

## WEEK 12: THE LONG OBEDIENCE

### Detailed Facilitator Guide with Notes and Questions

### Sustaining Recovery as Lifelong Practice

---

#### OVERVIEW FOR FACILITATORS

**Week 12 Goal:** Help participants understand that recovery is not a 12-week project but a lifelong journey—establishing practices, accountability, and mindset for sustainable transformation.

**The Final Week:** This is both ending and beginning:

- **Ending:** The structured 12-week program concludes
- **Beginning:** Lifelong recovery begins in earnest

**The Critical Message:** Recovery is not:

- A destination you arrive at
- A problem you solve once
- A 12-week fix
- Something you graduate from

**Recovery is:**

- A daily practice
- A direction you walk in
- A lifelong journey
- Something you deepen into forever

**The title "Long Obedience"** comes from Eugene Peterson's book *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*—the idea that discipleship (and recovery) is sustained faithfulness over time, not dramatic breakthroughs.

## **Why This Week Is Critical:**

**Research shows:** Most people relapse not because they don't know what to do, but because:

- They stop doing what they know works
- They lose accountability structures
- They believe they're "fixed" and don't need practices anymore
- Life stress overwhelms them and they revert to old patterns
- They isolate and stop receiving support

This week prepares them for **sustainable recovery**—not perfect, but persistent.

---

## **THE REALITY OF RECOVERY**

### **What Participants Need to Understand**

#### **Recovery is not linear:**

- You will have good days and hard days
- You will grow and regress and grow again
- Progress is real but imperfect
- Two steps forward, one step back is still progress

#### **Recovery requires daily practices:**

- The practices that got you here must continue
- You don't outgrow need for silence, gratitude, accountability
- Practices sustain recovery; without them, relapse is likely

#### **Recovery needs community:**

- You cannot do this alone

- Isolation is narcissism's breeding ground
- Ongoing accountability is not optional

**Recovery is discovering you're not "fixed"—and that's okay:**

- You're not cured; you're in recovery
- You're learning to manage patterns, not eliminate them
- You're becoming someone who can catch and correct quickly

**Recovery is costly:**

- It costs comfort (growth is uncomfortable)
- It costs pride (humility is daily)
- It costs autonomy (you need others)
- But the cost of NOT recovering is higher

**WHAT MAKES THIS WEEK DANGEROUS**

**Resistance Patterns to Expect**

**"I'm Fixed" Mentality:**

- "I've done the work, I'm good now"
- Abandoning practices that brought change
- Believing 12 weeks cured decades of patterns
- Arrogance about progress

**Despair:**

- "I'll never really change"
- "This is too hard to sustain"
- "I'm hopeless"

- Giving up before beginning

**Performance:**

- Trying to be the "best recovered person"
- Competing in recovery
- Using recovery itself as new source of narcissistic supply

**Minimizing:**

- "I wasn't that bad to begin with"
- "I don't need ongoing accountability"
- "I can maintain this on my own"

**Fear of Ending:**

- Anxiety about losing group support
- Uncertainty about next steps
- Grief about program ending

---

**OPENING SESSION (Day 1)****Final Week Introduction (20 minutes)****Facilitator Script:**

"This is our final week together. Eleven weeks ago, you began a journey—facing patterns you'd avoided, confronting harm you'd caused, letting die who you thought you were.

**You've traveled through:**

- **Weeks 1-3: Awakening** (seeing truth, facing harm, grieving false self)
- **Weeks 4-6: Emptying** (sitting with void, releasing control, learning to listen)

- **Weeks 7-9: Rebuilding** (practicing humility, developing empathy, building authentic relationships)
- **Weeks 10-11: Sustaining** (cultivating gratitude, learning service)

### **Now: Week 12—The Long Obedience.**

This title comes from Eugene Peterson: *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*. He writes about Psalm 120-134—the Songs of Ascent—pilgrim songs sung by people walking to Jerusalem for worship.

**The journey was long. Uphill. Repetitive.** Step after step, day after day, same direction.

**That's recovery.** Not a dramatic transformation and then you're done. But a long obedience—daily, persistent, in the same direction.

**This week, we prepare you for the long haul.**

Let me be honest: **Some of you will relapse.** Not because the program failed, but because recovery is hard. You'll get tired, stressed, isolated. Old patterns will resurface.

**That's not failure. That's the journey.**

**The question isn't:** Will you ever struggle again? **The question is:** When you struggle, will you have practices to return to? Will you have people to call? Will you catch yourself quickly and course-correct?

**Galatians 6:9:** 'Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.'

**The temptation:** Grow weary. Give up. Revert.

**The invitation:** Don't lose heart. Keep going. Stay the course.

**1 Corinthians 15:58:** 'Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.'

**Steadfast. Immovable. Always abounding.**

Not perfect. Not sinless. Not beyond struggle.

But **faithful**. Persistent. Showing up daily, even when you don't feel like it.

**This week:** We're building your long-term recovery plan. Your relapse prevention strategy. Your sustainable practices. Your accountability structures.

**Next week and beyond:** You walk this out. For the rest of your life."

---

### Opening Reflection (Go Around Circle)

**Question:** *"Complete this sentence: Twelve weeks ago, I was \_\_\_\_\_. Today, I am \_\_\_\_\_."*

**Facilitator Note:** Let them acknowledge growth without inflating it. Celebrate real change while staying honest about ongoing work.

---

### SCRIPTURE FOUNDATION EXPLORATION (40 minutes)

#### Galatians 6:9 - "Let Us Not Lose Heart"

**Read aloud:** Galatians 6:7-10

**Focus on verse 9:** "Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary."

**Facilitator Teaching** (12 minutes):

"Paul is addressing Galatian Christians who are tired. The Christian life is hard. Some want to quit.

**'Let us not lose heart'** (*mē enkakōmen*):

- Don't grow weary
- Don't give up
- Don't become discouraged

- Don't lose courage

**'In doing good':**

- Living out recovery practices
- Loving others
- Serving humbly
- Staying faithful

**The temptation:** Stop doing good because it's hard, unrewarded, invisible.

**'For in due time':**

- Not immediately
- Not on your timeline
- Eventually—God's timing

**'We will reap if we do not grow weary':**

- Harvest comes to those who persist
- **IF** we don't grow weary
- The condition: Keep going

**For recovery:**

You've done 12 weeks. You've seen change. But **the real test comes at week 20, week 40, year 2, year 5.**

Will you keep practicing humility when no one's watching? Will you stay in accountability when it's inconvenient? Will you serve when you're tired? Will you practice gratitude when life is hard?

**Paul says:** Don't lose heart. Keep going. In due time, you'll reap.

**But only if you don't grow weary and quit."**

## Discussion Questions:

1. "Paul says 'let us not lose heart.' What makes you want to lose heart in recovery?"
  2. "'In due time we will reap'—not immediately. Can you trust delayed harvest?"
  3. "What will make you 'grow weary' in recovery? How can you prepare for that?"
  4. "What practices will you maintain even when you're tired, stressed, or discouraged?"
- 

## Philippians 3:12-14 - "I Press On"

**Read aloud:** Philippians 3:7-14

**Focus on verses 12-14:** "Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

**Facilitator Teaching** (15 minutes):

"Paul—apostle, church planter, spiritual giant—says: **I have not arrived. I am not perfect. I'm still pressing on.**

**If Paul, after decades of walking with Christ, isn't 'done,' neither are you.**

**Verse 12:** 'Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect.'

Paul hasn't arrived. He's honest about ongoing need for growth.

**'But I press on'** (*diōkō*):

- Pursue, chase, run after



- Active, intentional, persistent
- Not passive hoping, but active pursuing

**'So that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.'**

Christ laid hold of Paul (grabbed him, claimed him, called him). Now Paul pursues being fully who Christ called him to be.

**For you:** Christ laid hold of you. He called you to this recovery journey. Now you pursue becoming fully who He's calling you to be.

**Verse 13:** 'I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet.'

**Humility about progress:** Paul knows he hasn't arrived. He's still in process.

**'But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead.'**

**Two movements:**

**1. Forgetting what lies behind:**

- Not dwelling on past failures
- Not resting on past successes
- Moving forward, not stuck in past

**2. Reaching forward to what lies ahead:**

- Stretching toward future growth
- Always more to become
- Never settling

**Verse 14:** 'I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.'

**There's a goal:** Christlikeness. Full humanity. Complete recovery.

**There's a prize:** Eternal life, yes—but also present joy, peace, authentic relationships, freedom.

**The upward call:** You're being called upward—toward God, toward wholeness, toward love.

**For recovery:**

You're not done. You've made progress (celebrate that). But you're not finished (stay humble about that).

The question is: **Will you press on?**

Will you keep pursuing recovery in year 2? Year 10? For the rest of your life?"

---

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. "Paul says 'I have not already become perfect.' Why is it important to acknowledge you're not 'done'?"
  2. "Paul is 'pressing on'—actively pursuing. What does active recovery look like vs. passive?"
  3. "Paul says 'forgetting what lies behind.' What do you need to release—past failures? Past successes you're resting on?"
  4. "Paul is 'reaching forward to what lies ahead.' What's ahead for you in recovery?"
  5. "Will you still be 'pressing on' in recovery 5 years from now? What would that require?"
- 

**1 Corinthians 15:58 - "Be Steadfast, Immovable, Always Abounding"**

**Read aloud:** 1 Corinthians 15:50-58

**Focus on verse 58:** "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord."

**Facilitator Teaching** (12 minutes):

"Paul concludes his chapter on resurrection with this charge:

**'Be steadfast'** (*hedraioi*):

- Firm, stable, seated securely
- Not blown about by every challenge
- Grounded, rooted

**'Immovable'** (*ametakinētoi*):

- Unmoved, unshakable
- Not easily dislodged
- Persistent in position

**'Always abounding in the work of the Lord':**

- Not occasionally
- Not when you feel like it
- **Always**—in season and out of season
- **Abounding**—overflowing, abundant, full

**'Knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord':**

Your hard work matters. Your daily practices matter. Your struggle to stay in recovery matters.

**It's not in vain.**

God sees. The work is producing fruit, even when you can't see it.

**For recovery:**

This is your charge:

- **Be steadfast:** Grounded in practices, not swaying with every emotion
- **Be immovable:** Don't abandon recovery when life gets hard
- **Always abound:** Keep practicing humility, empathy, service—always, not just when convenient

**Your toil—12 weeks of hard work, and the toil ahead—is not in vain.**

You're being transformed. Others are being blessed. God is glorified.

**Stay the course."**

---

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. "Paul says 'be steadfast, immovable.' What threatens to move you from recovery practices?"
  2. "'Always abounding'—not sometimes. Can you commit to recovery practices 'always'?"
  3. "Paul says your toil 'is not in vain.' Do you believe that? That this work matters?"
  4. "What would 'steadfast, immovable' recovery look like in your actual life?"
- 

#### **DAILY PRACTICES INSTRUCTION**

##### **Morning Recommitment: Daily Surrender (Days 1-7)**

##### **Detailed Instructions for Participants:**

"Each morning, recommit to recovery with this prayer:

**'God, I surrender again today. I cannot do this alone. Keep me faithful.'**

**Unpack the prayer (5 minutes):**

**'I surrender again':**

- Not once-for-all, but daily
- Today, I surrender control, pride, entitlement
- Fresh surrender each morning

**'Today':**

- Not worrying about tomorrow
- Not dwelling on yesterday
- Just today—I can stay in recovery today

**'I cannot do this alone':**

- Acknowledging dependence (always)
- Remembering: self-sufficiency is narcissism
- Asking for help daily

**'Keep me faithful':**

- Not 'make me perfect'
- But 'help me stay the course'
- Persistence, not perfection

**Then review your commitments:**

- What practices am I maintaining today?
- Who am I accountable to?
- Where might I struggle today? How will I respond?

**Throughout the day:** When tempted to revert to old patterns, return to surrender.

**The goal:** Making recovery a daily choice, not a one-time decision."

---

## **Daily Examen: Reviewing the Day (Days 1-7)**

### **Instructions:**

"Each evening, review your day using the Narcissism Recovery Examen:

### **5 Questions (10 minutes):**

#### **1. Where did I make it about me today?**

- What situations did I center myself?
- Where did I seek validation?
- When did I redirect conversations to myself?

#### **2. Where did I practice presence instead of performance?**

- When was I genuinely with someone?
- Where did I forget myself in service?
- When did I drop the mask?

#### **3. Where did I succeed in recovery today?**

- What practices did I maintain?
- Where did I choose differently than old patterns?
- What growth do I notice?

#### **4. Where did I fail/regress today?**

- Where did old patterns resurface?
- What triggered me?
- What do I need to own/repair?

#### **5. What am I grateful for today?**

- End with gratitude (always)

- Even on hard days, name gifts
- Gratitude keeps perspective

**Write briefly** in journal. Track patterns over time.

**The goal:** Daily awareness. Catching slips early. Celebrating growth. Staying honest."

---

### **Weekly Check-In With Accountability Partner (Ongoing)**

#### **Instructions:**

"Recovery requires ongoing accountability. By end of this week, establish:

#### **Who is your accountability partner?**

- Someone who's earned your trust
- Someone who will tell you truth
- Someone further along in health
- Ideally: therapist, sponsor, spiritual director, or trusted friend

#### **What will you meet about?**

- Review daily examen patterns
- Discuss struggles/successes
- Receive feedback
- Pray/support each other

#### **How often?**

- Weekly minimum (in person, phone, or video)
- More often if struggling
- Emergency check-ins as needed

**What you'll discuss:**

- Where am I reverting to narcissistic patterns?
- Am I maintaining recovery practices?
- How are my relationships?
- Where do I need feedback?
- What warning signs do you see in me?

**The structure:**

- 30-60 minutes
- You both share (if mutual)
- Honest, not performative
- Confidential

**If you don't have accountability, you will relapse.** This is not optional."

---

**BUILDING YOUR PERSONAL RECOVERY PLAN (Days 2-5)****Part 1: My Non-Negotiable Daily Practices (Day 2)****Instructions for Participants:**

"From everything you've learned, identify 3-5 **daily non-negotiables**—practices you will maintain every day for the rest of your life.

**Choose practices that are:**

- **Sustainable:** You can do them daily, not just when motivated
- **Specific:** Concrete actions, not vague intentions
- **Essential:** These are the practices that keep you grounded

**Examples of daily non-negotiables:**



**1. Morning silence/prayer** (20 minutes)

- Centering prayer, listening to God, silence
- Non-negotiable: Before checking phone, before day begins

**2. Daily examen** (10 minutes evening)

- Review day for narcissistic patterns
- Celebrate growth, own failures
- Non-negotiable: Before bed

**3. Gratitude practice** (5 minutes)

- List 5 specific gratitudes
- Notice abundance vs. entitlement
- Non-negotiable: Morning or evening

**4. One act of service** (daily)

- Make someone's life easier
- Preferably anonymous
- Non-negotiable: Every day

**5. Connection with one person** (daily)

- Real conversation, not surface
- Practice presence, listening
- Non-negotiable: Daily human connection

**Write your 3-5 daily non-negotiables:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Then:** Put them in your calendar. Make them as automatic as brushing teeth."

---

## **Part 2: My Weekly Practices (Day 3)**

### **Instructions:**

"Identify 3-5 **weekly practices**—rhythms that sustain recovery week to week.

### **Examples:**

#### **1. Accountability meeting** (1 hour weekly)

- With sponsor, therapist, or accountability partner
- Review week, receive feedback, pray

#### **2. Service commitment** (2-4 hours weekly)

- Soup kitchen, tutoring, hospice, etc.
- Regular, humble service

#### **3. Sabbath rest** (24 hours weekly)

- No productivity, no performance
- Rest, play, worship, connection

#### **4. Deep study** (1 hour weekly)

- Scripture, recovery literature, growth materials
- Feeding mind and soul

#### **5. Gratitude review** (30 minutes weekly)

- Review gratitude journal from week
- Write thank-you note to someone

**Write your 3-5 weekly practices:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Then:** Schedule them. Recurring calendar events."

---

### **Part 3: My Monthly and Quarterly Practices (Day 4)**

#### **Instructions:**

"Identify **monthly** and **quarterly** practices for long-term sustainability.

#### **Monthly:**

- Review daily examen patterns: What themes? What growth? What slips?
- Seek feedback from 2-3 people: 'How am I doing relationally?'
- Read recovery plan: Am I maintaining commitments?
- Adjust practices as needed

#### **Quarterly:**

- Do entitlement audit: Where is entitlement creeping back?
- Review relationship health: Are relationships mutual, authentic?
- Assess service: Am I serving with joy or resentment?
- Celebrate growth: How am I different than 3 months ago?
- Adjust course: What needs to change?

#### **Annual:**

- Full recovery review: Where have I grown this year?
- Where have I regressed?
- What practices need adjustment?
- What's ahead for next year?

**Write these into your plan."**

---

#### **Part 4: My Relapse Prevention Plan (Day 5)**

##### **Instructions:**

"Identify your warning signs for relapse and create your action plan.

**Warning Signs** (list yours specifically):

**Early Warning Signs** (catch these fast):

- Skipping daily practices (silence, examen, gratitude)
- Isolating from accountability
- Increasing focus on how I appear to others
- Entitlement thoughts increasing
- Resentment building
- Service feels burdensome
- Comparing myself to others
- Seeking validation/recognition
- Defensiveness when given feedback
- Dominating conversations again

**Late Warning Signs** (intervention needed):

- Haven't met with accountability partner in 2+ weeks

- Stopped attending therapy/group
- Relationships becoming transactional again
- Regularly making everything about me
- Angry/resentful most of the time
- Performing rather than being present
- Using people
- Lying or image-managing

### **My Personal Relapse Plan:**

#### **If I notice early warning signs, I will:**

1. Immediately resume daily practices (no excuses)
2. Call accountability partner within 24 hours
3. Increase silence/prayer time
4. Review Weeks 1-2 materials (patterns, harm)
5. Journal extensively about what's happening

#### **If I notice late warning signs, I will:**

1. Call therapist/sponsor immediately
2. Schedule emergency accountability meeting
3. Confess specifically where I'm regressing
4. Return to intensive recovery practices
5. Consider returning to group or therapy

#### **If I fully relapse, I will:**

1. Not give up (relapse ≠ failure, it's information)
2. Seek immediate professional help

3. Confess to accountability partner/sponsor
4. Do a full inventory of what led to relapse
5. Rebuild practices from ground zero
6. Increase accountability

**Who I will call in crisis** (write names/numbers):

- Accountability partner: \_\_\_\_\_
- Therapist: \_\_\_\_\_
- Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_
- Emergency support: \_\_\_\_\_

**Write this plan. Print it. Keep it accessible."**

---

### **Group Processing (Day 6)**

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. "What are your daily non-negotiables? Why those specifically?"
  2. "What are your personal early warning signs for relapse?"
  3. "What makes accountability hard for you? How will you maintain it?"
  4. "If you relapse (not if, but when you struggle), what will you do?"
  5. "Is your recovery plan sustainable? Or are you overcommitting?"
- 

### **LETTER TO FUTURE SELF (Days 5-6)**

#### **Instructions for Participants**

#### **Facilitator Introduction:**

"Write a letter to yourself 6 months from now. This letter will remind you why you did this work and what you need to remember."

---

## **What to Include in Your Letter**

**Opening:** "Dear [Your name], 6 months ago, you completed a 12-week recovery program from narcissism. I'm writing to remind you..."

### **1. Why you started:**

- What was life like before recovery?
- What pain drove you to seek help?
- Who had you hurt?
- What did you recognize in yourself?

### **2. What you learned:**

- What were your biggest insights?
- What practices changed you most?
- What did you discover about yourself, God, others?

### **3. Your warning signs:**

- Here are your relapse warning signs: [list from Part 4]
- If you notice these, here's what to do: [your plan]

### **4. What to do if you're reading this because you're struggling:**

- Don't despair—this is part of the journey
- Return to daily practices immediately
- Call [accountability partner name] today
- Review Week [most impactful week for you]
- Remember: Progress, not perfection

## 5. Encouragement to future you:

- You CAN do this
- You've proven you can change
- God is with you
- Others believe in you
- Keep going—one day at a time

## 6. Gratitude from past you:

- Thank future you for staying faithful
- Acknowledge it's hard
- Express belief in future you

**Closing:** "Remember: Recovery is not about being perfect. It's about being faithful. Keep going."

With hope and commitment, [Your name], [today's date]"

**Seal this letter.** Open it in 6 months. Read it when you're struggling.

---

## THEOLOGICAL AND CLINICAL DEEPENING

### Eugene Peterson Quote Discussion

**"A long obedience in the same direction." — Eugene Peterson, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction***

### Facilitator Teaching (15 minutes):

"Peterson writes about the Songs of Ascent (Psalms 120-134)—songs sung by pilgrims walking to Jerusalem for worship.

### The journey was:

- Long (days of walking)



- Uphill (ascending to Jerusalem)
- Repetitive (same path, year after year)
- Communal (pilgrims together)

**This is discipleship**—and recovery: **A long obedience in the same direction.**

**Not:**

- Quick fix
- Dramatic transformation then coasting
- Exciting adventure every day

**But:**

- Daily faithfulness
- Step after step
- Same direction, over time
- Community journey

**Peterson says:** Modern culture wants instant, easy, exciting. But maturity—spiritual and psychological—comes through **long obedience**.

**For recovery:**

You've walked 12 weeks. That's the beginning, not the end.

**The question:** Will you keep walking? Same direction? When it's not exciting? When it's hard? When no one's applauding?

**Long obedience** means:

- Year 2 is harder than year 1 (less novelty)
- You'll get tired of practices
- You'll be tempted to quit
- But you keep going anyway

**Same direction** means:

- Not trying new techniques constantly
- Not abandoning what works for something shinier
- Faithfulness to proven practices
- Consistency over time

**This is how transformation happens:** Not dramatic breakthroughs, but faithful daily obedience.

**Will you commit to the long obedience?"**

---

**Discussion Questions:**

1. "Peterson says 'long obedience.' What makes long-term faithfulness hard?"
  2. "Why do we want quick fixes instead of slow faithfulness?"
  3. "Recovery is 'same direction'—not constantly changing methods. Can you commit to what you've learned here?"
  4. "What would 'long obedience' in recovery look like 5 years from now?"
- 

**Chuck DeGroat Quote Discussion**

"Recovery from narcissism isn't a destination. It's a daily choice to live in reality, in humility, and in genuine connection—even when it's uncomfortable, even when you're not applauded for it." — Dr. Chuck DeGroat, *When Narcissism Comes to Church*

**Facilitator Teaching** (15 minutes):

"DeGroat, who works extensively with narcissism recovery, emphasizes: **This is daily choice, not one-time arrival.**

**'Recovery isn't a destination':**

There's no point where you say 'I'm done, I've arrived, I'm fully recovered.'

You're always in recovery. Always choosing. Always growing.

**'It's a daily choice':**

Every day, you choose:

- Reality over fantasy (about yourself, others)
- Humility over pride
- Connection over isolation
- Authenticity over performance

**'To live in reality':**

- Seeing yourself accurately
- Accepting limits
- Acknowledging dependence

**'In humility':**

- Thinking of yourself less
- Serving without recognition
- Being ordinary and okay with it

**'In genuine connection':**

- Authentic relationships
- Vulnerability
- Mutuality

**'Even when it's uncomfortable':**

- Recovery is often uncomfortable

- Growth hurts
- Vulnerability is scary
- Humility feels like death

**'Even when you're not applauded for it':**

**This is the key:** Recovery happens when no one's watching.

You won't get applause for:

- Daily silence practice
- Anonymous service
- Humility in marriage
- Listening to your kids
- Being ordinary

**But that's where recovery lives**—in the un-applauded dailyness.

**DeGroat's point:** Are you willing to choose recovery every day, even when it's hard, even when no one sees?"

---

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. **"DeGroat says recovery is 'daily choice.' What makes daily choice harder than one-time decision?"**
  2. **"What does 'living in reality' require from you daily?"**
  3. **"DeGroat says 'even when it's uncomfortable.' What discomfort will you face in ongoing recovery?"**
  4. **"'Even when you're not applauded'—can you commit to recovery when no one's noticing or praising you?"**
-

## COMMISSIONING AND CLOSING CEREMONY (Day 7)

### Preparing for Closure

**Facilitator Note:** This final session should feel ceremonial—honoring the journey, acknowledging growth, commissioning for future, creating sacred closure.

---

### Opening the Final Session (20 minutes)

#### Facilitator Welcome:

"This is our final session together. For 12 weeks, we've walked together through:

- Awakening to truth
- Emptying of false self
- Rebuilding in humility and love
- Sustaining through gratitude and service

Today, we celebrate what God has done, we acknowledge the road ahead, and we commission you to continue this journey."

---

### Testimonies of Transformation (30-45 minutes)

#### Instructions:

"Each person shares briefly (3-5 minutes):

#### Answer these questions:

1. Who was I 12 weeks ago?
2. What has changed?
3. What am I most grateful for from this journey?

#### 4. What am I committing to going forward?

##### **Guidelines:**

- Be honest (celebrate growth without inflating)
- Be specific (concrete changes, not generic)
- Be humble (acknowledging ongoing need)
- Be hopeful (committed to continue)

**Facilitator role:** Witness, affirm, bless each person's testimony."

---

##### **Group Affirmation (15 minutes)**

##### **Process:**

"We're going to affirm each person's growth. One at a time, the group speaks words of affirmation:

##### **For each person, others say:**

- 'I've seen you grow in...'
- 'I've witnessed your courage when...'
- 'I'm grateful for your...'
- 'I see Christ forming in you through...'

##### **Guidelines:**

- Specific, not generic
- True, not flattery
- Kind, not critical

**This is powerful:** Hearing others name your growth, seeing yourself through their eyes."

---

## **Commissioning Prayer/Liturgy (15 minutes)**

### **Facilitator leads:**

"We commission you to continue this journey. Let's speak this together:

### **Group Commissioning Liturgy:**

**Leader:** Do you commit to continuing the work of recovery—daily practices, ongoing accountability, lifelong growth?

**Response:** I do, with God's help.

**Leader:** Do you commit to humility—seeing yourself accurately, thinking of yourself less, serving without recognition?

**Response:** I do, with God's help.

**Leader:** Do you commit to authentic relationships—vulnerability, mutuality, presence over performance?

**Response:** I do, with God's help.

**Leader:** Do you commit to gratitude—acknowledging gifts, releasing entitlement, living in abundance?

**Response:** I do, with God's help.

**Leader:** Do you commit to service—making yourself nothing for others, decreasing so others may increase?

**Response:** I do, with God's help.

**Leader:** Do you commit to the long obedience—faithfulness over time, persistence through difficulty, daily surrender?

**Response:** I do, with God's help.

**[Pause]**

**Leader:** Then go forth. Walk this path. You are not alone. God is with you. We are with you. The journey continues.

**All: Amen."**

---

### **Individual Blessing (20 minutes)**

#### **Process:**

"One at a time, each person stands (or sits) in the center. The facilitator (or group) lays hands on them (if comfortable) and speaks a blessing over them.

#### **Blessing format:**

'[Name], you have walked through darkness into light. You have faced truth courageously. You have let die what needed to die. You have been remade.

Go forth in humility and strength. Go forth in gratitude and service. Go forth in authenticity and love.

May God keep you faithful. May the Spirit sustain you. May Christ be formed in you daily.

You are beloved. You are ordinary. You are enough.

Go in peace. Walk in recovery. Live in freedom.

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.'

**Adapt to each person's journey. Make it personal."**

---

### **Final Charge (10 minutes)**

#### **Facilitator's Final Words:**

"Twelve weeks ago, you walked in here as one person. Today, you leave as another.

Not perfect. Not finished. But **changed**.

You've learned to:

- See yourself honestly



- Face your harm
- Sit with emptiness
- Release control
- Listen genuinely
- Practice humility
- Feel empathy
- Build authentic relationships
- Live in gratitude
- Serve with joy

**These aren't skills you mastered. They're practices you'll engage for life.**

Recovery is not behind you. **It's ahead of you.**

Every day, you choose:

- Reality over fantasy
- Humility over pride
- Connection over isolation
- Gratitude over entitlement
- Service over self-focus

**Some days will be easy. Many will be hard.**

You will regress. You will catch yourself reverting. **That's not failure—that's the journey.**

**The question is:** When you notice, will you course-correct? Will you return to practices? Will you call your accountability partner? Will you surrender again?

**Remember:**

**You are not alone.** God is with you. This community is with you. Your accountability partner is with you.

**You are not beyond hope.** Change is real. You've proven it. Keep going.

**You are not perfect.** You don't need to be. You just need to be faithful.

**Galatians 6:9:** 'Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.'

**Don't lose heart.**

**Press on.**

**Stay the course.**

**Walk the long obedience.**

We're cheering for you. God is for you. You can do this.

Now go. Live it. And when you stumble—because you will—get up, dust off, and keep walking.

The journey continues.

Go with God."

---

## **Closing Prayer**

**All together:**

"God, You have walked with us through these 12 weeks. You've shown us truth. You've held us through pain. You've given us hope.

Now we go forth—not finished, but faithful. Not perfect, but persistent.

Keep us in recovery. Sustain our practices. Maintain our accountability. Give us courage for the long obedience.

When we fall, raise us up. When we forget, remind us. When we're weary, strengthen us.

Make us people of humility, empathy, authenticity, gratitude, and service.

Transform us daily into the image of Christ.

We cannot do this alone. We will not do this alone.

Thank You that we don't have to.

Amen."

---

## **AFTER THE PROGRAM: ONGOING SUPPORT**

### **Recommendations for Continued Recovery**

#### **Individual Therapy:**

- Continue or begin therapy with narcissism specialist
- Process deeper trauma/wounds
- Maintain accountability

#### **Support Groups:**

- 12-step groups (if applicable)
- Ongoing recovery groups
- Church small groups focused on authenticity

#### **Spiritual Direction:**

- Find spiritual director for ongoing soul care
- Continue silence/contemplative practices
- Deepen relationship with God

#### **Reading/Study:**

- Continue recovery reading
- Study Scripture

- Engage growth materials

**Service:**

- Maintain regular service commitments
- Join serving communities
- Keep serving anonymously

**Accountability:**

- Weekly check-ins (non-negotiable)
  - Monthly feedback sessions
  - Annual recovery reviews
- 

**RESOURCES FOR LIFELONG RECOVERY**

**Books for Ongoing Study:**

- *The Wounded Heart* by Dan Allender
- *When Narcissism Comes to Church* by Chuck DeGroat
- *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction* by Eugene Peterson
- *The Spirit of the Disciplines* by Dallas Willard
- *Life Together* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

**Clinical Resources:**

- Find therapist specializing in personality disorders
- Consider group therapy
- Explore EMDR for trauma

**Spiritual Resources:**

- Contemplative prayer communities

- Spiritual direction
- Silent retreats

**Online Communities** (carefully):

- Recovery forums (avoid narcissism-focused negativity)
  - Christian recovery groups
  - Accountability apps
- 

**FACILITATOR CLOSING THOUGHTS**

**This has been profound work—for them and for you.**

**Celebrate:**

- What God has done
- The courage they've shown
- The changes you've witnessed

**Acknowledge:**

- The road ahead is long
- Some will thrive, some will struggle
- You did your part; God does His part; they do theirs

**Release:**

- You're not responsible for their future
- You facilitated; you didn't fix
- Trust God with their continued transformation

**Care for yourself:**

- Process your own journey through this

- Celebrate your facilitation
- Rest before next group
- Seek your own ongoing support

**You've served well. Thank you.**

---

## **END WEEK 12 END OF THE SACRED RECOVERY: 12 WEEKS BEYOND NARCISSISM**

---

*"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord." — 1 Corinthians 15:58*