



TWELVE STEPS
for the
RECOVERY
of the
AMERICAN SOUL

1. We admitted that we had become divided against ourselves, that our national life had become unmanageable through fear, greed, falsehood, and the lust for power.
The first step is honesty. No recovery begins with propaganda. We have to admit that something deep in the American spirit is wounded.
2. Came to believe that a truth greater than ideology, tribe, party, or profit could restore us to sanity.
A nation cannot heal if it worships faction. Recovery begins when truth matters more than winning.
3. Made a decision to turn our national will toward liberty with responsibility, power with humility, and freedom with conscience.
Freedom without conscience becomes predation. Power without humility becomes corruption.
4. Made a fearless and searching moral inventory of our history, our institutions, our myths, and our behavior toward one another.
Not self-hatred. Not self-glorification. Just truth. We must look honestly at slavery, exploitation, conquest, injustice, corruption, violence, and betrayal—but also at courage, sacrifice, creativity, and democratic aspiration.
5. Admitted to ourselves, to one another, and to the next generation the exact nature of our wrongs.
A country begins to recover when it can tell the truth out loud. No euphemisms. No selective memory. No hiding behind slogans.
6. Became entirely ready to have our cruelty, dishonesty, arrogance, and indifference removed from our common life.
We cannot keep our favorite sins and still ask for renewal. We must become willing to change not only our policies, but our character.
7. Humbly asked for the strength to become a more decent people: more truthful, more just, more merciful, and more self-restrained.
National recovery requires humility. We are not the saviors of history. We are human beings capable of nobility and barbarism. We must choose.

8. Made a list of all the people, peoples, communities, and nations we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
This includes those harmed by racism, exploitation, neglect, war, corruption, cynicism, environmental destruction, and the abuse of power. Recovery requires memory joined to responsibility.
9. Made direct amends wherever possible, except when to do so would create further harm.
Amends are not mere apologies. They are repaired systems, honest education, fair dealing, restored trust, protection for the vulnerable, and policy rooted in human dignity.
10. Continued to take national inventory and, when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
A healthy nation does not need to pretend to be flawless. It needs the capacity for self-correction. Repentance is a civic virtue.
11. Sought through reflection, dialogue, prayer, moral courage, and democratic practice to deepen our contact with what is highest in us, asking only for the wisdom to know what is right and the courage to do it.
A republic without an inner life becomes mechanical, anxious, and easily manipulated. We need silence, depth, thoughtfulness, and moral seriousness.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a people, we tried to carry this vision into our institutions, our communities, and our public life, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.
The goal is not a moment of inspiration. The goal is a new way of being American: more honest, more responsible, more courageous, and more worthy of the freedoms we claim.