

Step Write Up



Volume 15 Issue 5

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Triggers and How We Overcome Them

Our employees were asked what their “triggers” are that make them want to use drugs or alcohol.

Ron M. - Particularly rough day at work, financial worries I think of my son, I never want him to see me the way I used to be.

Brittany B. - Her mom’s house I just leave.

Randy F. - Being bored I go to a meeting.

Laura B. - Isolating for the wrong reasons I call my sponsor, go to a meeting, and just “get out”

Tim H. - Convenience stores/gas stations I think about the work that I’ve done, everything I’ve been through. Now I go into convenience stores with minimal \$ and am in and out.

Kat S. - Seeing old ‘using’ friends I “Run like hell”, go through my Nova 1st step notebook

Erick H. - Being in social situations where drinking is the “norm”, i.e. Packer games!!! I avoid them, or do social activities with others in recovery.

Bob C - Running into old using friends. I deal with this by letting them know I don’t live that lifestyle anymore and turn around and walk away.

Chris P - I would want to drink if I lost a loved one or someone very close to me.

Sandy M - Home and my husband are a trigger for me. I have made a decision to get my own apartment in Oshkosh.

Lance - Stress is a trigger. Grieving and death are also a trigger. I just don't give it the power to control my thoughts and feelings.

Shane K - When I fight with my fiancé'. We are working on

bettering our communication with each other.

Bruce M - Isolating is a trigger. I attend meetings and recovery group. I do more things with my family and try to keep busy.

Michelle T - My mother and certain music. I avoid situations involving my mother as much as possible.

Jen B - Giving myself options. When I don't give myself the choice to do something. I.e. getting up everyday and going to work is not an option. It is what I must do. "I continue to do the next right thing"

Charlie B - Being in debt is a trigger. I live for today and don't worry about the bills in the future.

Mike K - Seeing using friends. I surround myself with recovering people.

Gary W - Becoming complacent. When I continue to go to meetings and connect with family and friends I am able to stay focused and positive about my life and my future.

Julie - Summer is a trigger. There are so many things going on outdoors. I redirect my thoughts to where I want my life to remain and not where I was prior to sobriety.

Mike M - Isolation, not attending meetings, not being open with others, and not being included in family events. I am much better at identifying and understanding these triggers and I am able to deal with them now that I am living a sober life.

Haley H - Insecurity with self and failure. I continue to go to meetings and talk openly about my thoughts and feelings. I surround myself with healthy people and people in recovery.

Quotes on Change

“Only I can change my life. No one can do it for me.
Carol Burnett

“We all have big changes in our lives that are more or less a second chance.” **Harrison Ford**

“They always say time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself.” **Andy Warhol**

“Things do not change: we change.” **Henry David Thoreau**

“It’s not that some people have willpower and some don’t. It’s that some people are ready to change and others are not.” **James Gordon**

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.

Am I Ready?

Addiction lives in a dark corner of the brain. It is a primitive and powerful voice. The strength of addiction makes no sense to most people. Do you mean that the urge to drink alcohol or ingest other drugs can be more important than the will to live? Yes. More important than the love of family? Yes. More important than the desire to work and be secure? Yes.

Recovery quiets this voice and allows an addict to move forward in life. But the craving can return after years of silence and many an addict has been caught by surprise and swallowed back up. To me, the fundamental question in my recovery is one of readiness. Am I ready when the voice gets loud again?

My father passed away four years ago and soon after I helped my Mom sort through his belongings. I volunteered to go through his medicine cabinet to find a particular heart medicine that my mother was

also taking...an expensive prescription. My good intention clouded my judgment. Is it a good idea for a recovering addict to be going through a medicine cabinet filled with pill bottles? Nope. I found a full bottle of a highly addictive pain killer, Oxycontin, and within seconds that primitive and powerful voice had been triggered.

I can’t really judge how close I came to relapse that day. It was close enough. It was a ‘grace of God’ experience. It renewed my respect for the power of addiction and refreshed my motivation to practice a program of recovery each and every day. So, are you ready?

Hugh Holly
CEO

Happy Birthday!

Milwaukee

Anton R. 10/08

Neenah

Paul K. 10/10

Kathleen S. 10/16

Sandra M. 10/21

Chad G. 10/29

Gary P. 11/06

Carrie O. 11/09

Mike M. 11/13

Antonette D. 10/14

Michelle D.G. 10/17

Michelle T. 10/21

Wade B. 11/01

Hugh H. 11/09

Catherine B. 11/12

Sam W. 11/24



Happy Anniversary!

Milwaukee

Mary M. 10/16/07

Erica B. 10/31/07

Adam D. 10/27/08

Neenah

Craig S. 10/03/96

Michelle D.G. 10/16/95

Brittany B. 10/17/08

Peter H. 10/24/08

Eric H. 11/07/08

Jamie S. 11/15/07

Colin S. 11/18/05

Tim H. 10/07/08

Kathleen S. 10/16/08

Hugh H. 10/19/73

Ronald M. 11/03/06

Denise B. 11/12/08

Natalie D. 11/17/08

Ken P. 11/24/91

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

Desire by Mary Riehl, Office Manager

This is something that helped me when I got out of treatment. I wanted to go to my hometown, which is Madison, to visit family and friends. I knew in my heart that I could not make that trip yet. I waited, and after a year of being clean, I went there with my husband and daughters and thank God I did. As we hit Sun Prairie my stomach started to get that queasy feeling - you know, the anxious one - the one that hits you hard because you may be getting high in a few minutes. I guess some people would call it excitement.

Well there it was. BAM! I realized that even a year was not long enough to go alone. And for some, no amount

of time is long enough. As time went by I met my sister there and we would spend a few days hanging out. Now when I go to visit I don't know anyone like in the past so I have to say I do feel safe. Maybe it is because I am further along in my recovery today. Don't get me wrong, I still have an urge now and then but not necessarily in Madison. If the feeling arises I know what to do...talk it out. It is the best way for me to get rid of the desire. So if you are someone new in the program and I say to be careful visiting friends and family, it is because I care about you and your sobriety.

Be Prepared

October of 1995 was the last time I surrendered to allure of alcohol. Sometimes it seems like a lifetime ago and sometimes like it was only months ago. Some days have gone by with little thought about how I was going to make it through the day sober. Some days have been filled with desire and obsession about how to get a drink. There have been many days where the thought comes, I process it, and move on with my day.

I think the days that are “easier” are because I continue to do the “work”. I am continually reflecting on behaviors, deciding if I handled a situation well or will try to do it different next time, and think about what I learned each day. I don’t spend much time on regrets or living in the past. If I need to “own” my behavior I do so, take action where necessary and let it go.

Those days when I have had to concentrate on staying sober, not turning into a bar or stopping at a liquor store are hard. I wish I could pinpoint a reason for those times but I can’t. Those “big” situations such as the death of my father or finding out a sister was ill have not been the triggers for ‘using’ feelings. The work I have done has prepared me how to take care of myself in those situations. The days when using creeps into my thoughts and I have an overwhelming desire to drink just happen for me. I have tried to figure out “why”, I don’t have an answer.

There have been times coming home from a meeting that I have had a desire to drink. There are have been hot days working in the garden where a cold alcoholic beverage is very appealing to me. There have been days where I have been afraid to leave the yard because I was not sure where I would end up.

The difference now is that I don’t go with that thought or feeling. I can see the end result of those actions. I make a different choice than I used to. I talk to someone, follow the using thought to end (regret, guilt, loss of trust), think about why I am feeling like drinking. Am I missing something else? Am I lonely, hungry, and tired? Am I taking care of myself in other ways? Sometime it is just sticking with the basics of recovery that get me past those using thoughts.

I know the path ahead is not smooth and there will be more bumps, choices and decisions. I can hope I am prepared to continue to make good choices in my future and I hope you are too.

Michelle Devine Giese

VP/COO

Whatever Happened To: Jaime Cisneros

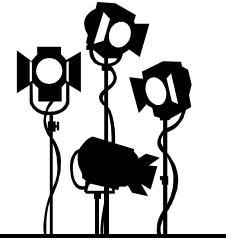
My name is Jaime Cisneros. I was employed at Step Industries from March 2007 until August of 2008. I started in the clean room and soon got a forklift operator position. After several months, a team leader position opened up and I was hired on for second shift Warehouse Team Leader. I later pursued and got a position at the Neenah Foundry making a lot of money. It was grueling work, very physically demanding, and at times I was miserable working so many hours and regretting leaving Step. Ten days before my probation period was up, they terminated anyone with under 90 days. I found myself out of a job with the holidays on their way.

I looked every day for a job and found nothing. By the middle of winter, depressed, and almost out of hope, I had to do something with my life. I turned to exercise and found out how much better I started feeling about myself. I started out walking about a mile. Then three. I began running half of it. That made me want to start eating healthier. I noticed I began losing a considerable amount of weight. The more weight I lost, the more I exercised and ate healthy. I started feeling better, and it showed in my confidence, in my relationship with my girlfriend, friends and family.

I received a lead on a job. Like so many others, the interview process began. I didn’t hold my breath because I had gotten excited before but once the employer looked at my record, that was as far as it got. However this time I was more confident, and it showed. Soon I started working at Kraft Foods, making pretty decent money with benefits. I have still maintained my lifestyle change and have now lost a total of 75 pounds. I run six miles every day before my 12 hour shift. I do other strength building activities as well.

I have realized how important taking care of myself physically is to my program. If you are not happy with yourself sober, it can easily lead back to a relapse. I am skinny now because I eat healthy and exercise. Before, when I was skinny, it was only because I hadn’t eaten for days. I gained a considerable amount of weight with sobriety, but have now found a way to balance it. In fact, anytime I come to visit Step now, people hardly recognize me!

Employee Spotlight...Erick H. Neenah Plant



Friendship, love and truth...these are all principles that have been in my life a long time, but none of them really meant anything to me until I found recovery. Growing up, the possibility of me being an alcoholic seemed unimaginable. I had never known any, and really had no clue what one was. I wouldn't say I had it all, but I had an incredibly loving family and a great youth.

From the outside, I probably looked successful...but on the inside addiction was starting to take over. I had my first drink as a sophomore in college at 19. Although I did seem to party a lot, it never held me back from anything or got me in trouble. Then I went to graduate school and started to behave in ways I didn't want to, but couldn't stop. From constantly lying to my wife, to stealing, to skipping classes; I didn't want anyone to find out about me. I went from a 4.0 one year to failing out the next. I still landed a pretty good job working in the field of education that I wanted to, and made some more empty promises to hold onto my marriage. An OWI in 2005 got me to face the idea that I may be an alcoholic. Not knowing what that really meant, I went to a couple of AA meetings and then just pretended to be sober for another year and a half.

My drinking was the driving factor in my divorce in 2007, and I moved to Milwaukee for a better job. This is where I began my daily drinking. After a couple of hospitalized detoxes and outpatient treatment, I still ended up losing my job. This got me to try Nova treatment for 28 days. I decided to follow the recommendation of the Terra Halfway House for three months, which is when I started to work at Step.

If there was any question in my head about powerlessness, it was resoundingly answered with a relapse the day after leaving Terra. Right back to where I left off with 3 days of non-stop drinking and I lost my job at Step for almost two months until they were hiring again. Now with 10 months sober, I am alive and bettering myself largely because of the supportive and rehabilitative role Step Industries has played in my life. I am continuing to learn everyday. About humility, about how surrounding myself with other recovering addicts helps me stay sober, and about how being honest and doing the next best thing is just a great way I want to live my life. I try to love myself, and others, with the kind of love God wants me to.

Cranberry-Pumpkin Cookies

½ cup butter, softened
1 cup white sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 egg
1 cup solid pack pumpkin puree
2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
1 cup fresh cranberries
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 tablespoon orange zest
½ cup chopped walnuts

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Grease cookie sheets.

In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in vanilla, egg and pumpkin. Sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and cinnamon; stir into mixture until well blended. Cut the cranberries in half and stir into mixture along with the orange zest and walnuts. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto cookie sheets.

Bake for 10 to 12 minutes.

Yields 3 doz. cookies

Meet the Board: Charlie Gorham

Hello, I am Charlie Gorham and I have been on the Board of Directors of Step Industries for 5 years. Michelle Giese asked me to write something about my background and my connection to Step. I tried to explain that I don't have anything to write about, but someone please tell me how to say "no" to Michelle.

I was born and raised in Milwaukee. In 1961 I graduated from the University of Wisconsin in Madison and for the next eight years I sold construction equipment for Allis-Chalmers. In those eight years I lived in six cities in the northeastern United States and was transferred back to Milwaukee in 1968.

In 1969 I started Gorham, Inc. which is a manufacturers' representative agency selling such products as stampings, valve springs, specialty fasteners, bicycle spokes and aluminum extrusions. Our customers included names you would recognize—Mercury Marine, Caterpillar, John Deere, Oshkosh Truck and Trek Bicycle.

I also owned Tranzparts, Inc. in Janesville, Wisconsin. We tore apart 250 to 300 junk automobile transmissions per day looking for certain parts that we either cleaned up and sold as used parts or that we could re-

build. Our customers were companies that rebuilt automatic transmissions—we did not rebuild transmissions. Tranzparts was also a distributor for gaskets and seals which we assembled into kits for resale.

I have sold both businesses and am now retired, living in Mequon, Wisconsin. My involvement in Step started when Andy Fleckenstein, a former board member, wanted me to meet with Hugh Holly. Hugh gave me a tour of the plant and asked if I had any suggestions regarding other companies that Step might try to solicit business from.

I have enjoyed my time on the Board and while I am fortunate not to have an addiction, I have two sons who both have addictions. One has been clean and sober for 3 years, 6 months. The other still struggles.

I have seen, first hand, the effects addictions can have on an individual, family and friends. That is why I can appreciate the struggle Step's employees face every day and also why I have so much admiration for those of you who have months, years and decades of clean and sober living.

Thank you for your time.

Double Layer Pumpkin Cheesecake

2 (8 ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup white sugar
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 eggs
1 (9 inch) prepared graham cracker crust
1/2 cup pumpkin puree
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 pinch ground cloves
1 pinch ground nutmeg
1/2 cup frozen whipped topping, thawed

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F

In a large bowl, combine cream cheese, sugar and vanilla. Beat until smooth. Blend in eggs one at a time. Remove 1 cup of batter and spread into bottom of crust; set aside.

Add pumpkin, cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg to the remaining batter and stir gently until well blended. Carefully spread over the batter in the crust.

Bake in preheated oven for 35 to 40 minutes, or until center is almost set. Allow to cool, then refrigerate for 3 hours or overnight. Cover with whipped topping before serving.

Beatles Songs 2

Find and circle all of the songs by The Beatles that are hidden in the grid.
The remaining letters spell the name of an additional Beatles song.

E V N O W H E R E M A N I N E E D Y O U
 E E L O V E M E D O C T O R R O B E R T
 W O T R E T L E K S R E T L E H S R I E
 H W H R E H E V O L I D N A Y U B F A B
 A I I S O D Y S P E N N Y L A N E M L L
 T L S M N G O T A H E L P C S E E U O I
 G D B O A W M E P T H I E N L I E V M G
 O H O N D R O W E H T B I F G J E S O C
 E O Y O N N T R R G T A I G A Y O L O E
 S N O I U O D H B H R N A Y O T D M L G
 O E E T O O R E A D E M W U I E E F Y N
 N Y U U Y C I N C M L A T R N T F T O I
 R P L L S C V O K I Y O E S O U S I D V
 E I B O E A E O W E E D L G R E N G X O
 S E U V V R M N R C E U E T J O P I T L
 O M O E O Y Y R I E M T Y A S A N D D Y
 L G Y R L K C O T B H O M S R M Y M O M
 A I R N E C A F E E V R A E B T I T E L
 M R O K H O R R R A E L S E I G G I P L
 I L F E S R S Y S H G O O D N I G H T A

ALL MY LOVING
 AND I LOVE HER
 BECAUSE
 BLUE JAY WAY
 COME TOGETHER
 DIG IT
 DOCTOR ROBERT
 DRIVE MY CAR
 FOR NO ONE
 FOR YOU BLUE

GIRL
 GLASS ONION
 GOLDEN SLUM-
 BERS
 GOOD NIGHT
 HELP
 HELTER SKELTER
 HER MAJESTY
 I FEEL FINE
 I NEED YOU
 I'M A LOSER

I'M SO TIRED
 LET IT BE
 LOVE ME DO
 LOVE YOU TO
 MAGGIE MAE
 MARTHA MY DEAR
 NOWHERE MAN
 OLD BROWN SHOE
 PAPERBACK
 WRITER
 PENNY LANE

PIGGIES
 RAIN
 REVOLUTION
 ROCKY RACCOON
 SAVOY TRUFFLE
 SHE LOVES YOU
 THE WORD
 THIS BOY
 WHAT GOES ON
 WILD HONEY PIE

STEP WRITE UP

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Helping People...Helping Business

Step It Up and Work It Out!

The event featuring Kristin and Cathy from the Biggest Loser was a day of fun, sharing and sweat. We have gotten a lot of great feedback about the event and we are so pleased to hear the wonderful comments. Putting on the event was a lot of work but feels well worth it. A special thanks to the JJ Keller Foundation and Kimberly Clark Foundation for their sponsorship, support and donations. A huge thanks to Fox Valley Technical College for the use of the beautiful facility (if you haven't been there lately check it out, it is amazing) and the staff was so helpful, patient and supportive. We would also like to thank the wonderful speakers; Dr. Cruz from Affinity Health System, Brenda Johnson from the YMCA Fox Cities, Kristin Steede and Cathy Skell and of course the wonderful emcee Ben Fauske from ICS.

We appreciate all those who volunteered their time for breakout sessions, Celeste from Celeste Holly Designs, Suzy from Yoga Fusion, Pat from Aromatic Oasis, Chef Jeff from FVTC, and Nick from Anytime Fitness. We are getting rave reviews about all the breakout sessions. Thanks to some other special people who committed a lot of time and energy to the event; Jolie and Jamie from the Mooring Programs, Nancy Smith, and Cheryl Fritz from Step. Without all of you it would not have gone so smooth. Thanks to all the volunteers that helped set up, guide people during the day, clean up, those who ran booths and ran around picking up donations. Thanks to a few special companies that donated the great products for the give-away-bags and the wonderful lunch: Wisconsin Pharnical, Enzymatic Therapy, Kimberly Clark, Great Harvest, Sara Lee/Hillshire Farms, 4imprint, Bouwer Printing, YMCA Fox Cities, and Vitamin Shop. There are many more people and companies that contributed to the success. Know that we appreciate everything that was done to help make this event a success.

Thanks,
Michelle Devine Giese
VP/COO