right.

In some cases, amends might be more appropriately made by other means. Making amends might be to let go of a resentment. For others it may be enough to practice doing our best to do the right thing, including how we care for our families, being a good worker, giving service in meetings, or by sponsoring another member. Writing a letter of amends can work in situations where someone is long gone. In all cases, we take care not to do further damage, and possibly this means not approaching the person at all.

Another consideration is how we harmed ourselves, including as artists. The A.R.T.S. Tools of Recovery offers a list of behaviors and actions we can take to heal our creative lives. Sharing these ideas out loud with others, or with a sponsor can affirm the commitment to make amends to ourselves.

When we make peace with others, the practice of forgiveness might help us to accept the truth and let go of the past. A growing freedom from the fear of God, ourselves, and others can bring us to a further opening to our gifts and our lives.

*(Tech screenshares Step Nine and the two sets of questions below)*

**Step 9: Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.**

**Experience: What does Step Nine mean to me?**

- What does it mean to me to make “direct amends?”
- What challenges come to mind when I think about making amends to others?
- What are the benefits of offering amends to right a wrong?

**Strength: How do I feel about Step Nine?**

- What feelings do I have at the thought of admitting a wrong to another?
- What feelings come up when I remember those moments when I wronged another?
- How do I feel about making amends to myself and my creative life?

*Leader/Facilitator:* These questions are offered as prompts to choose from for writing on Step Nine. 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 Nine.

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 Nine relate to me and my creative expression?**

- If I were to make changes in my behavior towards others and in my connection to a Higher Power, could it affect my creative flow?
- How might letting go of feelings such as expectation, resentment and blame free me to receive creative inspiration?
- In what ways does doing my art feel like making amends to myself?

*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.*

