

## **Twelve Steps for Planetary Recovery**

In the 1930's, a handful of people confronted the life-threatening condition of alcoholism and launched a recovery program called the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. This program is so effective it has inspired many other twelve-step programs that have touched the lives of millions of people around the world.

Now we face an even more life-threatening condition: the destruction of the environmental life-support systems of our planet. Like alcoholism, this destructiveness is based on addictive attitudes, lifestyles, and behaviors, and as millions of recovering addicts have shown, these self-defeating patterns can be changed.

Twelve Steps for Planetary Recovery is designed to address our personal, local, and global condition. Practicing these steps will free us individually and collectively to discover solutions to our environmental crises and the interrelated emotional, economic, spiritual, and social problems that confront us. One day and one step at a time, they can become a guide for our individual and collective lives.

1. We, humanity, admitted that we were destroying the planet and that our need to dominate, consume, and control had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that we, the earth, and the universe are one, and that our tendency to dominate could be balanced by our desire for unity.
3. Made a decision to call on a power greater than ourselves to bring us into balance.
4. Made a fearless and thorough moral inventory of our beliefs, attitudes, and practices, and evaluated their impact on us and the rest of the planet.
5. Admitted to ourselves, a Higher Power, as we understood it, and each other the exact nature of our wrongs, and released shame, so that we could move forward with compassion for ourselves and others.
6. Became willing to make social, attitudinal, and economic changes in order to be in balance with our planet and in harmony with ourselves.
7. Humbly asked our Higher Power to help us change our technologies, social relations, and personal and collective lives so that we could promote life enhancement and sustainability for ourselves and other species.
8. Made a list of all the ecological and social damage we had caused and became willing to reverse it.
9. Cleaned up our rivers, oceans, landfills, and air, as we cleaned up our thoughts, emotions, actions, and social relations.

10. Continued to monitor how our attitudes and economic and social behavior impact the web of life, and when we were wrong, promptly called ourselves to awareness.
11. Sought through observation, experimentation, cooperation, and meditation to expand our conscious contact with ourselves, the earth, and the universe, so that we could continually support our collective well-being, evolution, and sacred rhythm.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to bring balance into every relationship, with ourselves, each other, our planet, and the universe of which we are a part.

These steps may seem overwhelming. In fact, we don't expect to practice them perfectly. Instead we plan to use them for study and discussion, as reference points to evaluate where we are. We need to be honest about our situation and our capacities. We need to face ourselves and each other squarely and lovingly. And we need to do so now. Nothing less has worked or is working. Nothing more is required.

### Earth Day

**“. . . on April 22, 1970, Earth Day was held, it was one of the most remarkable happenings in the history of democracy. . .” – *American Heritage Magazine*, October 1993**

Senator Gaylord Nelson commissioned April 22, 1970 to salute our earth and bring to the forefront the sustainability problems we face on our planet. This annual earth awareness event has educated and involved millions of Americans.

“Actually, the idea for Earth Day evolved over a period of seven years, starting in 1962. For several years, it had been troubling me that the state of our environment was simply a non-issue in the politics of the country. Finally, in November 1962, an idea occurred to me that was, I thought, a virtual cinch to put the environment into the political “limelight” once and for all. The idea was to persuade President Kennedy to give visibility to this issue by going on a national conservation tour. I flew to Washington to discuss the proposal with Attorney General Robert Kennedy, who liked the idea. So did the President. The President began his five-day, eleven-state conservation tour in September 1963. For many reasons, the tour did not succeed in putting the issue onto the national political agenda. However, it was the germ of the idea that ultimately flowered into Earth Day.” – Senator Gaylord Nelson

The event is now international. You can find activities for the USA and other countries at [www.EarthDay.org](http://www.EarthDay.org).

You may also want to visit [www.GlobalGreenCities.com](http://www.GlobalGreenCities.com) to see evolving models for sustainable urban growth.

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