

Using the 12 Steps for Global Recovery



The 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous have been used by millions of people for addressing a variety of harmful addictions, not only with alcohol and other drugs, but gambling, sex, food, and the enabling behavior of those who deal with addicts, called co-dependents. The phenomena of addiction – using a substance or a process to the degree that it threatens the functionality and stability of your life – is widespread.

As a society we have a collective addiction. We are addicted to consuming the Earth. This addiction is threatening our health, our economy, our political stability, and the future of civilization as we know it. Our addictive consumption is deeply embedded into our economic system, which is wholly dependent on exploiting natural resources to produce goods. Economic prosperity means more shopping malls, car sales, and home building. As we pollute the biosphere with industrial waste, drive up global temperatures, and fight wars over resources, this addiction is life-threatening. It is even part of our identity: we are called “consumers,” continuously urged by advertising to consume as much as possible.

What if we adopted the *12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous* to address our addictive consumption of the Earth? Here’s what it might look like:

1. Admitted that we were powerless over the culture’s addictive consumption and destruction of the planet, and that our environmental crises had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that the divine power of Gaia, the living Earth, could run the biosphere correctly and heal the destruction over time.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and the legislation of our behaviors over to the balance of nature, as we understand it through our sciences and spiritual practices.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of the extent of the damage we have done to the planet.
5. Globally admitted the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to let the needs of Gaia override these destructive policies and behaviors.
7. Humbly returned to simpler ways of life, allowing our connection to Gaia to guide our habits.
8. Made a list of all systems we had harmed, and realized the need to make amends to them all.
9. Created direct policies, legislation, and practices to address such harm wherever possible.
10. Continued to monitor the way we live upon the Earth, and when wrong, promptly exposed it.
11. Sought, through appropriate activity and spiritual practice, our conscious connection with Gaia, seeking knowledge of Nature and the power to live collectively in harmony with Her.
12. Having experienced a global awakening as a result of these steps, celebrated and sought to help other people and nations find their way to a healthy relationship with their environment and fellow beings.

Bright Blessings,
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