

# Perfect Liberty II

A Guide to Freedom  
From Addiction



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## **Perfect Liberty II**

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# ***Dedication***

I am keenly aware of the quiet suffering of those who are bound down by impulse control problems. Hope may diminish as time begins to tarnish precious dreams of what could have been. It is my sincere prayer that this manual will provide some key ideas to both strengthen and encourage individuals. *Perfect Liberty* is dedicated to those who are courageous enough to fully commit themselves to the path of faith and truth. May the Savior of the world bless you in your recovery journey.

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## Preface

Niagara Falls is an incredible place to visit. One cannot help but be impressed by the power and majesty of that natural wonder. It also reminds us of an important principle as well. The falls are fed by the mighty Niagara River. Boats like to travel close to the edge of the falls for excitement and to get a better view. There is an important sign placed on the bank whose warning should be heeded. It says, "The point of no return." Experience has shown that boats going past this point run the risk of being swept over the falls. Whenever we ignore the commandments, we also place ourselves in grave jeopardy. We may think that it is OK to take short forays into the domain of evil, but there are too many risks. Once we place ourselves in Satan's territory, he has the advantage. Those who become accustomed to a sinful activity will eventually become careless and go too far. They will find that they are in the grasp of Satan's chains and an easy escape is no longer possible.



Acquiring greater knowledge and spiritual power are the keys to overcoming addictive behavior. Addictions damage lives and have the potential to destroy our souls. They are a bad bargain. We remember that Esau in a moment of hunger and weakness traded his birthright (or inheritance) to his younger brother Jacob for a bowl of lentil soup. We must be wiser than that. The stakes involved in passing this earthly test are higher than can be imagined. This book is concerned with helping individuals gain more power in the fight against temptations. Its foundational belief is that the answers for psychological questions about addictions will ultimately be found within the gospel of Jesus Christ. May you be blessed in your search for knowledge, as "the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)

# The Twelve Principles of Addiction Recovery

## 1. Faith

It is through faith in Jesus Christ that we can receive the power and knowledge to overcome addictions. Addiction comes not from lack of willpower, but from emotional vulnerability and the conditioning effects of sin. The Lord can be a pillar of strength and a fountain of wisdom as we demonstrate the humility to reach out to him. Recognizing that one's life is out of control and deciding to rely upon the Lord is the first step in the recovery process.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:  
(Matthew 7:7)

## 2. Monitoring desires

The continual monitoring of impulses in the context of rules, boundaries, and triggers is an important element in abstinence. True intent to change can be seen by the actual steps taken to alter behavior patterns. Inner attitudes that perpetuate sin must be detected and rooted out. Complete honesty is a requirement for lasting growth.

Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?  
Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned? (Proverbs 6:27-28)

## 3. Changing desires

True success in recovery involves changing the desires of the heart. This can be accomplished through three means: 1) obtaining the purifying influence of the Holy Ghost, 2) educating the inner self by cultivating truth in thoughts, 3) becoming converted to a spiritual lifestyle through faith-generated positive experiences. Understanding these processes can increase our capacity to live by correct principles in all areas of life.

Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. (Psalms 51:6&10)

## 4. Seek the gift of the Atonement

We can obtain forgiveness and added peace and strength as we receive the blessings of the Atonement. Heavenly Father requires of us honesty, humility, remorse, restitution as able, and a sincere willingness to relinquish our sins. Godly sorrow includes recognition of how we have offended the Lord and others. Sincere prayers, confession to priesthood leaders, appropriate disclosure to family, and a mighty effort to refrain from sin are signs of a changed heart.

For we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do. (2 Nephi 25:23)

## 5. Trust in God

Turn your life and will over to Jesus Christ by making spirituality your greatest goal. Spirituality could be defined as: 1) being obedient to the commandments and promptings of the Holy Ghost, 2) maintaining a positive emotional state by cultivating right thoughts and actions, 3) focusing on service to others and personal growth, 4) seeking to be in harmony with other people, nature, and truth.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. (Galatians 5:25)

## 6. One day at a time

Maintain a spiritual focus. Concentrate on the experience of the moment. Keep your thoughts off the past and the future and be in the present 95% of the time. Constructive activities create positive emotions and disrupt negative thinking patterns. Find joy and purpose in each day.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. (Matthew 6:34)

## **7. Peace through acceptance**

We can find greater peace by utilizing the wisdom of the Serenity Prayer from the 12-step model. The majority of negative emotions come from our resistance to accepting our present reality (truth). We can be fortified in pursuing righteous goals as we pray to the Lord for knowledge and spiritual strength.

*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.*

## **8. As a man thinketh**

Correct thinking is a vital element in recovery and spiritual living. Learn to change your thoughts and more effectively manage anxiety, anger, guilt, depression, and low self-worth. The adversary strives to weaken us with powerful lies that create doubt, despair, and self-condemnation and distance us from our Heavenly Father. These self-defeating ideas must be challenged with logic, scripture, and corrective emotional experiences. The Holy Spirit can help guide us in our quest for truth.

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. (John 8:32)

## **9. Take care of the inner self**

The inner self is the core part of man and the center of our emotions and desires. Greater inward harmony can be achieved by becoming more aware of deeper thoughts, emotions, and desires, and by providing effective conscious direction. Emotional success involves developing the wisdom and self-discipline to lead a moral and responsible life, while also taking care of personal needs.

President James E. Faust: The basic program of the Church today is to strengthen the inner self.

## **10. Individual worth**

All souls have equal worth in the eyes of God. Cease to base your value upon the approval of others or the achievement of perfectionistic standards. Particularly avoid comparisons as this is pride. Secure self-worth comes through humility, acknowledging personal progress, and accepting our value as children of our Heavenly Father.

Remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God. (D&C 18:10)

## **11. Healthy intimacy**

Love is all-important. Being part of a community of family, friends and neighbors provides joy and emotional strength. Learn to overcome fears of rejection and be a friend to all. Service is an integral part of the spiritual path and increases self-confidence. Perform acts of kindness for those around you every day.

This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. (John 15:12)

## **12. Continual self-improvement**

Eternal progression is an important gospel concept. Resolve to change defects in behavior and character and strive to become a better person—more kind, sensitive, honest, disciplined, and temperate. Also focus on gaining new skills, developing positive health habits, and acquiring knowledge. Goals give life more meaning and are the building blocks for our dreams. Strengthen motivational abilities and take things step-by-step. Gradual progress is real progress.

And if your eye be single to my glory, your whole bodies shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in you; and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things (D&C 88:67)