

Relief Is Coming

Reflections from the Desert of Addiction

Selected pages from the recovery workbook by Trey E.

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Read the voice first. Then decide.

This preview uses complete selections from Relief Is Coming so you can experience the book the way it is meant to be used: as honest recovery writing you can sit with, question, and carry into the next right action. The pages that follow are presented in the same visual style as the current sample series.

Relief Is Coming is written from lived experience for people who are hurting, newly sober, trying again, or standing at the edge of change. It is supplemental recovery writing, not a replacement for treatment, therapy, sponsorship, meetings, medical care, or emergency services.



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MY SHARE

I wish I could say that when I stopped drinking everything immediately got better. It didn't.

For about a year and a half, I tried to do sobriety entirely on my own. Pure self-will. I changed jobs, changed locations, isolated myself, tried to "start over," and spent a lot of time trying to think my way into sanity. Instead, I slowly found myself becoming more fearful, restless, hopeless, and mentally exhausted than I had ever been while drinking.

Even in my first days around recovery meetings, I was still trying to control everything. Still trying to out-think life. Still trying to save myself through my own willpower and intelligence.

And honestly, by the end of it, I was getting very close to losing my mind.

Addiction took me to a place where I genuinely did not think life was going to continue much longer.

Not metaphorically.

Not emotionally.

Literally.

By the end, I was exhausted. Exhausted from fighting myself, hiding from people, trying to control everything, and waking up every day trapped inside a mind that I no longer trusted. I was sick and tired of being sick, and tired.

And somehow, through the people in recovery, the Twelve Steps, honesty, prayer, surrender, and a willingness I did not even fully understand at the time, my life slowly began to change.

Not overnight. Not perfectly. But truthfully.

This book is not meant to replace Alcoholics Anonymous, sponsorship, treatment, therapy, medicine, or any other path someone may need. It is simply one person's attempt to share the experience, strength, hope, and spiritual principles that helped save his life.

The ideas in these pages are rooted primarily in the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and the experience shared in the Big Book, while also drawing from many other voices, experiences, and perspectives gathered along the way.

You do not need to believe exactly what I believe. You do not need to understand God perfectly. You do not need to have everything figured out before you begin. You only need a little willingness.

Recovery is not about becoming perfect. It is about becoming honest. It's becoming open. It's becoming willing. It's becoming present.

It's about becoming free.

And if you keep going long enough, one day at a time, life can begin to feel beautiful again.

Step 2 - Redefining Sanity

“We came to believe, or at least became willing to believe, that a Power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity.”

Honestly, the “restore us to sanity” part made perfect sense to me pretty quickly. By the time I got to this step, I knew my thinking wasn’t right. I had gone as far as convincing myself there had to be something physically wrong with my brain. I actually went and got an MRI because I was so convinced that when I was having seizures in the hospital detoxing something had gone very wrong and the doctors hadn’t caught it.

So the idea that I needed help getting my mind back into some kind of balance didn’t offend me at all.

The harder part was the “Power greater than ourselves” thing.

What does that even mean?

The Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book says we have to decide: “either God is everything or else He is nothing”

So not knowing anything about spirituality, I went all in on the “everything” part.

For me, God became everything. The trees, the stars, the sun, people, nature, energy, love, pain. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Allah. Buddha. Krishna. Yahweh. Creator. The Great Spirit. Every religion, every belief system, every attempt humanity has ever made to understand what all of this is.

All of life unfolding exactly the way it has from the very beginning until now.

And suddenly, God became something I could relate to. Not some king up on high. Or whatever. I didn’t have to understand any of that anymore.

Just, Everything.

That was enough for me.

Step 2 wasn’t about suddenly becoming religious or magically understanding God. It was just about becoming willing to believe that my mind and my self-will were not the highest power in existence. In fact who the hell was I to think I knew better than, well... Everything?

That willingness opened the door to hope.

Not certainty. Not proof. Just the possibility that maybe things could actually get better.

Step 3 - Letting Go

By the time I reached Step 3, I didn't have to wonder very hard whether my way was working.

Standing on my mother's fourth-floor patio, looking down at that quiet shaded ground below thinking how peaceful it looked was still pretty fresh in my mind.

That memory was still close enough to scare the shit out of me.

I knew *exactly* where my own thinking was going that day. In treatment centers I believe they call it "suicidal ideation."

In the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous, you'll hear it said that for the addict there are only three outcomes: institution, jail, or death. I say it a little differently. Institutionalized, Incarcerated, or Incinerated.

However you say it, the meaning is the same.

I had seen what the end of "my way" was going to look like.

I remembered saying "I'm done. I'm finished even trying to do this my way. I don't have another answer. Whatever is out there, I need help. I've got nothing left. Just take me. I don't care what happens. Just not this anymore. I don't want to die, but I don't want to live! Please! Help!"

That was my Step 3.

Not understanding.

Not certainty.

I didn't suddenly believe in anything. I didn't have it figured out. I just knew I couldn't keep going like that.

So I decided to let it all go.

I wasn't going to be cool, or get the chicks, or make everybody jealous with all the stuff I had. I was just going to do my best to listen to whatever it was that I was praying to that day.

Try to be humble. Try to be grateful. Try to be selfless.

I didn't know what any of that really meant and I certainly didn't know how the hell to do any of it.

I knew it was going to be hard because it meant giving up control and my whole life was about control by any means necessary up until then.

But I was going to try.

Step 4 - Why We Avoid Looking

On the idea of being “constitutionally incapable,” I started realizing there was probably a reason for that. At least for me.

I had spent so long avoiding guilt and shame. Blaming other people. Holding onto everything that had been “done to me,” everything that “wasn’t my fault.” Letting my ego build a case for why I was right, justified, and somehow above it all.

After a while, that was all I could see.

When I got to the part about “my part,” I struggled with it. I didn’t understand what I was supposed to be looking for. I’d sit there staring at it, trying to force it to make sense, and getting nowhere.

I remember sitting in a meeting hall by myself one day when an old-timer named Paulie came over. He asked what step I was on, nodded, and told me to bring my book and sit down.

In one short conversation, something shifted, and Paulie became my sponsor for life.

He looked at me and said, “You’re full of shit. You’ve spent your whole life running away from what you don’t want to be instead of running toward what you do. It’s time to stop running and turn around.”

He was much gentler than that, something about chasing hamburger when God wanted me to have steak, but gentle isn’t really my strong point.

Then he gave it to me even simpler.

“Right here, right now, you can either say fuck everything and run... again... or you can face everything and recover.”

That broke all the barriers for me in one hit. Because suddenly it wasn’t complicated anymore. It wasn’t about finding perfect answers or understanding every detail. It was about being willing to stop avoiding and actually look.

Paulie finished with something I’ve never forgotten:

“You’ve got to lose your face to save your ass.”

That’s what Step 4 really started becoming for me.

Taking off the mask.

Not a search for answers. Just a decision to stop running.

Recovery Tools & Program Use

The full workbook connects the reading and reflection format to simple online worksheet tools that can support individual recovery work, sponsor conversations, peer-support conversations, sober living assignments, and program-based reflection.

Online recovery tools include:

- Step 4 Resentments
- Step 4 Fears
- Step 4 Harms
- Step 4 Sexual Conduct
- Step 6 Character Defects
- Step 8 Harms Done

Helpful for:

- Treatment centers
- Sober living homes
- Peer support programs
- Alumni groups
- Faith-based recovery
- Sponsors and recovery groups

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For institutions, media, and recovery partners

Relief Is Coming can be reviewed as a supplemental recovery reflection workbook for client welcome materials, personal reflection, discharge or alumni support, group discussion, or sober living use. The book is written in plain language and is meant to support, not replace, appropriate care and recovery support.

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If the voice feels right, keep going.

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