

Recovery from the Dominant Culture

Healing the Culture that Makes Us Sick

We are all, to some degree, captive to the institutions and systems upon which we rely for the meeting of our basic needs. For example, we often must sacrifice some piece of our integrity to keep a job, to procure needed goods or services, or to stay out of prison for, say, war tax resistance. The problem is that every time we make one of these sacrifices of integrity without adequately acknowledging and mourning what we are doing, we are further dehumanized. We have all been molded and shaped to some degree by the systems in which we live and by the worldview that underlies them, which includes individualism, white supremacy, the idealization of self-sufficiency, dubious ideas about how to achieve security, status, and esteem, and so on. That is not to say that we have succumbed completely. In fact, quite the opposite is true. We have probably all resisted as much as we can. Still, prolonged exposure to this culture has hurt us and diminished our humanity. We want it back. In this ongoing experimental 12-step program, we will focus on recovery from this process. We often talk about our addictions to:

- economic, physical, and social security
- competition and measuring ourselves against others
- praise and approval
- smallness or timidity in the face of injustice or entitlement
- self-hatred and self-doubt
- staying busy
- control of people, places, and things
- keeping relationships shallow and safe
- having too much or too little money
- worrying about the future
- assorted substances and material stuff, or the compulsive renunciation thereof

Members of all other 12-step programs are welcome, as well as those who have never attended a 12-step meeting before. These meetings are an auxiliary to, but not a substitute for, programs in your primary addiction area. We encourage members to attend other 12-step meetings as appropriate. Together we will seek the guidance of a Higher Power of our own individual understanding and support each other in trying out new ways of living.

A Recovery from the Dominant Culture meeting is now taking place weekly in West San Jose! It is Tuesday evenings, 7 – 8 pm. Please contact derek@derekjoetennant.net for location details.

We also believe that our own recovery will not be complete until we participate in the healing of the addictive society that made us sick. For that reason, our twelfth step is a little broader than the one used by Alcoholics Anonymous and related programs. Ours reads:

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we practice these principles in all our affairs, trying to carry this message to those who still suffer and to contribute our efforts to projects that embody an alternative to the addictive processes of the dominant culture."