

CONSUMERISM RECOVERY PLAN

A 12-step program that uses individual constructs to transform consumerism.

If you're struggling to detangle yourself from consumerism's powerful grip, you're not alone. The following 12 steps are designed to help you incrementally identify a path toward a more conscious relationship with the things we buy.

Each step may take a few days or a few weeks, but working through them consistently will eventually transform you into an empowered consumer. Consider making them into calendar reminders over the next few months and share your progress with others.

THE PLAN:

Step 1 (Powerlessness) Admit we are powerless over consumerism – new products and services which create temporary happiness. We work to consume more and more products and services. It negatively affects our time and our relationship with ourselves, our friends, and our families.

Step 2 (Hope) Believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. Our inner void can be filled with new passions, not products that bring temporary joy and are designed to fail. Believe that our attention is our scarcest resource and commit focus on what truly matters most.

Step 3 (Surrender) Consciously live as if our taking of material possessions also takes away from the resources and livelihood of those in desperate need of basic needs. Understand that consumerism is a compulsion.

Step 4 (Inventory) Make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. Sell, donate, or throw out anything that has not been utilized in over a year.

Step 5 (Confession) Admit to a higher power, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. Confess the guilt we feel after purchasing an item. Identify the people in our lives who enable us – and ask them to join our fight for more balanced consumerism world-wide.

Step 6 (Readiness) Shop for what we need and not for what we think we need. Write down what we need before shopping – whether online or in-person shopping. Switch to low-interest credit cards, then pay down, and finally get rid of all credit cards. Be prepared to buy cryptographic tokens and partake in Time Banks.

Step 7 (Edified) Learn how to identify marketing ploys. Train instincts to see red flags in place of discounts and to see nothing but an attempt at stealing attention when an advertisement appears. Practice meditation to open minds and achieve greater mental bandwidth, greater clarity, and less decision fatigue on a daily basis.

Step 8 (Amends List) Make a list of all persons we have harmed, and become willing to make amends to them all.

Step 9 (Make Amends) Make direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would harm them or others.

Step 10 (Continue Inventory) Continue to take material item inventory, keep only what brings us lasting joy, and if we regress, promptly return the item. Identify and restart **Step One** if we begin a habit of purchase and return.

Step 11 (Keep Contact) Stay informed on societal and environmental progress. Join a philanthropic cause to donate our time and to serve others. Vote for politicians who help to reduce waste, advertising, and misleading information in our lives.

Step 12 (Help Others) Carry this message to others and pledge to practice these principles in all affairs.