

Step Write Up



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Courage and the Courage to Change by Michelle Devine Giese, VP/COO

Editor's Note: The theme for this issue is the Serenity Prayer

Webster's defines courage as "bravery or fortitude". I personally like a little less formal definition "Courage is having the guts to do what you believe is right." The thing that stands out to me about both of these definitions is that neither mention the absence of fear or that it is easy to have courage. I think sometimes when we see someone taking an action we view as courageous it "looks easy". I believe in most situations that is not the case. The person is probably nervous or afraid or unsure, but they DO IT ANYWAY. The difference between having courage and not having courage is what action is taken.

Taking that next step is where courage comes in. Courage is confronting a friend or relative who maybe making some unhealthy choices and risking them getting mad at me but doing it anyway because I care too much not to. Courage is asking someone for help when that is not comfortable. Courage is saying yes to a new adventure.

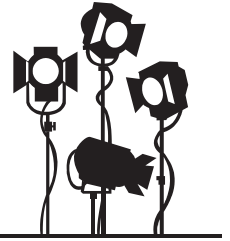
One of Webster's definitions of change is "give up one for the other." In my office I have a picture with a saying "Changes, There are no endings...only new beginnings" by Flavia. I have this because I need to remember that sometimes. I like little changes such as a new walking route, a new pair of shoes or trying a new food. What all of those have in common is that I can go back to the old one if I don't like the new one. Or if the new one is uncomfortable, there is comfort in knowing that I can go back.

I am not always good with big changes, especially if they are not my idea (those who really know me know that well). I don't like endings. I try to remember the saying when faced with change but sometimes it is really hard. When they told me I had to give up my "old life" when I went to treatment that was very scary. I did not know another life; I did not know a life without alcohol. I saw this as a big ending not a new beginning. I was giving up my identity or what I thought was my identity. I was giving up the life I knew "for the other" life. When I was 9 my parents told me I was moving to Appleton from Stevens Point, I did not see this as a new adventure but an ending to friendships and a school I knew. What I found in Appleton was lifelong friends and schools with even more opportunities. I can't imagine not making those changes (forced or chosen) and I realize I did not give up anything, but I have gained so much. I have gained new friends, self respect, and health just to mention a few.

All in all when I have had the courage to talk to that friend I see in trouble, confront that coworker who's not doing so well, take that step that is uncomfortable for me it has worked out in one or another. Once I get past the fear and do it I feel good about the decision made. The next time I am faced with the same situation it is easier to "do what I believe is right".

I hope you will find your Courage to Change.

Employee Spotlight: Johanna V. Neenah Plant



I remember my first day as a Step Industries employee frightfully well. I was a raw month and a half sober, still in rehab, and found myself folding paper napkins atop a stainless steel industrial table for ten hours. I was certain my life was over.

I look back now, six months later, to find that girl barely recognizable. I have undergone such a personal transformation in these past months, and I know that working at Step greatly contributed to that. I am able to look beyond the monotony of the actual work, the not so agreeable hours and the sometimes squalor ambiance. I see that I have found a place where it is OK to be exactly who I am, at whatever juncture I'm at in my life and my recovery.

That one perk has been insurmountable in comparison to all else. I was able to find a certain sense of comfort and from this was able to grow. I was surrounded by people who understood what it was like to struggle with alcoholism and addiction. These people became my allies, my teachers, even my friends.

This last month in particular has marked one of significant change in my life. I've moved out of transitional living and have made the decision to go back to school

at UW-Madison in the fall. Throughout this decision-making process I received so much support and encouragement from everyone at Step.

Because people there really took the time to know me, most everyone knew how much returning to school meant to me. I've secured a different job up until the time I leave for school, thus ending my employment at Step Industries. It was so wonderful to leave Step knowing that I will always have that group of support to turn to no matter what.

Though on that first day I never imagined I'd be saying this, I will be forever grateful for the time I spent as a Step Industries employee and will carry much of what I learned in my time there with me always.

An Easy Way to Help Step by Cheryl Fritz, Business Development Manager



What if Step Industries earned a penny every time you searched the Internet? Or how about if a percentage of every purchase you made online went to support our cause? Well, now it can!

GoodSearch.com is a new Yahoo-powered search engine that donates half its advertising revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. Use it just as you would any search engine, get quality search results from Yahoo, and watch the donations add up! Good Search does not need to be set as your home page, just add it as your search engine!!

GoodShop.com is a new online shopping mall which donates a percentage of each sale to your favorite cause! Hundreds of great stores including Amazon, Target, Gap, Best Buy, Ebay, Macy's and Barnes & Noble have teamed up with GoodShop and every time you place an order, you'll be supporting your favorite cause.

Just go to **www.goodsearch.com** and be sure to enter Step Industries as the charity you want to support. And, be sure to spread the word!

Staff Spotlight: Tracy Ogden

Hi Everyone, my name is Tracy Ogden. I am new to Step and am helping Hugh Holly write grants and helping Cheryl Fritz look for new business opportunities.

I have spent the last nine years working in development and marketing for nonprofits in the Valley. I went to St. Norbert College for Elementary Education and have a degree in Journalism from UW Oshkosh.

My husband, Max, and I have been married for three years this May and have a two year old daughter who is the light of our lives.

I am looking forward to my time at Step and have been very impressed with everyone and everything already!



An Old Friend

The Serenity Prayer feels like an old friend to me. Familiar and dependable. I learned it early on in recovery and used it often to slow down my racing brain, or when fear took over. I would say it over, and over, and over again. I would go for walks and chant the prayer out loud when the panic set in. I always found the relief I needed at the time.

The prayer is a great tool for addicts... for those given to compulsivity. It's a way to sort things out. Is this something I need to accept or something I need to change? A little reflection...a little thoughtfulness... never hurts. And what if I can't decide whether I need serenity or courage? Maybe I have to ask for help. Maybe I need to say the prayer again, and again, and again. The wisdom will come.

There is some pretty interesting stuff online about the origins of the prayer. A quick trip with Google brought me more than enough of the history and controversy surrounding the origins of the prayer. One thing is for sure...the prayer stays fresh and keeps on working for me.

Hugh Holly
CEO

Statement of Purpose

Step Industries provides transitional employment to people recovering from addiction to alcohol and other drugs. These opportunities are intended to relieve the stress of unemployment, promote self sufficiency, and help prepare the recovering person for further vocational growth.

Although we are a nonprofit corporation, we are primarily supported through the sale of our services. Thus customer satisfaction is essential to our ongoing success.

We offer a safe, supportive work experience. We choose to work together in an environment of respect, cooperation, and trust.

The Serenity Prayer, It's Meaning and Use

God grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the Courage to change the things I can, and the Wisdom to know the difference.

Step employees were asked what the Serenity Prayer means to them and how they use it in daily life.

It means peace of mind! Keeps good direction in my life and helps me to do the next right thing. Laura B.

Keeps me going day by day. It's important to repeat it daily. Jim R.

It keeps me sane. I say it at least 50 times a day! It is very important to me. Michelle T.

Helps keep me serene and helps to see the world through clear eyes. Lance

Strength! Kat S.

Peace that lies within me. Julie H.

Asking for God's help. I'm at a better place in my life with God's guidance. Don G.

Spirituality and living for today. Charlie B.

No matter how hard things get, they can't be as bad as when I used. As things come up I'm in a sober mode to deal with problems—gives strength! Ted K.

If everyone, including non addicts, used the prayer, the world would be a better place. It says a lot in a very few words. Don Z.

Accept & deal with situations that normally would lead to using because of anger, resentment and jealousy. It is calming and helps to stay in the moment and react appropriately. Andy

Asking for help, guidance and patience. Repeat a lot throughout the day. A LOT. Asking for courage and strength. Jeanette P.

Peace of mind when I am troubled. I say it many times daily. Comforting. Diane D.

I've made changes because of it—happier, at ease. Better relationship with son. Keeps me on the path of recovery. Ron M.

Helps me get back on track, to ask for help and guidance, and reminds me that I'm not in charge. Slow down. Dennis H.

Don't sweat the small stuff. I say it around people and to myself when I get frustrated. Molly D.

I use it constantly to calm myself down if I get cravings. It gives me patience, tolerance & love to deal with people, places, and things. Connie K.

The prayer helps me to remember where I've been and what I've done and how far I've come. Andrea M.

You've got to realize you can't do it by yourself whether you believe in God or not. Michael V.

I use it to surrender to God and let him take over so he can deal with my problems throughout the day so I don't have to. Katie N.

It gives me peace of mind. It's about my HP's will, not mine. It helps me deal with stressful situations. Scott M.

It's all about the prayer to change things I can—taking on new behaviors and taking action. Kathy P.

The prayer is uplifting and gets you in the right frame of mind. Ray Y.

I use it every day I come here. It means letting go and having faith that my HP is taking care of everything that I can't. Chad G.

It provides guidance in asking for help and patience. Jeanette P.

I realize that I can't change the past, but I can control my future with the help of prayer to my Higher Power. Because of my addiction I am a wiser, more appreciative person today. Kenyatta S.

First I have to look at the many challenges we face that we have no control over. The second part means that we ask Him to give us the strength to deal with these daily challenges. The last part means that we need to understand his wisdom—that we need to take a better look at the issue and come up with a better solution. Melloneice W.

Every day I say the prayer, it lets me know that I cannot fix everything. Recovery is not going to be easy, but by believing in my God I can stay clean. The prayer lets me know that I am not alone in this fight. Anton R.

The Serenity Prayer

"Looking for Peace at a time of turmoil, despair, or uncertainty."

It is uncertain the precise origin of the serenity prayer, but has been dated as far back as 1702. There are even claims for the authorship of the prayer by a Christian philosopher and theologian dated in the year 524 or 525. In 1939 the Serenity Prayer was brought to the attention of the founder of AA, Bill W., who after sharing it with the staff felt that it particularly suited the needs of AA. It is now used daily by addicts all over the world.

Many of us might be scared by the big G word (God), but take that one simple word out of this prayer and the message maintains its power. Acknowledging that there is an existence above and beyond ourselves can bring us inner peace and serenity despite chaotic circumstances that surround us. Simply uttering the Serenity Prayer can be used as a tool in Alcoholics and Narcotics anonymous to cope in the daily life as an addict. Trust that if we are able to relinquish whatever negativities in life that are holding us back, one way or another life will work itself out. Spirituality does not mean religion; it is faith in a relationship with something, and our own personal belief, stronger than ourselves that gets us through another day in recovery. ONE DAY AT A TIME.

By April T.

Happy Birthday!

Milwaukee

Kenyatta S. 6/15

Neenah

Craig S.	6/05	Danielle L.	6/07
Anna P.	6/09	Jamie S.	6/18
Ronald M.	6/26	Peter H.	7/09
Molly D.	7/17	Charles B.	7/18
Terri W.	7/18	Natalie D.	7/26



Happy Anniversary!

Milwaukee

Rochelle C.	6/08/06	Yolanda R.	6/25/07
Anton R.	7/09/08		

Neenah

Dan S.	6/08/99	Katherine N.	6/18/08
Jessica R.	6/22/08	Terri W.	6/23/08
Chris G.	6/28/07	Sam W.	7/15/99
Michelle T.	7/18/08	Lance B.	7/20/08
Haley H.	7/26/08	Steve F.	7/27/09

If you see any of these people, give them a big hug and ask them how they did it!

STEP WRITE UP

Step Industries, Inc.
1010 Strohmeyer Dr.
Neenah, WI 54956

Phone: 920-722-2345
Fax: 920-722-0629
Email: maxine@stepindustries.com
www.stepindustries.com



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