

Twelve Step Facilitation (TSF)

How Clinician-Guided Step Work Leads to Real Change



What is Twelve Step Facilitation?

Twelve Step Facilitation (TSF) is a structured, evidence-based clinical intervention designed to guide individuals into active, meaningful engagement with 12-step recovery programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA). Developed through the landmark Project MATCH research initiative and published by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, TSF provides the clinical framework that transforms twelve-step principles from concepts heard in a meeting into practices lived in daily life.

How It Works: The Core Phases of TSF

- **Assessment:** Examine the full impact of addiction on the individual's life and relationships.
- **Acceptance:** Acknowledge the loss of control over substances and the need for change.
- **Surrender:** Recognize that willpower alone has not been enough and embrace outside support.
- **Get Active:** Attend 12-step meetings, secure a sponsor, and begin clinician-supported step work.
- **Continuing Care:** Maintain long-term recovery through service commitments, sponsorship of others, and an ongoing deep practice of 12-step principals.

Goals of TSF

- Accept that addiction recovery requires active work
- Recognize the limits of willpower alone in sustaining sobriety
- Consistent engagement with a sponsor and fellowship
- Complete step work with honesty and accountability
- Build a spiritual foundation to support lasting change

Therapeutic Benefits

- Reduced isolation through community engagement
- Increased accountability from sponsors and peers
- Stronger personal identity grounded in sober living
- Long-term relapse prevention supported by step-based principles
- Measurable behavioral shifts through real action

“They’ve Already Done the Twelve Steps, And It Didn’t Work.”

This is one of the most common things families say about the twelve steps. And it raises a fair question: if the twelve steps didn't work before, why would they work now?

The answer is not that the steps failed. It's that **working the steps is not the same as living them**. Most people who relapse after twelve-step exposure completed a fraction of what the program actually requires. When engaging with the twelve-step program, it's important to set the right expectations for what real step work looks like.

What Does Living the Twelve Steps Look Like?

At Burning Tree Ranch, we help families understand what real step work looks like. There are clear guideposts families can use to evaluate whether their loved one has genuinely worked all twelve steps:

- 1) Sincere Amends, Followed Through**
Did they acknowledge the harm they caused, right their wrongs, and follow through with changed behavior?
- 2) Sustained Service to Others**
Did they dedicate a meaningful part of their life to helping other people in recovery find the same freedom?
- 3) Ownership of Past Behavior**
Did they accept responsibility for past actions, identify a clear path to doing things differently, and then actually follow-through to do them differently?
- 4) Spiritual Principles in Daily Practice**
Did they attend meetings consistently, take on service commitments, and place honesty and humility at the center of how they live?
- 5) Recognizable Change in Character**
Did they undergo an observable shift in personality that made them genuinely different from the one caught in addiction?

If the answer to any of these these questions is no or not really, the steps were not worked. Our program is long-term and progress based specifically to **give clients the time and clinical structure to work through each step** with real depth. Clients advance when they demonstrate these changes, not when a calendar says they are done.

TSF Integrated With Dual Diagnosis Treatment

TSF has demonstrated effectiveness when integrated with evidence-based clinical therapies in a dual diagnosis treatment approach. For chronic relapsers with co-occurring mental health conditions, twelve-step engagement provides the community connection and peer accountability that clinical therapy alone cannot replicate.

At Burning Tree Ranch, we integrate TSF with numerous therapeutic modalities to create a dual diagnosis treatment plan addressing both the addiction and the underlying conditions that have contribute to relapse. The goal is not just sobriety, but to build a new life in recovery.



"Families often tell us their loved one has done the steps before. What we ask is: Did they make sincere amends? Did they serve others? Real step work shows up in how a person lives, not just what they say."



Brook McKenzie, LCDC
CEO, Burning Tree Ranch

Dual Diagnosis:

The presence of **both a substance use disorder and a mental health condition** occurring together. Effective treatment for dual-diagnosis addictions must address both aspects simultaneously.



Have Other Treatment Programs Missed the Deeper Issues?

Burning Tree Ranch is the Nation's only authentic long-term treatment program for chronic relapse. Call us at (866) 287-2877 or visit us online at www.BurningTree.com.

Disclaimer: Burning Tree Ranch aims to enhance the quality of life for individuals battling substance use and mental health disorders through well-researched and professionally reviewed content. Our publications focus on the nature of behavioral health conditions, available treatments, and their outcomes. Reviewed by licensed experts, our material is informative but not a replacement for professional advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the guidance of a licensed health provider for any medical or clinical concerns.



BURNING TREE RANCH
AUTHENTIC LONG TERM TREATMENT

Learn More About Authentic Long-Term Treatment at www.BurningTree.com