

CORRELATION OF BIG BOOK AND THE TWELVE STEPS

- Step 1:** *Forwards*
 The Doctor's Opinion
 Bill's Story
 Doctor Bob's Nightmare
- Step 2:** *There is a Solution*
 More About Alcoholism
- Step 3:** *We Agnostics*
 How it Works, p. 60-63
- Step 4:** *How it Works, p. 64 to end of chapter*
- Step 5:** *Into Action, p.72-75*
- Step 6:** *Into Action, p.76, first paragraph*
- Step 7:** *Into Action, p.76, second paragraph*
- Step 8:** *Into Action, p.76, third paragraph to the middle of p.84*
- Step 9:** *Into Action, p.76, third paragraph to the middle of p.84*
- Step 10:** *Into Action, p.84, third paragraph to bottom of p.85*
- Step 11:** *Into Action, bottom of p.85 to end of chapter*
- Step 12:** *Working with Others:*
 To Wives
 The Family Afterward
 To Employers
 A Vision for You

THE TWELVE STEPS

- 1 We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
- 2 Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
- 3 Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
- 4 Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
- 5 Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
- 6 Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
- 7 Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
- 8 Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
- 9 Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
- 10 Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
- 11 Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
- 12 Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Steps and Traditions
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THE TWELVE TRADITIONS

- 1 Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity.
- 2 For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority -- a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
- 3 The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.
- 4 Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.
- 5 Each group has but one primary purpose -- to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
- 6 An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
- 7 Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
- 8 Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
- 9 AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
- 10 Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
- 11 Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
- 12 Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help,
I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that:
I am responsible.

Big Book Name and Date References

(Compiled by Tony C. and Barefoot Bill)

<u>Pg/Ch.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Description</u>
Preface		
xi	written by Dr. Silkworth	The Doctor's Opinion
Preface 2Ed		
xv	Bill Wilson & Dr. Bob	during a talk between a NY stockbroker & Akron physician (they first met on 5/12/35)
xvi	Ebby Thacher	alcoholic friend in contact with Oxford Group
xvi	Dr. Silkworth	(named) NY specialist in alcoholism
xvi	Bill Wilson	The broker
xvi	Dr. Bob	the Akron physician
xvii	Bill Dotson	AA#3 (sober date was 6/26/35, Bill Wilson & Dr. Bob first visited him on 6/28/35)
xvii-iii	Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick	(named) noted clergyman
xviii	Fulton Oursler	(named) editor of Liberty
xviii	John Rockefeller Jr	(named) gave dinner
xviii	Jack Alexander	(named) wrote Saturday Evening Post article
xix	Traditions	all Twelve Traditions mentioned
xx	recovery rate from 1939-1955	Of alcoholics who came to AA & really tried, 50% got sober at once & remained that way; 25% sobered up after some relapses, and among the remainder, those who stayed on with AA showed improvement
Doctor's Opinion (was page 1 in the first edition of the Big Book)		
xxv-xxxii	Dr. William D. Silkworth	well known doctor (worked at Towns Hospital, N.Y.C.)
xxv	Bill Wilson	patient he regarded as hopeless
xxvii	9 years experience	Dr. Silkworth had 9 years of experience with alcoholics & drug addicts when he wrote this
xxvii	Bill Wilson	one of the leading contributors of this book
xxxi	Hank Parkhurst	man brought in to be treated for chronic alcoholism
xxxi	Fitz Mayo	another case, had hid in a barn
Bill's Story (Bill Wilson)		
1	Winchester Cathedral	Bill Wilson has a spiritual experience ("Here I stood on the edge of the abyss into which thousands were falling that very day. A feeling of despair settled down on me - where was He - why did He not come - and suddenly in that moment of darkness, He was there. I felt an all enveloping, comforting, powerful presence. Tears stood in my eyes, and as I looked about, I saw on the faces of others nearby, that they too had glimpsed the great reality.")

1 Thomas Thetcher an old tombstone (the name of
 the Hampshire Grenadier)
 2 1920's certain securities then cheap
 & rather unpopular
 2 April, 1925 off we roared on a (Harley
 Davidson) motorcycle
 3 Ella Goldfoot's worked on farm for a month
 3 ? remonstrances of friends,
 became lone wolf
 3 our sumptuous apartment Livingston Street, NY
 3 ? Spring 1929 contracted golf
 fever, went to country
 4 Ekwanok Country Club the exclusive (golf) course
 which had inspired such awe in me as a lad
 4 Penick & Ford XYZ-32 (stock) (Penick & Ford
 is a corn products company, it went from 52 to 32 in 1 day)
 4 Dick Johnson friend in Montreal (worked at
 Greenshields & Co., a brokerage house)
 4 1930 By the following spring
 4 Macy's wife (Lois) work in dept.
 store
 5 A. Wheeler & F. Winans 1932 formed group to buy -
 bender - chance vanished
 5 written sweet promises Promise followed empty
 promise. On October 20, 1928, Bill wrote in the family
 Bible, the most sacred place he knew: 'To my beloved wife
 that has endured so much, let this stand as evidence of my
 pledge to you that I have finished with drink forever.' By
 Thanksgiving Day of that year he had written, 'My strength
 is renewed a thousandfold in my love for you,' In January
 1929, he added, 'To tell you once more that I am finished
 with it. I love you.'
 None of those promises, however, carried the anguish Bill
 expressed in an undated letter to Lois: 'I have failed
 again this day. That I should continue to even try to do
 right in the grand manner is perhaps a great foolishness.
 Righteousness simply does not seem to be in me. Nobody
 wishes it more than I. Yet no one flouts it more often.'
 Again, he wrote a promise to his wife in the family Bible:
 'Finally and for a lifetime, thank God for your love.' The
 promise was dated September 3, 1930. Like those that had
 preceded it, it was not kept. That was the last of the
 Bible promises.
 6 ? doctor came with sedative,
 next day drinking gin & sedative
 7 early spring 1934 I was forty pounds under
 weight
 7 Dr. L. Strong & Dr. Emily brother in-law (husband of
 sister Dorothy) & mother put him in Towns Hospital
 7 Dr. Silkworth met kind doctor explained
 ill, body & mind
 7 Summer, 1934 After a time I returned to
 the hospital
 8 11/11/34 Armistice Day 1934
 8-12 Ebby Thacher old school friend
 9 Shep C, Rowland H, Cebra G two? (three) men appeared in
 court (Shep Cornell, Rowland Hazzard & Cebra Graves)

9 chartered an airplane January 1929, from Albany
N.Y. to newly opened Manchester Vt.
10 Fayette Griffith (Bill's) grandfather
10 Winchester Cathedral (see page 1)
12 the Cathedral Winchester Cathedral (see
page 1)
13 12/11/34 At the hospital I was
separated from alcohol for the last time (Bill was admitted
to the hospital at 2:38PM and he is 39 years old)
13 Ebby & Shep Cornell schoolmate visited at hosp
with friend
14 Dr. Silkworth friend, the doctor
14 12/14/34 God's impact on Bill is
sudden & profound, he calls Silky & describes what just
happened, this spiritual experience as THE result of the
work he did on pages 13 & 14 were all done when Bill had 3
days of sobriety or less!
14 Ebby friend emphasized
16 Bill C. committed suicide in Bill &
Lois's home (a lawyer, stayed with them almost a year, died
1936)
16 36 years sober, age 75 Bill W., co-founder of AA,
died January 24, 1971

There Is A Solution

21 mostly from Bill's story Here is the fellow who has
been puzzling you...
26 Rowland Hazard a certain American Business
man - treated by Dr. Carl Jung (1931)
26 Freud & Adler consulted best known American
psychiatrists (Freud was sick & Adler was booked up so
Rowland ended up working with Jung)
26 Dr. Carl Jung (named) European psychiatrist
28 William James (named) American psychologist
who wrote "Varieties of Religious Experience"

More About Alcoholism

32 ? A man of thirty (On page 123
of Richard Peabody's 1931 book "The Common Sense of
Drinking", Peabody briefly mentions an unknown man who gave
up drinking until he had made his fortune five years later.
Resuming "moderate" drinking, he was soon back in his
alcoholic difficulties, losing his money in two or three
years and dying of alcoholism a few years after that. This
anecdotal account was probably the germ idea for this
story)
35-7 Ralph Furlong a friend we shall call Jim
(Ralph is the author of the story "Another Prodigal Son"
which only appeared in the first edition of the Big Book)
37-8 ? jay walker story
39-43 Harry B. Fred
43 Dr. Percy Polick staff member world-renowned
hospital (Bellevue Hospital, N.Y.)

We Agnostics

50	Alfred E. Smith	"celebrated American statesman" (four time governor of New York and unsuccessful first Roman Catholic presidential candidate.)
51	Wright brothers	(named) first successful flight 1903
51	Professor Langley	Samuel P. Langley, flying machine landed in Potomac - 1903 project for War Dept.
52	Wright brothers	(named) built a machine that could fly
55	?	people who proved that man could never fly
56	Fitz Mayo	the minister's son
56	Bill Wilson	approached by an alcoholic

How It Works

Into Action

76	Book of James 2:20,26	Faith without works is dead
79	?	man we know was remarried
80	Oxford Group member	he accepted sum of money from business rival - explained in church

Working With Others

101	Eskimo	running away from drinking to Greenland Ice cap
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To Wives

Family Afterward

124	Henry Ford	(named)
133	?	one of the many doctors
135	Earl Treat	one of our friends is a heavy smoker and coffee drinker

To Employers (chapter was written by Hank Parkhurst)

136	Hank Parkhurst	member who spent life in world of big business
136	?	Mr B.
137	?	one of the best salesmen
137	?	man who hung himself
138	Frank Winans?	officer of one of largest banks in America
138	Bob E. or Rowland H.?	an executive of the same bank
140	Dr. Edward Cowles?	Chicago doctor with spinal fluid theory of alcoholics (see http://www.eskimo.com/~burked/history/cowles.html)
141	Standard Oil New Jersey	"if my company" (that Hank Parkhurst worked for)
148	?	vice president of large industrial concern
149	Honor Dealers Co.	I own a little company (an automobile polish distributorship (see page 246 & 248)
149-50	Bill Wilson & Jim Burwell	two alcoholic employees

Vision For You

151	Bill's former Higher Power	King Alcohol
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151 Four Horsemen (named) Terror, Bewilderment, Frustration, Despair - Revelations 6:2-8 war, famine, pestilence, and death personified the four plagues of mankind

153 Bill Wilson one of our number made a journey

153 Akron, OH. a certain western city

153 National Rubber Machinery business (of that trip)

involved in proxy fight

154 Akron, Ohio in a strange place (had to have that one)

154 Mayflower Hotel paced a hotel lobby

154 Reverend Walter Tunks clergyman he phoned (Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Akron)

155 "the old Episcopal Church" church selected at random

155 Dr. Bob resident near nadir of alcoholic despair

155 AMA convention went on a roaring bender (Atlantic City, NJ)

156 around 6/17/35 He (Dr. Bob) has not had a drink since. (It is generally stated that Dr. Bob's sobriety date and the founding date of AA is 6/10/35, but recent facts around Dr. Bob's last drink indicate that this date is closer to a week or so later.)

156 Mrs. Hall/Akron City Hosp head nurse of local hospital

156-8 Bill Dotson real corker, none too promising, future AA, lawyer

158 6/26/35 He (Bill Dotson) never drank again.

158 Ernie Galbraith - Akron devil may care young fellow

159 Bill Wilson our friend of the hotel lobby incident

159 Dr. Bob, Bill D, Ernie G leaving behind his first acquaintance, the lawyer and the devil-may-care chap

159 ? - Archie T, Bill/Bob G (Salesman), Bill Van H, Dr. Bob, Charlie S, Dick S (AA#7), Ernie G, Harry Z, Jim S (Writer), Joe D (AA #5), Marie B, May B & Tom L/Jim L, Paul S, Ralph F, Wally G, Walter B - all 17 have stories in 1st edition. Additionally, Phil S (AA#5), Bill V, J.D.H., Bob E, Ken A were sober by 1937. Some may go with p.161. A year and 6 mo.s later these 3 succeeded with 7 more (puts this early 1937)

160 T. Henry & Clarace Williams One man and his wife

161 Cleveland, OH. community 30 miles away

161 Lloyd T, Clarence S, ?Charlie J. (see names from pg.159) has 15 fellows of AA

161 New York eastern city

162 Towns Hospital, NYC well known hospital for treatment of alcohol & drugs

162 Bill Wilson member there 6 years ago

162 Dr. Silkworth doctor in attendance

162 eastern city NYC

162 western friends Ohio

162 New York, Akron/Cleveland our two large centers

163 Hank Parkhurst AA member living in a large community (Montclair, NJ)

163 Dr. Howard prominent psychiatrist (of Montclair, NJ/Chief Psychiatrist for the State of NJ)

163 Dr. Russell Blaisdell chief psychiatrist of a large
public hospital (Rockland State Hosp.in NY)

Stories in the third edition of the Big Book

Doctor Bob's Nightmare - Dr. Bob Smith

171 Sister Ignatia (named) At St. Thomas
Hospital, Dr. Bob was well assisted beginning in August 1939
(along with Dr.Bob's office girl Lillian)

171 St. Johnsbury, VT. I was born (8/8/1879) in a
small New England village

171 Judge & Mrs. Walter Perrin Smith Dr. Bob's father &
mother

172 St. Johnsbury Academy Dr. Bob graduates from high
school 1898

172 Dartmouth College one of the best colleges in
the country (in Hanover, N.H., graduated 1902)

173 Univ. of Michigan entering one of the largest
universities in the country (1905)

174 Rush Medical Univ. another of the leading
universities of the country (near Chicago, Ill., received
medical degree 1910)

174 Akron, OH. western city

174 1912 I opened an office downtown

174-5 ? local sanitarium

175 Scylla and Charybdis (named) (mythology: Strait of
Messina-big rock with monster (Scylla) one side, whirlpool
(Charybdis) on other. Odysseus managed to navigate through)
translated: "between a rock & a hard place"

175 1/16/19 - 12/5/33 Eighteenth Amendment
(Prohibition)

176 ? hide out in one of the clubs

176 ? registering at a hotel

176 Anne Smith my wife (Anne & Dr. Bob went
out together for 17 years before they were married)

177 Wallace Beery/Tugboat Annie (named)play or movie
involving a drinking man

178 Oxford Group crowd of people -their poise,
health and happiness (Dr. Bob got involved with the O.G. in
1933 & separated himself from them Nov. or Dec. 1939)

179 Henrietta Sieberling a lady called up my wife

179 5/12/35 We entered her house at
exactly five o'clock

179 AMA Convention meeting of a nat'l. society
(in Atlantic City, NJ; June 10-12, Mon-Wed, 1935)

179 nurse Lily/Cuyahoga Falls I woke up at a friend's
house, town near home

179 Bill Wilson my newly made friend

179 Bill Wilson meet a friend of hers

181 11/16/50 Dr. Bob died on 11/16/50, he
was 55 years old, he had 20 years sober

Alcoholics Anonymous Number Three - Bill Dotson, Akron

182 Henrietta wife

182 Akron Law School (named)

182 Kenmore/Akron, Ohio (named)

183 ? couple of hired hands

183 ?Ohio State Univ our state university

Core Principles of the Oxford Group.

Frank Buchman worked mostly in Princeton, Cambridge and Oxford Universities. His movement received wide international publicity in the 1920's-30's. Core Oxford Group principles consisted of the "four absolutes" (of honesty, unselfishness, purity and love, which were believed to be derived from scripture in the Sermon on the Mount).

Additionally the OG advocated the "five C's" (of confidence, confession, conviction, conversion and continuance) and "five procedures" (of 1. Give in to God, 2. Listen to God's direction, 3. Check guidance, 4. Restitution and 5. Sharing for witness and confession).

The OG gave AA the term "sharing." They were also strong advocates of self-examination, admission of character defects, amends for harm done and working in service with others. Reputedly, Buchman dated the founding and name of the "Oxford Group" when he met with undergraduates from Christ Church College of Oxford University).

Rev Frank Buchman - Oxford Group PR Disaster - August 26, 1936

On August 26, 1936 Frank Buchman and the Oxford Group experienced an international public relations disaster. A "NY World Telegram" article by William H Birnie quoted Buchman as saying, "I thank heaven for a man like Adolph Hitler, who built a front-line of defense against the anti-Christ of Communism." Although the remark was taken out of context in its reporting, it plagued Buchman's reputation for many years and it marked the beginning of the decline of the Oxford Group.

Over time, Bill was criticized by the NY Oxford Group members for working only with alcoholics. In Akron, T Henry and Clarace Williams were also criticized by Oxford Group members who did not support their efforts with alcoholics. The Oxford Group was out to save the world and sought out famous public figures to join their ranks for the publicity it would generate. Bill simply was out to save some nameless drunks.

Rowland H - Dr Carl Gustav Jung - Early 1930s

The alcoholic patient was Rowland H (Hazard) who came from a very wealthy colonial Rhode Island family. Detailed and accurate information about him has been difficult to obtain and verify. The Hazard family has persistently made it known that they wish to keep their family matters private. Rowland was treated by Dr Jung in Zurich, Switzerland in the late 1920s or early 1930s. After returning to drinking and being treated a second time, Rowland was told by Dr Jung that there was no medical or psychological hope for an alcoholic of his type; that his only hope was a vital spiritual or religious experience - in short a genuine conversion experience.

Rowland was hospitalized again for his alcoholism in February and March 1932. From January 1933 to October 1934 his drinking left him unable to carry on his business activities. *Courtenay Baylor* became Rowland's therapist in 1933, and continued to work with him through 1934.

(Con't) Rowland H - Dr Carl Gustav Jung Early - 1930s

It was under the influence of Baylor's Emmanuel Movement therapy (with its combination of spirituality and simple lay therapy) that Rowland actually began to recover.

Rowland became a prominent member and vestryman of the Calvary Episcopal Church in NYC (the Oxford Group's US headquarters. In the latter 1930s, he was a member of the Oxford Group's "Business Team" together with Bill Wilson, James Newton and T Henry Williams of Akron, OH. He later moved to Shaftsbury and Bennington VT which would lead to his eventual contact with Ebby T (Thacher).

Step 12 Wording Changed - Spiritual Experience Appendix Added - March 1941

In March 1941, almost 2 years after the 1st printing, the wording of Step 12 was changed in the 2nd printing of the Big Book. The term "spiritual experience" was changed to "spiritual awakening" and the term "as the result of these steps" was changed to "as the result of those steps." Step Twelve Wording Changed Again In 1956, the wording of Step 12 changed again in the 2nd printing of the 2nd edition Big Book. The term "as the result of those steps" was restored to its original form of "as the result of these steps."

An appendix titled "Spiritual Experience" was added. Many members thought they had to have a sudden, spectacular spiritual experience similar to the one Bill W describes in the chapter "Bill's Story." The appendix emphasized that most spiritual experiences developed slowly over time and were of the "educational variety." The term "educational variety" is attributed to William James in the Appendix. However, the book "The Varieties of Religious Experience" does not contain the term. What James stated in his summary of his lecture was "... The value of conversion depends not on the process, but on the fruits - These are not superior in sudden conversion ..."

A LeRoy Chipman - John D Rockefeller Jr - 1942 In 1942

A LeRoy Chipman asked John D Rockefeller Jr and the 1940 dinner guests for a loan of \$8,500 (\$112,000 today) to buy back the remaining outstanding shares of Works Publishing stock. Rockefeller lent \$4,000, his son Nelson \$500 and the other dinner guests \$4,000. By acquiring all the outstanding shares it ensured that complete ownership of the Big Book would be held in trust for the entire AA Fellowship.

The Yale School - E M Jellinek - Marty M - 1943/1944

Professor E M Jellinek, along with Dr Howard W Haggard, founded the Yale University School of Alcohol Studies which had its first summer session in July 1943. Bill W and Marty M (Mann) lectured at the school. In early 1944, Marty M moved to New Haven, CT to help create the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism (NCEA) and attended the Yale Summer School of Alcohol Studies. The NCEA later became the National Committee on Alcoholism (NCA) and today is called the National Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD).

Dr Harry Tiebout Treats Bill W's Episodes Of Depression - 1944

In 1944, Dr Harry Tiebout published his first paper on AA titled "Therapeutic Mechanisms of Alcoholics Anonymous" in the "American Journal of Psychiatry." He later served as a Board Trustee from 1957- 1966. In mid-1944, Bill W began twice-a-week treatment with Dr Tiebout for debilitating episodes of depression. Some AA members were outraged and criticized Bill for "not working the program," "secretly drinking" and "pill taking." Bill endured the attacks in silence. In 1945, Bill started seeing psychotherapist, Dr Frances Weeks once a week on Fridays. He continued to see her until 1949.

Self-Supporting - 1945

In 1945 the Alcoholic Foundation Board wrote to John D Rockefeller Jr and the 1940 dinner guests that AA no longer needed their financial help. Big Book royalties could look after Dr Bob and Bill and group contributions could pay the office expenses. If these were insufficient a reserve accumulated from literature sales could meet the deficit.

In total Rockefeller and the dinner guests donated \$30,700 (\$365,000 today). The donations were viewed as loans and paid back out of Big Book income. This finally led to the principle of being fully self supporting declining all further outside contributions and later formed the basis of Tradition 7.

"Honest" AA Preamble Changed - April 1958

The 1958 Conference also approved removing the word "honest" from the term "honest desire to stop drinking" in the AA Preamble. AA legend sometimes erroneously states that the word "honest" was removed from Tradition 3. Neither the long nor short form of Tradition 3 ever contained the word "honest." The term "honest desire to stop drinking" is from the Foreword to the first edition Big Book.

Myth: Dr Silkworth was the first US physician to call alcoholism a "disease"

Neither Dr Silkworth nor Bill W ever used the term "disease" to describe alcoholism. They both preferred to use terms such as "malady" or "illness" and deliberately avoided the use of the word "disease." Alcoholism is not described as a disease in either the basic text of the Big Book (including the forewords) or in the 12&12.

Professor E M Jellinek was not a physician - he was a biostatistician and the first editor of the "Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol." He later was an alcoholism consultant to the World Health Organization. In 1960, he wrote a book titled "The Disease Concept of Alcoholism" which advanced the concept among the medical community.

Elba - p.4, Bill's Story

A small island between Corsica and Italy. Napoleon was defeated at the Battle of Leipzig in October 1813, forcing Napoleon to abdicate in April 1814. He was exiled to the island of Elba. Meanwhile, in France, the Bourbons were restored to power. However, Napoleon escaped from Elba in February 1815 and took control of France, "without spilling a drop of blood" as he wished.

St. Helena - p.4 Bill's Story

Napoleon was ultimately defeated at the Battle of Waterloo in June 1815. The British exiled him to the remote island of Saint Helena in the South Atlantic, where he died in 1821 at the age of 51.

Belladonna Treatment - p. 7, Bill's Story

The Towns-Lambert Alcoholism Cure started with Compound Cathartic to accelerate defecation. The Compound Cathartic was administered every twelve hours for the next four days. Then the hypnotic drugs were administered to Bill and those drugs were chloral hydrate, morphine, and paraldehyde.

After Bill rested soundly for a short period from the hypnotic drugs, he was awakened every hour for the Belladonna Treatment. The Belladonna Treatment administered to Bill by Dr. Silkworth started with the deliriant, *Atropa belladonna* also known as night shade. (Note: Deliriants are a class of hallucinogen that are unique in that, even with lower doses, they offer solid hallucinations which display themselves seamlessly into waking consciousness, similar to fully formed dreams or delusions.) The effects of belladonna include delirium, hallucinations, light sensitivity, confusion and dry mouth. The second ingredient in the protocol was another deliriant, *Hyoscyamus niger*, also known as henbane, hog's bean, or insane root. *Hyoscyamus niger* contains two alkaloids: hyoscyamine and hyoscine. The third major ingredient was dried bark or berries of *Xanthoxylum americanum*, or pricey ash, which was added to help with diarrhea and intestinal cramps. This mixture was given every hour, day and night for fifty hours. The end of the treatment was marked by the abundance of stools. Then Castor oil was then given to the patient as a further purgative.

Following the Lambert protocol, Dr Silkworth administered a small amount of strychnine to Bill W. every four hours.

Hydrotherapy - p. 7, Bill's Story

Before World War II, various forms of hydrotherapy were also used to treat alcoholism. Water therapy, predominantly cold water, was used to treat patients who were detoxing.

Delirium Tremens - p. 7, Bill's Story

Delirium tremens (DTs) is one of the most severe manifestations of alcohol withdrawal. It occurs after a period of heavy drinking, typically in those with a history of chronic alcohol use and those who have previously experienced severe alcohol withdrawal symptoms. It is a rare, life-threatening condition and it doesn't occur in everyone who withdraws from alcohol. It's estimated that about half of the people who abuse alcohol will experience withdrawal symptoms, only a handful (at most 5%) of those people will exhibit symptoms of delirium tremens. Symptoms of delirium tremens are different from typical alcohol withdrawal symptoms and occur on a different timeline. Symptoms range in severity from irritability and confusion to tremors, nausea, vomiting, and seizures.

Wet Brain - p7, *Bill's Story*

Wet brain, or Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome (WKS), is a brain disorder related to the acute and chronic phases of a vitamin B1 (thiamine) deficiency. Thiamine depletion is seen in individuals with poor nutrition and is a common complication of long-term heavy drinking. It's possible to reverse the symptoms when caught early, but when left untreated, wet brain can lead to irreversible confusion, difficulty with muscle coordination, and even hallucinations.

Professor Langley's Flying Machine - p. 51, *We Agnostics*

Samuel Langley, known as "Professor Langley," on page 51 of the Big Book, was an American astronomer, physicist, inventor, aviation pioneer, professor of astronomy the University of Pittsburgh, and secretary of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC. The U.S. Army paid \$50,000 (1.7 million in today's dollars) for him to develop a full-scale man-carrying aircraft in 1898 after Langley's successful flights with small-scale unmanned models two years earlier.

On the first flight attempt, October 7, 1903, the craft failed to fly and dropped into the Potomac River immediately after launch. On the second attempt, December 8, the craft collapsed after launch and again fell into the river. Rescuers pulled Manly unhurt from the water each time. Langley blamed the calamities on a problem with the launch mechanism, not the aircraft. The real problem lay in his failure to consider the problems of calculating stress on an airframe and correct control of an aircraft. He made no further tests, and his experiments became the object of scorn in newspapers and the U.S. Congress.

Nine days after the December 8, 1903, failure, the Wright brothers conducted four successful flights near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

Let him have his head - p.129, *The Family Afterward*

Let someone have his or her head. Allow someone to proceed as he or she wishes, give someone freedom. For example, "He usually gave his assistant his head when it came to scheduling appointments." This expression alludes to loosening a horse's reins and letting it go where it wants to. [Second half of 1500s]

Boiled as an Owl - p.158, *A Vision for You*

Basically mean "drunk" and is possibly an old Dutch expression. In the 17th Century, owls were often associated with fools or vulgar behavior. "Drunk as an owl" has been used by famous writers in the past, and "owl eyed" was used by writer Horace Walpole in 1764 to mean drunk.

Scylla and Charybdis - p. 175, *Doctor Bob's Nightmare*

Scylla and Charybdis were mythical sea monsters noted by Homer; Greek mythology sited them on opposite sides of the Strait of Messina between Sicily and Calabria, on the Italian mainland. Scylla was rationalized as a rock shoal (described as a six-headed sea monster) on the Calabrian side of the strait and Charybdis was a whirlpool off the coast of Sicily. They were regarded as maritime hazards located close enough to each other that they posed an inescapable threat to passing sailors; avoiding Charybdis meant passing too close to Scylla and vice versa. According to Homer's account, Odysseus was advised to pass by Scylla and lose only a few sailors, rather than risk the loss of his entire ship in the whirlpool.

"To choose the lesser of two evils", catch 22, or "between a rock and a hard place" express similar meaning. The mythical situation also developed a proverbial use in which seeking to choose between equally dangerous extremes is seen as leading inevitably to disaster.

Off the Beam – *Twelve and Twelve* p.84, *Step Nine*, and p.110, 112, *Step Twelve*

"Flying the beam" in the 1930s and 1940s meant using radio range stations to navigate. Pilots hoped to hear a steady tone on the radio that meant they were on course. If they drifted off course to either side, they would hear different sounds—a Morse code "A" or "N".

Emmet Fox, a New Thought spiritual leader who was very influential to Bill Wilson and early AA, used the metaphor of being on or off the beam in his writings and lectures. Here is an example:

"Today most commercial flying is done on a radio beam. A directional beam is produced to guide the pilot to his destination, and as long as he keeps on this beam he knows that he is safe, even if he cannot see around him for fog, or get his bearings in any other way.

As soon as he gets off the beam in any direction he is in danger, and he immediately tries to get back on to the beam once more.

Those who believe in the All-ness of God, have a spiritual beam upon which to navigate on the voyage of life. As long as you have peace of mind and some sense of the Presence of God you are on the beam, and you are safe, even if outer things seem to be confused or even very dark; but as soon as you get off the beam you are in danger.

You are off the beam the moment you are angry or resentful or jealous or frightened or depressed; and when such a condition arises you should immediately get back on the beam by turning quietly to God in thought, claiming His Presence, claiming that His Love and Intelligence are with you, and that the promises in the Torah are true today.

If you do this you are back on the beam, even if outer conditions and your own feelings do not change immediately. You are back on the beam and you will reach port in safety.

Keep on the beam and nothing shall by any means hurt you."

PREFACE and FOREWORDS

1. Has the recovery program of AA changed significantly since 1939?
2. What is the main purpose of this book?
3. What is the requirement for membership?
4. What five tenets of the Oxford Group was the 'broker' (Bill W.) convinced were necessary?
5. Since the physician (Dr. Bob) had tried spiritual means to get sober but had failed. When the broker (Bill W.) helped him finally get sober, what did this seem to prove?
6. In what two cities did AA first grow?
7. Why was it necessary to unify our fellowship?
8. There are principles by which AA survives and functions effectively. What are these called?
9. Is AA the only therapy for the alcoholic?
10. In spite of the great increase in the size of the Fellowship, how does A.A. remain simple and personal?

ARE YOU AN ALCOHOLIC?

To answer this question, ask yourself the following questions and answer them as honestly as you can.

	YES	NO
1. Do you lose time from work due to drinking?	{ }	{ }
2. Is drinking making your home life unhappy?	{ }	{ }
3. Do you drink because you are shy with other people?	{ }	{ }
4. Is drinking affecting your reputation?	{ }	{ }
5. Have you ever felt remorse after drinking?	{ }	{ }
6. Have you gotten into financial difficulties as a result of drinking?	{ }	{ }
7. Do you turn to lower companions and an inferior environment when drinking?	{ }	{ }
8. Does your drinking make you careless of your family's welfare?	{ }	{ }
9. Has your ambition decreased since drinking?	{ }	{ }
10. Do you crave a drink at a definite time daily?	{ }	{ }
11. Do you want a drink the next morning?	{ }	{ }
12. Does drinking cause you to have difficulty in sleeping?	{ }	{ }
13. Has your efficiency decreased since drinking?	{ }	{ }
14. Is drinking jeopardizing your job or business?	{ }	{ }
15. Do you drink to escape from worries or trouble?	{ }	{ }
16. Do you drink alone?	{ }	{ }
17. Have you ever had a complete loss of memory as a result of drinking?	{ }	{ }
18. Has your physician ever treated you for drinking?	{ }	{ }
19. Do you drink to build up your self-confidence?	{ }	{ }
20. Have you ever been to a hospital or institution on account of drinking?	{ }	{ }

If you have answered YES to any ONE of these questions there is a definite warning that you may be an alcoholic.

If you have answered YES to any TWO, the chances are that you are an alcoholic.

If you have answered YES to THREE or MORE, you are definitely an alcoholic.

Prepared by Johns Hopkins University Hospital, in determining whether or not a person is an Alcoholic.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Write of your destructive behavior caused by:

1. POWERLESSNESS OVER ALCOHOL AND/OR DRUGS

Kinds

Frequency

Preoccupation

Attempts to control

2. UNMANAGEABLE LIFE

Physical or medical

Emotional

Social or family

Financial

Educational

Occupational

Spiritual

Destructive behavior

Accidents and/or dangerous situations produced

THE PERSONALITY OF THE ALCOHOLIC

To gain insight, it would seem wise to consider carefully this commonly accepted list of personality traits found in the alcoholic. He has certain characteristics or symptoms that occur in normal people, but in him these are exaggerated and uncontrolled. These are the things that render him incapable of being at peace. They compel him to seek relief. They lie beneath the surface of his exterior, and, when in operation, drive him to drink in spite of all that he may know that drinking will produce in the way of self-destruction and harm.

LOW FRUSTRATION TOLERANCE, seems to be about the most constant trait. This is the inability to endure for a length of time any uncomfortable circumstance or feeling. The alcoholic is impatient.

ANXIETY, that state which seems to exist in all people, exists in an exaggerated way in the alcoholic. He is subject to nameless dreads and fears. The anxiety drives him to "fight or flight." Sometimes this is called free-floating anxiety. Usually the alcoholic is not even certain about that for which he should be anxious.

GRANDIOSITY. This can be described as "the organization of the universe around the perpendicular pronoun." Grandiosity is worn as a protective armor to hide feelings of low self-esteem. In reality, although the alcoholic nourishes and inflated image of himself, his deep conviction is one of self-worthlessness. He quivers inside his bold and shiny suit of armor. He feels inadequate, but can't dare show it.

PERFECTIONISM sets impossible goals with inevitable failures and resultant guilt. The alcoholic is an idealist. This idealism, perhaps, is one of the reasons for his success after recovery has been initiated in his life. He is an exceptionally fine worker once the illness has been arrested and after his perfectionism has been reduced to reasonable proportions.

WISHFUL THINKING. We alcoholics are masters at this. Wishful thinking is the science of arranging to do what we want to do, then making it appear reasonable. This keeps our technique of rationalization operating smoothly. Half truths, or none at all permeate this trait.

ISOLATION and deep insecurity deprive us of the real generosity need to make close and enduring friendships. We are loners.

SENSITIVITY. This exaggerates all the unpleasant interpersonal relationships we experience. We have all been through the occasional snub, not necessarily meant by the other person, and have dwelt upon this event until it becomes a downright resentment.

IMPULSIVENESS. "I want what I want when I want it." This is probably related in some way to a low frustration tolerance that we all seem to have. In some ways the alcoholic takes a certain pride in this impulsiveness as though it were a valuable asset.

The alcoholic can't seem to enjoy a job or task, he is preoccupied only with completing it. Much of what he does he does with an intensity that leaves him emotionally exhausted. Long, tedious tasks are not for him; his specialty is a burst of effort which last until the fun is gone, or his interest wanes. He is known as a "great three inning man."

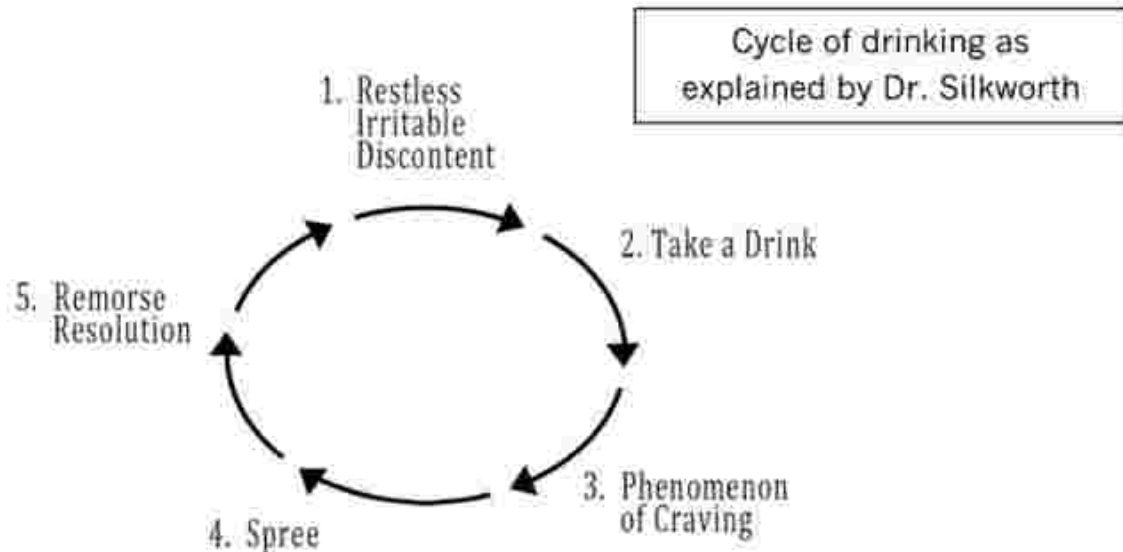
DEFIANCE, is a characteristic, probably the result of unbearable conflict and anxiety, that makes itself evident when he rejects society as a whole, both when drinking and not drinking. This is associated with a feeling that he does not fit, exactly, into society.

DEPENDENCE, on other persons exist in some form in all alcoholics.

These personality traits, then, all contribute to the mental make-up of the alcoholic. These same mental traits also contribute to make the alcoholic drink. Since these are the things about the alcoholic that make it such that he is unable to resist, or refrain from, the first drink, it stands to reason that his sobriety must depend upon doing something about these characteristics. Before we consider recovery, however, let us consider the physical aspects of this disease.

THE DOCTOR'S OPINION

1. In what two ways are alcoholics abnormal or different from others?
2. According to Dr. Silkworth in his second letter, what three aspects of early A.A. does he find amazing and inspiring?
3. What does he tell us happens to chronic alcoholics that never occurs in the average temperate drinker?
4. Why do men and women drink?



5. According to Dr. Silkworth, once a psychic change has taken place in an alcoholic, how much effort is necessary to control the desire to drink?
6. What are the five types of drinkers listed on p.XXX?
7. What is the one symptom these five types have in common?

BILL'S STORY

- 1) Although Bill believed in a Power greater than himself, or a Spirit of the Universe, or some such thing, he disagreed with ministers and the world's religions.
 - a) How did he feel about Christ?
 - b) How did he feel about the power of God in human affairs?
- 2) What one belief is required to make a beginning?
- 3) Ebby (Bill's friend) emphasized that of all these principles, one is imperative. Which one is it?
- 4) If an alcoholic failed to do what, then they could not survive the certain trials and low spots ahead?

DOCTOR BOB'S NIGHTMARE

- 1) Most of the time, Doctor Bob did not take the morning drink which he craved so badly, but instead would do what?
- 2) What ended the beer experiment?
- 3) Bill gave Doctor Bob information about the subject of alcoholism, which was undoubtedly helpful, but what was of far more importance?
- 4) What are the four reasons that Doctor Bob spent helping other alcoholics?
 - a)
 - b)
 - c)
 - d)

PSYCHOLOGY AND THE AA SOLUTION

An excerpt from *Writing the Big Book: The Creation of A.A.*, by William H. Schaberg, Central Recovery Press, 2019, p.138-140.

"Besides religion and medicine, the final component in Wilson's evolving approach to recovery was a two-sided psychological understanding to the drinker's problems. The first half of that understanding was his identification of the 'peculiar mental twist' that he now believed to be at the very heart of the alcoholic's problem. Silkworth had explained how the phenomenon of craving invariably set in once an alcoholic took the first drink, but what baffled Bill Wilson was the complete failure of the alcoholic's ability to refuse that first drink—when he had no alcohol whatsoever in his body. Why was it that all the accumulated memories of past disasters (and of present promises) had absolutely no impact on his decision to *start* drinking?

The second psychological element didn't concern the source of the problem; it was related to the solution to the alcoholic's dilemma. Although Dr. Silkworth did not invent this idea, he can fairly be credited with clearly formulation an early explanation of the concept in his April 1937 paper entitled 'Reclamation of the Alcoholic.' That article outlines his own three-step medical procedures* for the successful treatment of alcoholics and fully describes the last of these three steps, which is called 'Moral Psychology.' This phrase has caused considerable confusion over the years because it appears twice in Silkworth's Big Book chapter "The Doctors Opinion" without any explanation of its exact meaning. But in this article, the doctor is clear that the primary function of moral psychology is to address the underlying egotism found in alcoholics 'whose interests center entirely in themselves' and, when successfully applied, it liberates them to the point where they begin to 'ask how they can help others.' The purpose of moral psychology then is to assist alcoholics in overcoming their perspective of extreme self-centeredness and encourage them to adopt an attitude of consideration and care for others. In Silkworth's opinion, this shift of perspective away from self and toward others was of paramount importance in keeping alcoholics from taking their next drink.

This belief that self-centeredness is the central problem for an alcoholic and that it can only be overcome by a life based on usefulness to others are two of the most fundamental and often repeated premises to be found in the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

In brief, whenever Bill Wilson or other early A.A. members talked about psychology in relation to their program of recovery, they were referring to one or the other of these two concepts: either the insanity of taking the first drink (and the need for an effective spiritual defense against it) or the alcoholic ego (and of the need to cure that problem through a change of attitude and positive engagement with other people)."

* "We might define these three phases as follows: 1, Management of the acute crisis; 2, physical normalization and cell revitalization so that craving is eliminated, and 3, mental and moral stabilization, which naturally involves some 'moral psychology.'" (Silkworth, "Reclamation of the Alcoholic," p. 321)

The Disease Concept of Alcoholism

Physical CAN'T DRINK Addiction

Mental CAN'T QUIT Obsession

9 out of 10 drink safely.
They are at EASE.

1 out of 10 doesn't drink safely.
He/She is at DIS-EASE.

ONE
DRINK

enzymes of sufficient
quantity and quality

acetaldehyde

diacetic acid

ACETONE

breaks down into:
carbon dioxide
sugar
water
and is assimilated
into the body.

ONE
DRINK

enzymes of insufficient
quantity and quality

acetaldehyde

diacetic acid

ACETONE LEVEL CREATES A CRAVING

SIMPLE
CARBOHYDRATE

One drink soils off craving
from the acetone level.
(2 drinks, 3 drinks, 4 drinks).

The SOLUTION

W I L L P O W E R

NECESSARY TO
DRINK AT THIS
LEVEL

UNNECESSARY TO
DRINK AT THESE
LEVELS

PROBLEM
Emotional
Barometer

THE WELL KNOWN SPREE

One emerges restless, irritable, discontented.
Filled with guilt, remorse, resentment, self-pity, and fear.

POWERLESS OVER ALCOHOL

An Alcoholic's Savior: God, Belladonna or Both?



POTIONS An advertisement for a facility offering treatment once thought to cure alcoholism and drug addiction.

By HOWARD MARKEL, M.D.

April 19, 2010

In October 1909, Dr. Alexander Lambert boldly announced to a New York Times reporter that he had found a surefire cure for alcoholism and drug addiction. Even more astounding, he stated that the treatment required “less than five days.” The therapy consisted of an odd mixture of belladonna (deadly nightshade), along with the fluid extracts of xanthoxylum (prickly ash) and hyoscyamus (henbane). “The result is often so dramatic,” Lambert said, “that one hesitates to believe it possible.”

Dr. Lambert was hardly a quack looking for headlines. He was widely known as Theodore Roosevelt’s personal physician, a professor of medicine at Cornell Medical College and an expert on alcoholism. Dr. Lambert had years of experience taking care of thousands of alcoholics at Bellevue Hospital’s infamous “drunk ward.” In fact, it was on this storied hospital ward where he experimented with the belladonna cure.

He had obtained the recipe from a layman named Charles B. Towns, who, in turn, claimed to have learned about it from a country doctor. In 1901, Mr. Towns opened a substance abuse hospital in New York City at 293 Central Park West, between 89th and 90th Streets. He needed Dr. Lambert because he lacked a medical degree and, hence, professional credibility; Dr. Lambert needed Mr. Towns, because for all his medical knowledge, he had relatively little to offer his patients in terms of an effective treatment.

The Towns Hospital attracted only the wealthiest alcoholics and addicts, who gladly paid exorbitant fees for a treatment that “successfully and completely removes the poison from the system and obliterates all craving for drugs and alcohol.” Because of Prohibition and the paradoxical rise in alcoholism in 1920, the Towns Hospital restricted its practice to drying-out well-to-do alcoholics.

Perhaps the most famous patient was William Griffith Wilson, better known as Bill W., the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. In the early 1930s, Mr. Wilson was consuming more than two quarts of rotgut whiskey daily, a definite health risk according to Alexander Lambert, who found in his copious research that consumers of cheap or bootlegged alcohol were far more prone to seizures, delirium tremens and brain damage than those who drank the expensive stuff. Between 1933 and 1934, at his wife’s urging and on his wealthy brother-in-law’s dime, Mr. Wilson was admitted to Towns four times. The cost upon admission was steep: up to \$350 (roughly \$5,610 today) for a four- to five-day stay.

Although Mr. Wilson made some progress in temporarily abstaining, he relapsed after each of the first three hospitalizations. It was around this time that he reunited with a drinking buddy named Ebby Thacher. Unlike previous times, when they went out on wild binges, Mr. Thacher told him that he quit booze and was a member of the Oxford Group, a church-based association devoted to living on a higher spiritual plane guided by Christianity. As

a demonstration, on Dec. 7, 1934, Mr. Thacher took Mr. Wilson to the Calvary Mission on East 23rd Street and Second Avenue, where the most drunken of New York's Depression-era down-and-outers went to be fed and, it was hoped, "saved."

A few days later, a drunken Wilson staggered back into the Towns Hospital. There, his physician, William D. Silkworth, sedated him with chloral hydrate and paraldehyde, two agents guaranteed to help an agitated drunk to sleep, albeit lightly. This was especially important because the medical staff members had to wake patients every hour for at least two days to take the various pills, cathartics and tinctures of the belladonna regime.

On the second or third day of his treatment, Mr. Wilson had his now famous spiritual awakening. Earlier that evening, Mr. Thacher had visited and tried to persuade Mr. Wilson to turn himself over to the care of a Christian deity who would liberate him from the ravages of alcohol. Hours later, depressed and delirious, Mr. Wilson cried out: "I'll do anything! Anything at all! If there be a God, let him show himself!" He then witnessed a blinding light and felt an ecstatic sense of freedom and peace. When Mr. Wilson told Dr. Silkworth about the event, the physician responded: "Something has happened to you I don't understand. But you had better hang on to it."

Hang on to it he did. Indeed, this experience ultimately led Mr. Wilson to abstain from alcohol for the remaining 36 years of his life and to co-create the novel program whereby one alcoholic helps another through a commitment to absolute honesty and a belief that a higher power can help one achieve sobriety.

Long before Mr. Towns touted his cure for alcoholism, belladonna (as well as henbane) was known to cause hallucinations. The hallucinations brought on by alcoholic delirium tremens tend to be a transmogrification of things the alcoholic is actually seeing or experiencing into a realm of sheer terror. A stray coil of rope may appear to be a poisonous cobra; a pattern on the wallpaper seems to transform into a poisonous spider. But they can also be tactile, like the sensation of insects crawling on the skin. Other hallucinations associated with alcohol withdrawal, or alcoholic hallucinosis, tend to be brief and involve hearing accusatory or threatening voices.

Belladonna hallucinations, on the other hand, are typically based on recent discussions the person had but become far more fantastic. Many times, these visions appear to fulfill the wishes one might have had during the inspiring experience.

Several decades after his 1909 announcement, Alexander Lambert took great pains to distance himself from belladonna. Although Dr. Lambert found the detoxification process to be useful in the short run, he became discouraged by its toxicity, its propensity to induce hallucinations and the fact that many of those he treated at Bellevue relapsed and returned for subsequent treatment. Something more was needed, he declared, and that task fell to Bill Wilson and an alcoholic physician from Ohio named Bob Smith, who created Alcoholics Anonymous in 1935.

Were Bill Wilson's spiritual awakening and influential sobriety the products of a belladonna hallucination shortly after his discussions with his friend Ebby Thacher? Could they have been incited by his alcohol withdrawal symptoms? Or did something else happen to him that science cannot explain? In the end, millions of people who have benefited from Alcoholics Anonymous and similar 12-step programs around the world would say that such pharmacological, physical or spiritual parsing hardly matters.

"We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable"

STEP ONE REVIEW – Key points in the readings

The Doctor's Opinion

1. Medical science/Doctors have no cure for alcoholism.
 - a. Doctors cannot even agree how to treat an alcoholic.
2. Credibility for AA, vouching for AA, it's members, and their success
3. Alcoholism is an illness/allergy; both mind and body are affected.
 - a. The only thing that all alcoholics have in common is "they cannot start drinking without developing the phenomenon of craving"

Bill's Story

1. Alcoholism is a progressive illness
2. The failure of self-will/will power in combating alcoholism
3. The failure of self-knowledge in combating alcoholism
4. Ebby's visit
 - a. One alcoholic talking to another
 - b. Spiritual solution to alcoholism
 - c. Working with others was critical

Step One, 12x12

1. The necessity of admitting complete defeat/surrender/hitting bottom/hopelessness
 - a. The average alcoholic, self-centered in the extreme, does not want to take the steps unless their lives depend on it
2. Self-confidence/self-will was a total liability in battling alcoholism
3. Explanation of the Alcoholism
 - a. We were smitten by an insane urge (mental obsession); we take the first drink when sober and know better
 - b. We have an allergy of the body (craving) that insures we keep on drinking once we start
4. Since the Big Book was printed 1939, which only dealt with low-bottom cases, by 1952 the fellowship included lots of higher bottom/potential alcoholics. "The age had come down and the bottom had come up" -Joe and Charlie

"We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable"

Part One of the First Step; Powerlessness

Silkworth – We're powerless AFTER we take the FIRST DRINK; craving

AA – We're powerless BEFORE the FIRST DRINK; the insanity of the sober alcoholic, who being sober for months or years, picks up the FIRST DRINK when they should know better.

Part Two of the First Step; Unmanageability

Unmanageability AFTER the FIRST DRINK; our drunken lives

Unmanageability BEFORE the FIRST DRINK; when sober for a period of time, we become aware of the unmanageability of our lives in general. The reasons we drank / our discomfort with reality.

The Bedevilments p.52

"We were having trouble with our personal relationships, we couldn't control our emotional natures, we were prey to misery and depression, we couldn't make a living, we had a feeling of uselessness, we were full of fear, we were unhappy, we couldn't seem to be of real help to other people."

THERE IS A SOLUTION

1. We are people who normally would not mix, but what does exist among us?
2. What is the tremendous fact for us?
3. What are attitudes which make us more useful to others?
4. Our very lives, as ex-problem drinkers, depend on what?
5. Where does the main problem of alcoholic exist?
6. What becomes practically nonexistent, which leaves us without defense against the first drink?
7. If we had passed into the region from which there is no return through human aid, what were our two alternatives?
8. If what we have learned and felt and seen means anything at all of us, whatever our race, creed, or color are what?

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

1. Have you accepted Step One. . .that we are powerless over alcohol and our lives had become unmanageable?

2. List and/or describe your "insane"

Actions

Reactions

Thoughts

Hopes

Attempts to control

THE FAILURE OF SELF-WILL AND SELF-KNOWLEDGE IN COMBATING ALCOHOLISM

- p. 5, This had to be stopped. I saw I could not take so much as one drink. I was through forever. . . this time I meant business. Shortly afterward I came home drunk.
- p. 7, It relieved me somewhat to learn that in alcoholics the will is amazingly weakened when it comes to combating liquor, though it often remains strong in other respects.
- p. 7, Surely this was the answer: self-knowledge. But it was not...
- p. 11, His human will had failed. Doctors had pronounced him incurable. Society was about to lock him up. Like myself, he had admitted complete defeat. Then he had, in effect, been raised from the dead...
- p. 20, How many times people have said to us: ... "His will power must be weak."
- p. 22, What has become of the common sense and will power that he still sometimes displays with respect to other matters?
- p. 23, In a vague way their families and friends sense that these drinkers are abnormal, but everybody hopefully awaits the day when the sufferer will rouse himself from his lethargy and assert his power of will. The tragic truth is that if the man be a real alcoholic, the happy day may not arrive.
- p. 24, The fact is that most alcoholics, for reasons yet obscure, have lost the power of choice in drink. Our so-called will power becomes practically nonexistent. We are unable, at certain times, to bring into our consciousness with sufficient force the memory of the suffering and humiliation of even a week or a month ago. We are without defense against the first drink.
- p. 26, Above all, he believed he had acquired such a profound knowledge of the inner workings of his mind and its hidden springs that relapse was unthinkable. Nevertheless, he was drunk in a short time.
- p. 32, Then, gathering all his forces, he attempted to stop altogether and found he could not.
- p. 33, Young people may be encouraged by this man's experience to think that they can stop, as he did, on their own will power. We doubt if many of them can do it, because none will really want to stop, and hardly one of them, because of the peculiar mental twist already acquired, will find he can win out.
- p. 39, . . . the actual or potential alcoholic, with hardly an exception, will be absolutely unable to stop drinking on the basis of self-knowledge.
- p. 40, He was positive that this humiliating experience, plus the knowledge he had acquired, would keep him sober the rest of his life. Self-knowledge would fix it.

THE FAILURE OF SELF-WILL AND SELF-KNOWLEDGE IN COMBATING ALCOHOLISM

- p. 40, I felt I had every right to be self-confident, that it would be only a matter of exercising my will power and keeping on guard.
- p. 42, I saw that will power and self-knowledge would not help in those strange blank spots.
- p. 43, The alcoholic at certain times has no effective mental defense against the first drink. Except in a few rare cases, neither he nor any other human being can provide such a defense. *His defense must come from a Higher Power.*
- p. 60, The first requirement is that we be convinced that any life run on self-will can hardly be a success.
- p. 62, So our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making. They arise out of ourselves, and the alcoholic is an extreme example of self-will run riot, though he usually doesn't think so. Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must or it kills us!
- p. 71, In this book you read again and again that faith did for us what we could not do for ourselves. We hope you are convinced now that God can remove whatever self-will has blocked you off from Him.
- p. 76, We attempt to sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of our effort to live on self-will and run the show ourselves.
- p. 85, Every day is a day when we must carry the vision of God's will into all of our activities. "How can I best serve Thee--Thy will (not mine) be done." These are thoughts that must go with us constantly. We can exercise our will power along this line all we wish. It is the proper use of the will.
- p. 87, We ask especially for freedom from self-will, and are careful to make no request for ourselves only.
- p. 155, When our friend related his experience, the man agreed that no amount of will power he might muster could stop his drinking for long.

MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

1. What have our drinking careers been characterized by?
2. What's the first step in recovery?
3. What are alcoholics of our type in the grip of?
4. What do physicians who are familiar with alcoholism agree on?
5. What is the powerful lesson that the businessman's story contains?
6. There was always the curious mental phenomenon that parallel with our sound reasoning ran what?
7. However intelligent we may have been in other respects, where alcohol has been involved, what have we been?
8. The actual or potential alcoholic, with hardly an exception, will be absolutely unable to stop on the basis of what?
9. Once Fred knew that he had an alcoholic mind, what did he come to understand?
10. The alcoholic at certain times has no effective mental defense against the first drink, so where must their defense come from?

"Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity"

1. What are three statements that help a newcomer relax?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
2. What did the author have to do to acquire a belief in a Power greater than myself?
3. What helped us avoid looking at some of our shortcomings?
4. What have psychiatrists observed is the outstanding characteristic of alcoholics?
5. How is "Sanity" defined?
6. In Step Two what can lead us to faith?

INSANITY AS IT RELATES TO ALCOHOLISM IN OUR BOOK ALCOHOLICS ANONOMOUS

p.22 – 12&12 *Step One*: "The tyrant alcohol wielded a double-edged sword over us: first we were smitten by an **insane urge** that condemned us to go on drinking, and then by an allergy of the body that insured we would ultimately destroy ourselves in the process."

p.xxvii – BB *The Doctor's Opinion*: "Men and women drink essentially because they like the effect produced by alcohol. The sensation is so elusive that, while they admit it is injurious, **they cannot after a time differentiate the true from the false.** To them, their alcoholic life seems the only normal one. **They are restless, irritable and discontented, unless they can again experience the sense of ease and comfort which comes at once by taking a few drinks** – drinks which they see others taking with impunity."

p.23 – BB *There is a Solution*: "These observations would be academic and pointless if our friend never took the first drink, thereby setting the terrible cycle in motion. Therefore, **the main problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind, rather than his body.**"

p.8 – BB *Bill's Story*: "Trembling, I stepped from the hospital a broken man. Fear sobered me for a bit. **Then came the insidious insanity of that first drink.**"

p.154 – BB *A Vision for You*: "Fear gripped him. He was on thin ice. **Again it was the old, insidious insanity – that first drink.**"

p.35 – BB *More About Alcoholism*: "So we shall describe some of **the mental states that precede a relapse into drinking, for obviously this is the crux of the problem.** What sort of thinking dominates an alcoholic who repeats time after time **the desperate experiment of the first drink?**"

p.24 – BB *There is a Solution*: "**We are unable, at certain times, to bring into our consciousness with sufficient force the memory of the suffering and humiliation of even a week or a month ago.** ... There is a complete failure of the kind of defense that keeps one from putting his hand on a hot stove."

p. 66 – BB *How it Works*: "with the alcoholic this business of resentment is infinitely grave. We found that it is fatal. For when harboring such feelings we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the Spirit. **The insanity of alcohol returns and we drink again.** And with us, to drink is to die."

p.37 – BB *More About Alcoholism*: "Whatever the precise definition of the word may be, **we call this plain insanity.** How can such a lack of proportion, of the ability to think straight, be called anything else?"

p.37 – BB *More About Alcoholism*: "**There was always the curious mental phenomenon that parallel with our sound reasoning there inevitably ran some insanely trivial excuse for taking the first drink.** Our sound reasoning failed to hold us in check. The insane idea won out."

p.37 – BB *More About Alcoholism*: "In some circumstances we have gone out deliberately to get drunk. . .but even in this type of beginning we are obliged to admit that **our justification for a spree was insanely insufficient in the light of what always happened.**"

p.38 – BB *More About Alcoholism*: "However intelligent we may have been in other respects, **where alcohol has been involved, we have been strangely insane.** It's strong language, but isn't true?"

p. 92 – BB *Working with others*: "Show him **the mental twist** which leads to **the first drink** of a spree."

p.40 – BB *More About Alcoholism*: "I rather appreciated your ideas about **the subtle insanity which precedes the first drink**, but I was confident it could not happen to me after what I had learned."

p.41-42 – BB *More About Alcoholism*: "Not only had I been off guard, **I had made no fight whatever against the first drink. This time I had not thought of the consequences at all.** . . I now remembered what my alcoholic friends had told me, if I had an alcoholic mind, the time and place would come – I would drink again. They said that though I did raise a defense, **it would one day give way before some trivial reason for having a drink.** Well, just that did happen and more, for what I had learned of alcoholism did not occur to me at all. I knew from that moment that I had an alcoholic mind. **I saw that will power and self-knowledge would not help in those strange mental blank spots.**"

"Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity"

STEP TWO REVIEW – Key points in the readings

There is a Solution

PART I – p.17-20 *Our journey so far and why we need a book*

1. An amazing part of our program is the fellowship, and we have all discovered a common solution, but the fellowship is not the solution.
2. Alcoholism is an illness:
 - a. It effects everyone close to the alcoholic; i.e. we make everyone around us sick
 - b. Doctors, partners, parents, family and friends don't seem to be able to help
 - c. No one really understands the alcoholic
 - d. The alcoholic is never completely honest with anyone
3. BUT a sober alcoholic can help when no one else can:
 - a. They can gain confidence quickly
 - b. They are proof of the solution because they are sober
 - c. They are humble and only want to help
 - d. They want nothing in return
4. There are no full-time sponsors because we need to help everyone we effected, not just the alcoholic:
 - a. At home
 - b. At work
 - c. In all of our relationships
5. THEREFORE we need a book.
 - a. We are often the only ones who can help active alcoholics
 - b. There's too few of us and we can't do this full-time
 - c. There are too many alcoholics, and most will die before they're exposed to the program if the solution can only spread by word of mouth.
 - d. We are trying to write a book that will not create any controversy, disagreement, or argument.
6. What has allowed us to succeed so far:
 - a. Real tolerance of other people's shortcomings and viewpoints
 - b. Respect of other people's opinions
 - c. Our constant thought of others and how we may help meet their needs

PART II – p.20-25 *What is Alcoholism?*

1. The world assumes alcoholism is the result of a lack of will power because most people who are not alcoholic can stop or moderate if they need or want to.
2. Alcoholism is a progressive illness which becomes more difficult to control over time, and when fully realized, the chronic, or "the real alcoholic" becomes powerless over alcohol and cannot stop drinking on their own.
3. An alcoholic who has been physically separated, detoxed, from alcohol will not experience cravings as long as they do not drink. A relapse will immediately trigger cravings and throw the alcoholic back into a state which makes it virtually impossible to stop drinking, causing humiliation and suffering once again.
4. The sober alcoholic, not experiencing cravings, knows this and still takes the **FIRST DRINK**.
5. **THEREFORE**, the main problem of the alcoholic centers in their mind, rather than their body.
6. They often have no idea why they took the first drink, but are also equally convinced that next time it will be different. In other words, they do not see the hopelessness of their situation.
7. Common sense and will power do not work when it comes to combating alcoholism, we are without defense against the first drink.
8. If alcoholism has progressed to this point, the alcoholic is beyond human help. Unless locked up, they may die or go permanently insane.

PART III – p.25 *The Solution*

1. There is a solution and it is spiritual.
 - a. Almost none of us liked it
 - i. The inventory, humility, and honesty required to get sober
 - b. But we saw that it worked in others
 - i. AA was full of happy sober people
 - ii. We were miserable, hopeless, and in pain
 - iii. They were offering to help us
 - iv. We did the work and our lives got better
2. We have had deep and effective spiritual experiences.
 - a. We experienced hope and purpose again
 - b. We felt a part of humanity again
 - c. We experienced a whole new world
 - d. We were certain that a power greater than us was the source of the change.
 - i. We had a personality change that allowed us to stay sober
 - ii. We were sure we could not have done this by ourselves
 - iii. We discovered that we could slowly grow into our spiritual beliefs

- iv. The foundation of a spiritual experience is a simple awareness that there is a power greater than ourselves
- v. Anyone who is willing, honest, and openminded can recover
- 3. If you are a chronic alcoholic like us, our experience shows that only a spiritual solution will allow you to recover, otherwise you will probably die from alcoholism.

PART IV – p.26-28 *Roland Hazard and Carl Jung*

- 1. A rich, smart, American man named Roland Hazard was a hopeless alcoholic.
 - a. He was frequently institutionalized for alcoholism
 - b. He saw the most famous American psychiatrists, but could not stop drinking
 - c. He went to Europe to be treated by one of the worlds greatest doctors; Carl Jung
 - d. Treatment went great and he thought he was cured
 - e. But he relapsed after treatment
 - f. He returned to Jung and begged for an explanation
 - g. Jung told him he was hopeless and would probably die and that he had never seen a chronic alcoholic recover
 - h. Roland, because he was a good alcoholic, looked at Jung and asked him there were any exceptions
 - i. Jung, because he was a good doctor, told Roland the truth. Yes, in the historical record there are cases like yours that have recovered through spiritual experiences
 - j. These cases seem to be occurrences that completely change the person and free them from alcoholism
 - k. I've been trying get you to have an emotional rearrangement with psychiatry, but I've never been successful with a chronic alcoholic like you.
 - l. Roland said that he always puts money in the basket at church
 - m. Jung chuckled at him and said he was toast
- 2. Turns out Roland was not toast and he recovered
 - a. But we're not going to tell you how that happened yet.
 - b. We did what Roland did and we recovered too

PART V – p.28-29 *Epilogue*

- 1. There are many ways to find God
- 2. We are all children of a living Creator with whom we may form a relationship upon simple and understandable terms as soon as we are willing and honest enough to try.
- 3. AA is not a religion. It's a set of spiritual principles that cooperate with all religions.
- 4. The personal stories are examples of the many ways AA members have established a relationship with God.

More about Alcoholism

1. Alcoholics are obsessed with the idea that they can solve their alcohol problem
2. The first step in recovery is accepting that we are sick
 - a. We have an illness that centers in the mind; a mental illness
 - b. We are not like people who are non-alcoholic
3. Alcoholism is a progressive illness
 - a. No one ever recovers control
 - b. We get worse, never better
4. There is no medical treatment for alcoholism
5. No period of sobriety, no matter how long, will cure you of alcoholism.
 - a. Once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic
 - b. Your recovery depends on you believing this
6. It doesn't matter how many years you drank or how much you drank. Some people progress rapidly and become chronic alcoholics quickly.
7. We are insane regarding alcohol. We are insane BEFORE we take the FIRST DRINK.
8. Alcoholics will be unable to stop or moderate based on self-will or self-knowledge.
9. Our only defense against the insanity of the first drink is a spiritual solution that comes from a higher power.

Step Two, 12x12

1. Step Two presents the newcomer with a dilemma in the statement that only a higher power can remove their obsession for alcohol
 - a. Some of us won't believe in God
 - b. Some of us can't believe in God
 - c. Some of us who do believe in God have no faith that he will perform this miracle
2. The newcomer who won't believe – the belligerent one.
 - a. Thinks man is at the top of the evolutionary chain, therefore man is god
 - b. Their sponsor assures him that even an Atheist can take Step Two
 - i. First, AA does not demand that you believe anything, all of the Twelve Steps are suggestions
 - ii. Second, to get sober and to stay sober, you don't have to swallow all of Step Two immediately, this Step can be taken in small pieces
 - iii. Third, all you really need is a truly open mind. Just resign from the debating society regarding questions that are unknowable
 - c. The sponsor will point out the basic principle of all scientific progress: search and research repeatedly and always with an open mind
 - i. AA should be judged on its results, which are very good
 - ii. Ceasing to argue, and focusing on the results of AA, most newcomers begin to see and feel the implication of Step Two immediately

- iii. Belief will develop if we take the rest of Steps as earnestly as we can
 - d. This is not the only way to develop faith in AA, there are countless ways. If you don't like this one, continue to look and listen to people who have what you want. You're sure to find one
- 3. We also have the option to make AA itself our higher power
 - a. Many members have done this and it works
 - b. As their sobriety grows and their lives get better, their belief grows
 - c. Many begin to see this as God working in their lives
- 4. Consider next the newcomer who once had faith, but lost it – the bewildered one
 - a. Sometimes AA is harder for those who have lost or rejected faith than to those who never had any faith at all
 - i. Neither having faith nor not having faith worked for them
 - ii. They can feel that there is no place to turn to
 - iii. They are in a state of profound confusion
 - b. Many people in AA can identify with this newcomers situation
 - i. AA's can share their experience, strength, and hope
 - ii. AA's can explain that when they got to the end of their drinking, it was AA that gave them a way out
 - iii. In the process they rediscovered their faith
- 5. Now lets consider the newcomer who believes they're smarter then the rest – the intellectually self-sufficient man or woman
 - a. AA is full of people like this
 - i. AA's can share their experience, strength, and hope
 - ii. AA's can explain that when they got to the end of their drinking, it was AA that gave them a way out
 - iii. Faced with death, AA helped them get right sized
 - iv. Humility and intellect can be compatible, as long as they placed humility first
 - v. In the process they received the gift of faith
- 6. There are also newcomers who are against organized religion – the defiant one
 - a. They criticized the Bible and condemned church goers
 - b. They blamed religion for the wars and killing done in the name of God
 - c. Self-righteousness, the very thing they condemned in others, became their ugliest character defect
 - d. They ultimately turned to defying God
 - i. God didn't give them what they wanted
 - ii. They thought God abandoned them
 - iii. They blamed God for the bad things that happened to them
 - e. Once in AA they learned that they had never asked what God's will was for them, they had been telling God what it should be

- i. Belief meant reliance, not defiance
 - f. In AA they witnessed the results of belief/faith
 - i. Sober men and women able to live life on life's terms, able to match calamity with serenity
 - g. This was a faith that worked under all conditions.
 - i. We decided that whatever price in humility must be paid, it was worth it
- 7. Now lets look at the devout church goer who is alcoholic – the full of faith one
 - a. This case boils down to the quality of faith, rather than the quantity
 - i. Faith without works is dead
 - ii. In AA spirituality is based in action; the results we get are the result of the work we do
 - iii. Unless we trust God, clean house, and help others we will not be restored to sanity and will return to alcohol
- 8. Practicing alcoholics have no idea how irrational they are, or seeing it can bear to face it
 - a. Some will admit they are problem drinkers, but can't stand the idea that they are mentally ill
 - b. Sanity is defined as "soundness of mind", but any alcoholic soberly analyzing their destructive behavior can claim "soundness of mind"
 - c. True humility and an open mind can lead us to faith and God will restore us to sanity if we rightly relate ourselves to him

WE AGNOSTICS

1. How do we distinguish between the alcoholic and the non-alcoholic?
2. Given the choice, would you prefer to:
 - A. Die
 - B. Be in jail
 - C. Have a wet brain
 - D. Live on a spiritual basis
 - E. Have everything exactly as it is now, but not drink
3. What was our dilemma and how did we solve it?
4. What is the main object of this book?
5. Though it may be impossible for you to fully define or comprehend that Power, how can you get results anyway?
6. As we began to be possessed of a new sense of power and direction, provided we took other simple steps, what did we find?
7. When thousands of men and women say that since they have come to believe in a Power greater than themselves, to take a certain attitude toward that Power, and to do certain simple things, what has happened?

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE APPENDIX

1. What has manifested itself among us in many different forms?
2. What does William James refer to most of our spiritual experiences as?
3. What is the essence of a spiritual experience?

"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him"

1. What is the key and what swings the door open?
2. Which two things did not require action, but only acceptance in the first two Steps?
3. What always blocks the entrance of God or our Higher Power?
4. Step Three represents our first attempt to do what?
5. What do many of us suppose will make us look like the hole in the doughnut?
6. What is the brave philosophy, wherein each man plays God?
7. When it comes to dependence what hasn't produced any baleful results?
8. When an alcoholic's lone courage and unaided will won't work what must he do?
9. How do we obtain permanent sobriety and a contented, useful life?
10. At times of emotional disturbance and indecision what is it suggested that we say?

HOW IT WORKS, p. 60-63

1. What is the first requirement in what we need to do in the process of turning our will and lives over to the care of God?

2. What does the actor think and do when the show doesn't come off very well?

3. What is the root of our troubles?

4. What places us in a position to be hurt?

5. Of what must we alcoholics rid ourselves, and what are the consequences if we don't?

6. Because we couldn't reduce our self-centeredness much by wishing or trying on our own power, what did we need?

7. What does "Relieve me of the bondage of self" mean to you?

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

1. Are you convinced that your life run on your will can hardly be a success?
2. Are you convinced that your romances, friendships, marriage, finances, career run on your will can hardly be a success?
3. Do you believe, above everything else you must be rid of selfishness, or it will kill you?

THE SERENITY PRAYER – 12X12 P.125

God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change,
Courage to change the things we can,
And wisdom to know the difference.

THIRD STEP PRAYER – BB P.63

God, I offer myself to Thee – to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!

FOUR STEP PRAYER – BB P.67

This is a sick man [person]. How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done.

SEVENTH STEP PRAYER – BB P.76

My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen.

ELEVENTH STEP PRAYER – 12X12 P.99

Lord, make me a channel of thy peace
that where there is hatred, I may bring love
that where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness
that where there is discord, I may bring harmony
that where there is error, I may bring truth
that where there is doubt, I may bring faith
that where there is despair, I may bring hope
that where there are shadows, I may bring light
that where there is sadness, I may bring joy.
Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort than to be comforted
to understand, than to be understood
to love, than to be loved.
For it is by self-forgetting that one finds.
It is by forgiving that one is forgiven.
It is by dying that one awakens to Eternal Life.
Amen.

*God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things
I cannot change*

*Courage to change
the things I can*

*and Wisdom to know
the difference*

*Living one day at a time
Enjoying one moment at a time
Accepting hardship
as the pathway to peace*

*Taking, as He did
This sinful world as it is
not as I would have it*

*Trusting that He will make all
things right if I surrender
to His will*

*That I may be reasonably happy
in this life
and supremely happy
with Him forever in the next*

Amen

SPIRITUAL SOLUTION COMES IN TWO FORMS**1. The Fellowship**

BB p.17, We are people who normally would not mix. But there exists among us a fellowship, a friendliness, and an understanding which is indescribably wonderful. We are like passengers of a great liner the moment after rescue from shipwreck when camaraderie, joyousness and democracy pervade the vessel from steerage to Captain's table.

BB p.152, Yes, there is a substitute and it is vastly more than that. It is a fellowship in Alcoholics Anonymous. There you will find release from care, boredom and worry. Your imagination will be fired. Life will mean something at last. The most satisfactory years of your existence lie ahead. Thus we find the fellowship, and so will you.

2. The Spiritual Awakening that comes from doing the Steps

BB p.25, The great fact is just this, and nothing less: That we have had deep and effective spiritual experiences which have revolutionized our whole attitude toward life, toward our fellows and toward God's universe.

12X12 p.106, When a man or a woman has a spiritual awakening, the most important meaning of it is that he has now become able to do, feel, and believe that which he could not do before on their unaided strength and resources alone.

OR THE ALTERNATIVE

BB p.25, We had but two alternatives: One was to go on to the bitter end, blotting out the consciousness of our intolerable situation as best we could; and the other, to accept spiritual help.

BB p.44, To be doomed to an alcoholic death or to live on a spiritual basis are not always easy alternatives to face.

SPIRITUAL SOLUTION DESCRIBED

Big Book, *Bill's Story*, p.12, December 1934

"It was only a matter of being willing to believe in a Power greater than myself. Nothing more was required of me to make my beginning."

Big Book, *Our Southern Friend*, p.214, October 1935

"Then he asks me if I believe in a power greater than myself, whether I call the power God, Allah, Confucius, Prime Cause, Divine Mind, or any other name. I told him that I believe in electricity and other forces of nature, but as for a God, if there is one, He has never done anything for me. Then he asks me if I am willing to right all the wrongs I have ever done to anyone, no matter how wrong I thought the others were. Am I willing to be honest with myself about myself and tell someone about myself, and am I willing to think of other people, of their needs instead of myself, in order to get rid of the drink problem?"

"I'll do anything," I reply.

"Then all of troubles are over," says the man and (he) leaves the room."

Liberty Magazine, *Alcoholics and God*, Morris Markey, September 1939

"You had better admit that this thing is beyond your own control. You've tried to solve it by yourself, and you have failed. All right. Why not put the whole thing into the hands of Somebody Else?"

Even though the man might be an atheist or agnostic, he will almost always admit that there is some sort of force operating in the world--some cosmic power weaving a design. And his new friend will say:

"I don't care what you call this Somebody Else. We call it God. But whatever you want to call it, you had better put yourself into its hands. Just admit you're licked, and say, 'Here I am, Somebody Else. Take care of this thing for me.'"

Saturday Evening Post, *Alcoholics Anonymous (aka The Jack Alexander article)*, Jack Alexander, March 1941

"If he applies to Alcoholics Anonymous, he is first brought around to admit that alcohol has him whipped and that his life has become unmanageable. Having achieved this state of intellectual humility he is given a dose of religion in the broadest sense. He is asked to believe in a Power that is greater than himself, or at least to keep an open mind on that subject while he goes on with the rest the rest of the program. Any concept of the Higher Power is acceptable. A skeptic or agnostic may choose to think of his Inner Self, the miracle of growth, a tree, man's wonderment at the physical universe, the structure of the atom, or mere mathematical infinity. Whatever form is visualized, the neophyte is taught that he must rely upon it and, in his own way, to pray to the Power for strength."

SPIRITUAL AND SPIRITUALITY

An excerpt from *Twelve Steps to Religionless Spirituality; The Power of Spirituality with or without God*, by Ward B. Ewing, Cascade Books, 2021, p.10-11.

"The simplest definitions of 'spiritual' is anything that we cannot see or touch that affects our lives—things like love, resentment, hope, anger, acceptance, fear, peace, anxiety, and serenity. Spiritual realities are present for all human beings. When we become defensive because of criticism, that is a spiritual event. When we continue to hold a resentment against another, as in the story above, that is a spiritual dynamic that negatively impacts our lives. If we respond to an act of kindness with kindness in return, that is a spiritual event. How one responds to defeat, kindness, hostility, support, or criticism depends on a very complex process we call 'spirituality.'

Spirituality is often associated with otherworldliness or the occult, sometimes with godliness or piety or purity. But it is much broader. It is the way we respond to events that are spiritual in nature. It is the way our lives are organized with the result that certain responses and results become characteristic. One's spirituality may be conscious, but it also includes the unconscious. It may include intentional efforts, but it also includes unconsidered responses. Spirituality might be understood as experiences and principles that guide us in our actions and reactions to the world."

*"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God
as we understood Him"*

STEP THREE REVIEW – Key points in the readings

We Agnostics

PART I – p.44 *Summary up to this point in the book*

1. DEFINITION OF ALCOHOLISM, "If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely, or if when drinking, you have little control over the amount you take, you are probably alcoholic."
 - a. If that be the case, you may be suffering from an illness which only a spiritual experience will conquer.
 - b. To be doomed to an alcoholic death or live on a spiritual basis are not always easy alternatives to face.
 - c. Our human resources, as marshalled by the will, were not sufficient; they failed utterly. . . we had to face the fact that we must find a spiritual basis for life – or else.

PART II – p.45-48 *Where and how were we to find this Power?*

1. The main object of the book is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem.
2. We found that as soon as we were able to lay aside prejudice and express even a willingness to believe in a Power greater than ourselves, we got results.
 - a. It is impossible for any of us to define or comprehend God, but that doesn't interfere with the process.
 - b. It doesn't matter what anyone else believes on this subject, your own idea will work.
 - c. In the book and the program, the word God means your own conception of God.
 - i. This is also true of any other spiritual words you find in the book.
 - d. Any simple belief system regarding a "Power greater than yourself" will work.

PART III – p.48-51 *Why should we believe in this Power?*

1. Spirituality cannot be based on visual proof, but should be based on good evidence.
2. We should avoid judging spirituality based on how some people use it, but we should take notice of what good results it provides people who practice it.
3. The sober members of AA are examples of the results that come from believing in a power greater than themselves; their sobriety, happiness, and peace of mind are tangible evidence of why one should have faith.

PART IV – p.51-53 *The material vs the spiritual*

1. There has been more material progress made in just the last century than in the tens of thousands of years of human history that came before it.
 - a. The reason is that, in the past, material progress was slowed down by superstition, tradition, and fixed ideas
 - b. In the modern world aren't some of us just as irrational about spiritual things, as our ancestors were about the material world?
2. The verdict of our modern age was that man couldn't fly
 - a. Material progress in this area (knowledge gained through scientific investigation; observation, experimentation, and testing of theories) seemed to prove that human flight was impossible
 - b. The success of the Wright Brothers, and peoples initial resistance to believe it was true, are modern examples of material progress being slowed down by superstition, tradition, and fixed ideas
3. On the other hand, today people demonstrate a complete willingness to let go of old ideas for new ones, if they work.
 - a. Based on this, why shouldn't we apply the same willingness to change to our character defects (bedevilmments).
 - b. Seeing alcoholics recover based on a reliance on a power greater than themselves, we had to stop doubting the power of this course of action.
 - c. Our ideas didn't work, but the God idea did.
4. The Wright brothers' success was based on their faith that they could succeed where others had failed, without that nothing could have been accomplished
 - a. In this case, faith actually allowed material progress to take place
5. The only logical way we can explain our present faith as being reasonable is
 - a. The results gained through investigation of God idea in solving our alcohol problem worked
 - i. It worked for others and it worked for us
 - ii. Nothing else we tried was ever successful
6. Being alcoholics, and facing the hopelessness of our situation, we had to face the issue of God. (again, the word "God" representing your own individual idea of a power greater than ourselves)
 - a. We have a chronic, progressive, fatal illness
 - b. The experience of AA is that dependance on a power greater than ourselves is the only thing that will allow us to get sober and stay sober
 - c. Which requires that we come to believe that there is a power greater than ourselves, but it does not mean that we understand that power
 - i. "Most of us think this awareness of a Power greater than ourselves is the essence of spiritual experience." p.568 BB

- ii. "it was impossible for any of us to fully define or comprehend that Power, which is God." p.46 BB
- d. Then we're faced with a decision; God either is, or God isn't. What was our choice to be?

PART V – p.53-55 *Reason vs Faith*

1. We can only get so far in this process relying on reason only, at some point we need to acquire faith in a power greater than ourselves in order to move forward.
 - a. We had faith
 - i. In our ability to think and reason
 - b. We worshipped
 - i. People, sentiment, things, money, and ourselves
 - c. We loved
 - i. We have all loved something or somebody
2. Hence, we saw that reason isn't everything.
 - a. Neither is it entirely dependable
 - i. Look at the people who proved man couldn't fly
3. Yet, when we witnessed sober members of AA who said that God was the source of their sobriety, somehow we still doubted.
4. Deep within all of us is the fundamental idea of God.
 - a. If we search fearlessly, we find this deep down within us.
 - b. A willingness to believe, and action along these lines (taking the Steps), produced results that created belief within us
 - i. "First, Alcoholics Anonymous does not demand that you believe anything. All if its Twelve Steps are but suggestions." p.26 12x12
 - ii. "As soon as a man can say that he does believe, or is willing to believe, we emphatically assure him that his is on his way. It has been repeatedly proven among us that upon this simple cornerstone a wonderfully effective spiritual structure can be built." p.47 BB
 - iii. "Circumstances made him willing to believe. He humbly offered himself to his Maker – then he knew." p.57 BB
 - c. Sometimes quickly, sometimes slowing, God will always materialize if we seek.
 - d. When we drew near to him he disclosed himself to us.

How it Works

PART I – p.58-60 *Clear-cut directions showing how we recovered & Review up to this point*

1. This a very successful program for those who work at it.
 - a. People who don't succeed are those that do not completely surrender
 - b. Rigorous honesty is fundamental to recovery
 - c. If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it – then you are ready to hear how we recovered
 - d. "Almost none of us liked the self-searching, the leveling of our pride, the confession of shortcomings which the process requires," p.25
 - e. Our experience is that this is the only thing that works
 - f. Until we surrendered to the process and did all the work, we couldn't stay sober
 - g. We are powerless over alcohol
 - h. Our only defense against the insanity of the first drink is a spiritual solution to be found in the steps
2. This program is about progress not perfection
 - a. Our willingness to grow along spiritual lines (the Steps) is what will allow us to stay sober one day at a time.
3. Summary: *More about Alcoholism, We Agnostics, The Doctor's Opinion, Bill's Story, and There is a Solution* should have made three things clear
 - a. An understanding of alcoholism, Identification as an alcoholic, and an admission of defeat
 - b. Nothing we or anyone else could do, including Doctors, could solve our alcohol problems
 - c. That there is a spiritual solution to our problems

PART II – p.60-63 *Step Three*

1. We have to understand that a life based on self-will won't work, even if we mean well.
 - a. Trying to control people and situations to get what we want.
 - b. Thinking everything is about us
 - c. Believing that if everyone did what we wanted, life would be perfect
 - d. It really doesn't matter whether we try to charm people into getting our way, or whether we bully them. Either way, we are in the wrong
 - e. When these tactics fail, which they usually do, we think life is unfair
 - f. Then we decide to double down and become more charming or a bigger bully
 - g. This still doesn't work, and we think it's really the other peoples fault, so we act like victims and are full of self-pity

2. What is wrong with us?
 - a. Aren't we just trying to get something we want, even when helping others?
 - b. Aren't we just delusional, thinking everything would be great if we could control the outcome
 - c. Doesn't everyone around us see through our manipulations and realize that we're self-centered jerks?
 - d. Doesn't the way we act cause others to rebel against our attempts to "run the show?"
 - e. Aren't we just making things worse, not better?
3. Our problem is that we are SELFISH and SELF-CENTERED!
 - a. We are driven by fear, self-delusion, self-seeking, and self-pity
 - b. We are often in conflict with the people around us and they push back
 - c. Sometimes they hurt us, but we struggle to see our part in it
 - d. If we honestly look at the situation, we usually can see that it was our selfish behavior that caused it in the first place
4. We create our own problems
 - a. Our selfish, self-centered behavior creates chaos in our lives and relationships
 - b. But we usually don't think it's our fault
5. The most important thing that we have to do is this; we MUST be rid of this selfishness! We MUST or it kills us!
 - a. God makes this possible, and we have not found anything else that works
 - b. We could not live up to our own standards of living / conduct
 - c. We could not reduce our self-centeredness even when we wanted to, no matter how much we tried
 - d. We had to have God's help
6. Here's what we did:
 - a. We quit playing God
 - i. We stopped trying to control people, places and things
 - ii. We stopped trying to get our way all the time
 - b. We decided to put God in charge of our lives
 - i. We sought guidance by way of prayer and meditation / quiet time
 - ii. We sought the suggestion of our sponsors, and our friends in AA when we were troubled or confused
 - iii. We considered the needs of others before ourselves
 - iv. We try to grow into responding to situations, rather than reacting to them
7. When we did these things, we got amazing results; the promises on the top of p.63
8. So we committed to this course of action
 - a. Usually by saying the Third Step prayer with our sponsor
 - b. Then by surrendering daily along these lines

Step Three, 12x12

1. Willingness is the key that will unlock the door to faith, followed by action; a decision to open the door
 - a. The first two steps did not require action, only acceptance
 - i. That we were powerless over alcohol
 - ii. That there was a spiritual solution to our problem
 - b. Step Three, and all the remaining Steps, require action
 - i. Faith alone is not enough
 - ii. We have to put God in charge of us
 - iii. The effectiveness of the rest of the program depends on how well we try and do this
 - c. The experience of AA is that anyone, and everyone, can do this
 - i. It doesn't require special abilities
 - ii. It doesn't require special knowledge
 - iii. It doesn't require faith
 - iv. It ONLY requires action
2. Seeking help from AA for our alcoholism is a form of Step Three
 - a. We turn ourselves, and our alcoholism over to the care of a power greater than ourselves; AA
3. We still may rebel at the idea of complete surrender
 - a. We may want to still control other parts of our lives other than alcohol
 - i. *The program has no say in the way I earn a living*
 - ii. *AA can stay out of my sex life*
 - b. We may feel that complete surrender will result in the loss of the things that make us who we are
 - i. We won't be ourselves anymore
 - ii. We'll be puppets or zombies
4. The trouble with this kind of thinking ignores the actual good results of surrendering
 - a. The more we depend on a Higher Power, the more independent we become
 - i. We will no longer be dependent on alcohol
 - ii. We will no longer be consumed by selfishness and self-centeredness
 - iii. Our instincts, which cause us to act without thought or feeling, slowly get replaced with intuition that allows us to respond to circumstances without fear
 1. "What used to be the hunch or the occasional inspiration gradually becomes a working part of the mind." BB p.87
 2. "We find that our thinking will, as time passes, be more and more on the plane of inspiration. We come to rely upon it." BB p.87

5. We need to also look at the bad results of a life run on self-will; the brave philosophy, wherein each of us tries to play God
 - a. We became alcoholics
 - b. We "cannot after a time differentiate the true from the false" BB p.xxviii
 - c. We could no longer rely on our intelligence or willpower to solve our problems
 - d. We were "crushed by a self-imposed crisis we could not postpone or evade" BB p.53
 - e. "The less people tolerated us, the more we withdrew from society, from life itself" BB p.151
6. After coming to AA why does the willing person continue to turn their will and life over to a higher power?
 - a. They begin to realize they have more problems than alcohol and some seem impossible to solve
 - b. They are haunted by the guilt, shame, and remorse of the past
 - c. They are still plagued by bitterness of those they hate
 - d. Their financial problems worry them sick
 - e. They panic over all the bridges they burned
 - f. And how shall they ever straighten out the awful jams that separated them from their friends and loved ones
7. Realizing that they have no tools or solutions to solve these problems, they begin to see that they now must depend on somebody or something else.
 - a. At first this is likely to be their closest AA friend
 - b. They rely on the message of recovery that they hear in meetings; that there are no problems too big to be faced and solved
 - c. They get a sponsor and start taking suggestions
 - d. They begin to realize that putting the plug in the jug and attending AA meetings is just the beginning
 - e. They begin to understand that doing ALL THE STEPS is real solution to being restless, irritable, and discontent
8. The proper use of willpower is when we try to make our will conform with God's will.
 - a. Our whole problem had been the misuse of willpower
 - b. We had tried to conquer our problems with it rather than attempting to bring it into agreement with God's intention for us
 - c. To make this increasingly possible is the purpose of AA's Twelve Steps, and Step Three is the beginning of the process

HOW IT WORKS, P.63-71

1. Though our decision (Third Step) was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless what?
2. When starting upon our personal inventory, what was the first thing we did?
3. When considering the common manifestations of self that defeated us, what's the "number one" offender?
4. When we harbor resentments, what are the four consequences?
5. If we were to live, what must we do?
6. What do we avoid so that we don't destroy our chance of being helpful?
7. Why do we have fears?
8. What do we do to commence to outgrow fear?
9. What are two ways in which we try to shape a sane and sound ideal for our future sex life?
10. "To sum up about sex," what must we do?
11. "We hope you are convinced that God can" do what for you?

BUSINESS INVENTORY	PERSONAL INVENTORY
SCOPE	
Fact-Finding Fact-Facing Truth Stock-in-Trade	Searching Fearless Moral Ourselves
OBJECT	
Disclose damaged or unsalable goods	Search out the flaws in our make-up which caused our failure
SUBJECT	
Items that are broken Inventory that is rotten Stock that can't be sold	Resentment Fear Guilt, Shame, & Remorse
PURPOSE	
To get rid of them promptly and without regret	To get rid of them promptly and without regret

1. The instincts for sex, for material and emotional security, and for companionship are perfectly necessary and right, and surely God-given, yet what usually happens to us?
2. When have our instincts turned into liabilities?
3. What is the benefit in discovering our emotional deformities?
4. What happens to people who go power-mad?
5. What should alcoholics be able to see is the underlying cause of their destructive drinking?
6. When people think that "conditions" drove them to drink, and become alcoholics, what never occurred to them?
7. What did we learn was our *first* need if we are seriously disturbed?
8. Regardless of how we categorize, or what we call or character defects, all who are in the least reasonable will agree upon what?
9. What is the basic breeder of most human difficulties, and the chief block to true progress?
10. What three conclusions will the newcomer probably arrive at while doing Step 4?
11. What are the common symptoms of emotional insecurity?
12. What are the two disastrous pitfalls that egomania creates?

WHAT DOES FEAR STEAL?

Adventure	Independence	Potential
Attention	Integrity	Present
Caring	Intelligence	Reality
Comfort	Interest	Sanity
Concentration	Intimacy	Security
Confidence	Intuition	Self Respect
Courage	Job opportunities	Self-esteem
Creativity	Job performance	Sense of humor
Energy	Joy	Serenity
Enthusiasm	Laughter	Sex
Faith	Life	Sobriety
Family	Love	Socializing
Freedom	Material possessions	Spirituality
Friends	Money	Spontaneity
Friendships	Motivation	Strength
God	Open-mind	Time
Growth	Opinions	Trust
Happiness	Opportunities	Truth
Health	Participation	Willingness
Higher Power	Peace of mind	
Hope	Personal relationships	

“Sometimes we think fear ought to be classed with stealing. It seems to cause more trouble.”

Alcoholics Anonymous, pages 67-68

"In dealing with resentments, we set them on paper. We listed people, institutions, or principals with whom we were angry." ·p.64 Big Book

PEOPLE

Mother	Childhood Friends	Other Drivers
Father	School Friends	Clergymen
Brother	Co-workers	Clerks
Sister	Bosses	Bartenders
In-Laws	Employees	Landlord
Aunts	Subordinates	Lawyer
Uncles	Customers	Doctor
Cousins	Group Leader	Psychiatrist
Nieces	AA Members	Politicians
Nephews	Step Study Leader	Celebrities
Spouses	Sponsor	The Wealthy
Ex-spouses	Sober Living People	The Poor
Children	Roommate	Other Races
Girlfriends	Housemate	Other Nationalities
Boyfriends	Teachers	Those Fuckers

INSTITUTIONS: A relationship or behavioral pattern of importance in the life of a community or society.

Politics	Marriage	DMV
Churches	Banks	God
Schools	Insurance Companies	AA
Jails	IRS	Government
Detox	Military	Sports
Recovery Homes	Veterans Administration	Phones
Hospitals	Unemployment Agency	Email

PRINCIPLES: Pertaining to basic truths, rules of human conduct, and fundamental laws governing the operation of something.

Death	Injustice	Monogamy
Suffering	Cheating	Sportsmanship
Disease	Unfairness	Being Nice
Pain	Lying	Being Polite
Sickness	Competitiveness	Honesty

BASIC INSTINCTS OF LIFE WHICH CREATE SELF

SOCIAL INSTINCT	SECURITY INSTINCT	SEX INSTINCT
SELF-ESTEEM – What we think of ourselves, high or low. ➤ PRIDE – An excessive and unjustified opinion of oneself, either positive (self-love) or negative (self-hate) PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS – Our relations with other human beings and the world around us. ➤ COMPANIONSHIP – wanting to belong or to be accepted. ➤ PRESTIGE – Wanting to be recognized, or to be accepted as a leader. AMBITIONS – Our plans to gain acceptance, power, recognition, prestige, etc.	MATERIAL – Wanting money, property, and possessions in order to be secure in the future. EMOTIONAL – Based upon our needs for another person or persons. Some tend to dominate, some are overly dependent on others. AMBITIONS – Our plans to gain material wealth, or to dominate, or to depend upon others.	ACCEPTABLE – Our sex lives as accepted by Society, Religion, or our own principles. HIDDEN – Our sex lives that are contrary to either Society, Religion, or our own principles. AMBITIONS – Our plans regarding our sex lives either acceptable or hidden.
RESENTMENTS Feelings of bitter hurt or indignation which comes from rightly or wrongly held feelings of being injured or offended.	FEARS Feelings of anxiety, agitation, uneasiness, apprehension, etc.	GUILT, SHAME, REMORSE Wrong acts which result in pain, hurt feeling, worry, financial loss, etc., for others and also for ourselves.

SELF

FLAWS IN OUR MAKE-UP WHICH CAUSED OUR FAILURE

REVIEW OF RESENTMENTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION

"SELF"

Instruction 1	In dealing with resentments we set them on paper. We listed people, institutions, or principles with whom we were angry. (Complete Column 1 on every resentment. Do nothing on Columns 2, 3, or 4 until Column 1 is complete.)
Instruction 2	We asked ourselves why we were angry. (Complete Column 2 on every resentment. Do nothing on Columns 3 or 4 until Column 2 is complete.)
Instruction 3	On our grudge list we set opposite each name our injuries. Was it our self-esteem, our security, our ambitions, or personal or sex relations which had been interfered with? (Complete each Column within Column 3 going through every resentment. Starting with the Self-Esteem Column and finishing with the Sexual Ambitions Column. Do nothing on Columns 4 until Column 3 is complete.)
Instruction 4	Referring to our list again, putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we regularly looked for our own mistakes. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened, or inconsiderate? (asking ourselves the above questions we complete Column 4.)
Instruction 5	Reading from left to right we now see the resentment (Column 1), the cause (Column 2), the part of self that had been affected (Column 3), and the exact nature of the defect within us that allowed the resentment to surface and block us off from God's will (Column 4).

COLUMN 1

COLUMN 2

I'm resentful at:

The cause(s):

Affects my: (Which part of self is affected?)

COLUMN 3

COLUMN 4

My part:

Social Instinct

Security Instinct

Sex Instinct

Ambitions

What is the exact nature of my wrongs, faults, mistakes, defects, shortcomings? Were they selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened, or inconsiderate?

Self-Esteem

Personal Relationships

Material

Emotional

Acceptable Sex Relations

Hidden Sex Relations

Social

Security

Sexual

Resentment is the “number one” offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stem all forms of spiritual disease.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION

COLUMN 3

My part:

Column 1 on every year. Do nothing on Columns 2, 3, or 4 until Column 1 is complete.)

Affects my: (Which part of self caused the fear?)					My part:
Social Instinct	Security Instinct	Sex Instinct	Ambitions		What is the exact nature of my wrongs, faults, mistakes, defects, shortcomings? Were they selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened, or inconsiderate?
Relationships		Single Sex Relations Sex Relations			

COLUMN 2

[illegible]

Fear in the Past = Fuck Everything And Run

Fear in the Future = False Evidence Appearing Real

Fear in the Present = Face Everything and Recover

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION

"SELF"

COLUMN 3

COLUMN 4

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION

Instruction 1	We intend all possible we harmed. (Complete Column 1 on every sheet. Do nothing on Columns 2, 3, or 4 until Column 1 is complete.)
Instruction 2	We asked ourselves what we did. (Complete Column 2 on every person. Do nothing on Columns 3 or 4 until Column 2 is complete.)
Instruction 3	Was it our self-esteem, our security, our ambition, our sex instinct, which caused the harm? (Complete each Column within Column 3 going through every person. Starting with the Self-Esteem Column and finishing with the Sexual Ambitions Column. Do nothing on Columns 4 until Column 3 is complete.)
Instruction 4	Referring to our list again, Putting put of our minds the wrongs others had done, we respectively looked for our own mistakes. Whom we had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened, or inconsiderate? (Asking ourselves the above questions we complete Column 4.)
Instruction 5	Reading from left to right we now see the harmed (Column 1), what we did (Column 2), the part of self caused the harm (Column 3), and the exact nature of the defect within us that caused the harm and block us off from God's will (Column 4).

[illegible]

We Subjected each relationship to this test – was it selfish or not?

"Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves"

STEP FOUR REVIEW – Key points in the readings

How it Works

PART I – p.63-64 *Backing up our decision with action*

1. The decision we just made in Step Three was a vital and critical part of our commitment to sobriety and the program of AA, but it will have little permanent effect unless we immediately follow it with a vigorous course of action.
 - a. We need to face, and be rid of, the things in ourselves which caused our downfall
 - b. Liquor was but a symptom
 - c. We need to take a personal inventory
2. Taking a commercial inventory is critical for a business to survive
 - a. It is a process of fact-finding and fact-facing, in order to discover the truth about the things that are taking up our valuable storage space
 - b. One goal is to identify broken items, or things that cannot be sold, and get rid of them promptly and without regret, so we can stop wasting time, money, and space on things that are doing us no good
 - c. It is an objective process, not an emotional one
3. We applied these same principles of commercial inventory to our personal lives
 - a. We reviewed our lives honestly in order to discover the truth about the things that are taking up our valuable resources
 - b. We searched out the flaws in our make-up which caused our failure
 - c. Now that we understood that SELF (self-will, self-knowledge, self-reliance, self-centeredness, selfishness) had failed us, we looked for ways that these commonly showed up in our lives

PART II – p.64-67 *Resentment*

1. Resentment is the most common way that SELF manifests in our lives to defeat us
 - a. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else
 - b. It makes us spiritually sick and we must FIRST work to overcome this spiritual illness
 - c. Spiritual recovery leads to mental and physical recovery
2. We listed our resentments on paper; Column 1
 - a. We looked for the cause of each resentment; Column 2
 - b. We identified what part of self had been affected by each cause; Column 3
 - c. We reviewed our lives thoroughly and honestly searching for all the instances in which resentment played a part
3. The alcoholic needs to understand that resentment has the power to kill us
 - a. It prevents us from recovering spiritually

- b. If we remain spiritually sick then the insanity of alcohol returns and we drink again, and for us to drink is to die
- c. If we wanted to live, then we had to be free of ANGER
 - i. "The grouch and the brainstorm were not for us...for the alcoholic these things are poison" p.66 BB
 - ii. "We avoid retaliation or argument" p.67 BB
 - iii. "Argument and fault-finding are to be avoided like the plague" p.98 BB
 - iv. "If he is trying to live on a spiritual basis, he will be doing everything in his power to avoid disagreement or contention" p.118 BB
- 4. We looked back at the inventory so far
 - a. We began to see that people, places, and things had a lot of power over us
 - b. Enough power to cause us to drink, and for us to drink is to die
 - c. We realized that we are just as powerless over people, places, and things as we were powerless over alcohol, and therefore will-power would not help us in dealing with resentments any more than in dealing with alcohol
- 5. This was our course of action: we worked on our empathy toward others
 - a. We realized that people on our lists were perhaps spiritually sick like us
 - b. We asked God to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that we would grant a sick friend or family member
 - c. When we get triggered by other people
 - i. We remind ourselves that they are sick too
 - ii. We consider how we can be helpful to them
 - iii. We ask our higher power to shield us from becoming angry
 - iv. We stay out of self-will and pray for knowledge of God's will for us
 - v. We avoid retaliation or argument
- 6. Having adjusted our thinking and reactions toward the people on our list by practicing the suggestions above, we approach Column 4
 - a. We ignore the other person's part
 - b. We look for our part in the situation
 - c. We look how we responded to the things in Column 2
 - d. When we see what we did we listed it in Column 4
 - e. We aim to be rigorously honest about ourselves
 - d. We seek the willingness to right any wrong we might have done

PART III – p.67-68 *Fear*

- 1. Fear is another common manifestation of SELF that defeated us
 - a. It touches about every part of our lives
 - b. It is a toxic aspect of our personalities
 - c. It sets us up to clash with people, places, and things, but we don't see it
 - d. It robs us of a peaceful existence in this world

2. We listed our fears on paper; Column 1
 - a. We looked for why have the fear; Column 2
 - b. We identified what part of self had caused the fear, or been affected by it; Column 3
 - c. We look for our part in the situation; Column 4
 - i. "It (fear) set in motion trains of circumstances which brought us misfortune we felt we didn't deserve. But did not we, ourselves, set the ball rolling?" BBp.67
3. We reviewed our lives thoroughly and honestly searching for all the instances in which fear played a part
 - a. When filling in Column 4, "My Part", we should consider that our part is often how we responded to the things in Column 2 "The Cause"
4. We considered why we had these fears
 - a. Wasn't it because self-reliance failed us?
 - b. Wasn't it because self-confidence failed us?
5. This was our course of action: we worked on trusting and relying upon God
 - a. We reminded ourselves that God is significantly more powerful than us
 - b. That we are in the world to play the role they assign us
 - c. By seeking to understand and do Gods will, and humbly relying on them, they enables us to match calamity with serenity
 - d. We let them demonstrate, through us, what a spiritual life is
 - e. We ask them to remove our fear and direct our attention to what they would have us be
 - f. At once, we begin to outgrow fear

PART IV – p.68-70 Sex

1. Sex is also a manifestation of SELF which caused our failure
 - a. We tried to be sensible on this issue
 - b. We avoid extreme judgements of ourselves and others
 - c. We look at our own sex lives over the years
2. We considered where we were at fault, and what should we have done instead
 - a. We subjected each relation to this test – was it selfish or not?
3. We reviewed our lives thoroughly and honestly searching for all the instances in which sex behavior hurt ourselves or others.
 - a. Whom had we hurt? Whom, or what, hurt us; Column 1
 - b. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate? Did we cause others to feel jealousy, suspicion, or bitterness?; Column 2
 - c. We identified what part of self had caused the harm. Are we feeling guilt, shame, or remorse toward ourselves or others; Column 3
 - d. We look for our part; Column 4

4. When filling in Column 4 we consider the following suggestions
 - a. We try to ignore the other person's part
 - b. We look for our part in the situation, remembering that our part is often how we responded to the things in Column 2
 - c. We consider the harm we may have caused others, but also ourselves
 - d. We aim to be rigorously honest to ourselves about ourselves
 - e. We seek the willingness to right any wrong we might have done
5. This was our course of action: we tried to shape a sane and sound ideal for our future sex life.
 - a. We ask God to mold our ideals and help us to live up to them
 - b. We remember that our sex powers were God-given and therefore good
 - c. Sex is neither to be used lightly or selfishly nor is it to be despised or loathed
 - d. Whatever our ideal turns out to be, we must be willing to grow toward it
 - e. We must be willing to make amends where we have done harm, provided that we do not bring about more harm in doing so
 - f. In meditation, we ask God what we should do about each specific matter. The right answer will come, if we want it
 - g. God alone can judge our sex situation. We avoid hysterical thinking or advice from others
6. Suppose we don't live up to our chosen ideal regarding sex and we repeat old behavior? Does this mean we are going to relapse?
 - a. This depends on us and on our motives
 - b. If we are sorry and have the honest desire to get back into what we believe is God's will for us regarding sex, we believe we will be forgiven and will have learned our lesson.
 - c. If we are not sorry, and our conduct continues to harm others, we are quite sure to drink
 - d. These are facts based on our own experience
7. To sum up about sex
 - a. We earnestly pray
 - i. For the right ideal
 - ii. For guidance in each questionable situation
 - iii. For sanity
 - iv. For the strength to do the right thing.
8. If sex is very troublesome
 - a. We throw ourselves into service for others
 - b. We think of their needs and work for them.
 - c. This takes us out of ourselves
 - d. It quiets the imperious urge; Imperious = arrogant, overbearing, and urgent + Urge = desire, demand, or impulse

PART V – p.70-71 *Epilogue*

1. If we have been thorough about our personal inventory, we have written down a lot
 - a. We have listed and analyzed our resentments (fears and sex problems)
 - i. We have begun to see their futility and fatality
 - ii. We have begun to see their terrible destructiveness
 - iii. We have begun to learn tolerance patience and good will toward all people, even our enemies, because we now see them as sick people like us
 - iv. We have listed the people we have hurt by our conduct, and are willing to straighten out the past if we can
2. In this book you read again and again that faith did for us what we could not do for ourselves.
3. We hope you are convinced now that God can remove whatever self-will has blocked you off from him.
4. If you have completed Step Three and Step Four, you have made a good beginning

Step Four, 12x12

PART I – p.42-44 *Instincts*

1. We have instincts for a reason; survival
 - a. Our desires for sex, material and emotional security, and for companionship are perfectly natural surely God-given
2. Yet these instincts, so necessary for our existence, often get out of hand and drive us
 - a. Nearly every serious emotional problem can be seen as a case of misdirected instincts
 - b. When we are driven by our instincts, they turn into physical and mental liabilities
3. Step Four is our vigorous and painstaking effort to discover what these liabilities in each of us have been, and still are
 - a. We want to find out how our instincts have warped us
 - b. We want to discover the harm we have done ourselves and others
 - c. By discovering what our emotional deformities are, we can move toward their correction
 - d. There can be little sobriety or contentment for us, unless we learn how to do it and continue practicing it for our lifetime
 - e. Unless we do Step Four, faith remains out of reach for most of us

PART II – p.44-47 *Resistance to doing the Fourth Step*

1. We are liable to have severe reactions to going through the process of Step Four
 - a. Depressive types will often be overcome by guilt and self-loathing
 - i. This is pride in reverse
 - ii. It leads to relapse and death
 - b. Self-righteous or grandiose types will think an inventory is unnecessary
 - i. Thinking their problems were the result of drinking not the cause of it
 - ii. Sobriety will seem enough
 - c. Others will avoid an inventory claiming that their drinking was other peoples fault
 - i. The other people need the inventory not us
 - ii. They would be fine if others stopped being the problem
 - iii. They believe their resentments are justified and reasonable
2. A good sponsor can help in all these cases
 - a. They can comfort the depressive type
 - i. That they are not strange or different
 - ii. That their character defects are not worse than anybody elses
 - iii. They can share their experience with this step
 - iv. They can encourage balance by having the newcomer consider their assets
 - b. They can guide the self-righteous or grandiose types into a more humble consideration of their liabilities
 - i. They can explain that most AA members suffer from self-justification
 - ii. But once an inventory was taken they almost always found their part

- c. They can coach the newcomers who blame all their flaws on other people to consider the experience of the AA fellowship
 - i. Alcoholics create excuses and alibis for all of our behavior
 - ii. But once an inventory was done they almost always could see their part

PART III – p.47-48 *Gaining perspective and humility*

1. We believed “conditions” drove us to drink, and when we tried to control the conditions and found we couldn’t, our drinking went out of control and we became alcoholics
2. It never occurred to us that we needed to adjust ourselves to meet the conditions that life presented us with
3. In AA we slowly learned many things
 - a. Our resentments, self-pity, and unwarranted pride had to be dealt with
 - b. That playing the big shot only turned people against us
 - c. That harboring grudges and planning revenge only harmed us
 - d. That when we were seriously disturbed, the top priority was to calm down, no matter what we thought caused it
 - e. We had to admit that we had character defects even when it was painful and humiliating
 - f. We had to stop blaming other people for our problems
4. When we started to practice these things we received these promises
 - a. The road ahead began to look easier
 - b. We had started to get perspective on ourselves, which means that we were gaining in humility
 - c. We walked with a new confidence that we are on the right track

PART IV – p.48-50 *The need for a list of defects*

1. There is plenty wrong with us alcoholics about which plenty will have to be done if we are to expect sobriety, progress, and any real ability to cope with life
2. Let’s consider a common list of major human failings – the Seven Deadly Sins: pride, greed, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth.
 - a. Pride, leads to self-justification, spurred on by fear, is the basic breeder of most human difficulties, and the chief block to true progress
 - b. All these failings generate fear, then fear generates more character defects. Unreasonable fear that our instincts will not be satisfied drives us
3. Pride and fear are the biggest road blocks to completing a moral inventory, but they turn out to be imaginary obstacles
 - a. The experience of the fellowship is that once we have complete willingness to take inventory, and exert ourselves to do the job thoroughly, we receive the promises of clarity and confidence
4. By now the newcomer has probably arrived at the following conclusions

- a. That their character defects, representing instincts gone astray, have been the primary cause of their drinking and failure at life
- b. That unless they are now willing to work hard at the elimination of the worst of these defects, both sobriety and peace of mind will still elude them
- c. That all the faulty foundation of their life will have to be torn out and built anew on bedrock

PART V – p.50-53 *How do we take a moral inventory of ourselves*

1. We start with the personal flaws which are acutely troublesome and fairly obvious
 - a. Using our best judgment of what has been right and what has been wrong
 - b. We might make a rough survey of our conduct with respect to our primary instincts for sex, security, and society
2. Sex instinct
 - a. When, and how, and in just what instances did my selfish pursuit of the sex relation damage other people and myself?
3. Financial security
 - a. In addition to my drinking problem, what character defects contributed to my financial instability?
4. Emotional security
 - a. Sexual; looking at both past and present, what sex situations have caused me anxiety, bitterness, frustration, or depression?
 - b. Financial: to what extent have my own mistakes fed my gnawing anxieties, and if the actions of others are part of the cause, what can I do about that?
5. Social instinct
 - a. Twisted relations with family, friends, and society have caused us the most problems
 - b. We have been especially stupid and stubborn about them.
 - c. Our egomania digs two disastrous pitfalls
 - i. Either we insist on upon dominating the people we know
 - ii. Or we depend upon them far too much
 - d. This self-centered behavior blocked a partnership relation with any one of those about us

PART VI – p.53-54 *Epilogue*

1. Some of us will think that all these questions don't apply to us, but often this is because we have buried these exact defects deep down in us under a thick layer of self-justification
2. Thoroughness ought to be the watchword when taking inventory
 - a. It is wise to write out our questions and answers
 - b. It will be an aid to clear thinking and honest appraisal
 - c. It will be the first tangible evidence of our complete willingness to move forward

BB: INTO ACTION, P.72-75

1. What is the best reason for doing Step 5?
2. What do we not gain without telling another human being all our life story?
3. Why must we be entirely honest with somebody?
4. What are the Fifth Step promises that appear on p. 75?

Twelve and Twelve: STEP FIVE

1. What troubles are caused by holding back on Step 5?
2. Most AA's would declare that without what, we could not stay sober?
3. Step 5 is the answer to what?
4. To those who have made progress in AA, how is humility defined?
5. What are the only ways that we can set foot on the road to straight thinking, solid honesty, and genuine humility?
6. What is the second difficulty with trying to take our problems directly to God by ourselves?
7. What is the benefit of talking to another person?
8. What are the real tests of choosing who to do our Fifth Step with?

IT'S STILL THE SAME

"In my judgment such of us who have never fallen victim (to alcoholism) have been spared more by the absence of appetite than from any mental or moral superiority over those who have. Indeed, I believe if we take habitual drunkards as a class, their heads and their hearts will bear an advantageous comparison with those of any other class.

"There seems ever to have been a proneness in the brilliant and warm-blooded to fall into the vice - the demon of intemperance ever seems to have delighted in sucking the blood of genius and generosity.

"The victim should be pitied and compassioned, just as are the heirs of consumption and other hereditary diseases.

"Their failing should not be treated as a misfortune, and not as a crime, or even disgrace"

A. Lincoln, 1842

Based on *Step 5 - Steps by the Big Book, Workbook for the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous*, author unknown, stepsbybigbook.net

"Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."

We have a written inventory and we are prepared for a long talk. (p.75)

Find someone with whom to take Step 5. Let your higher power guide you in finding the right person. You can choose anyone, in or out of AA, you may choose to share different parts of your story with different people, but make sure you have a good reason for making such decisions and that you're not practicing avoidance. All things considered, in most cases your sponsor is the best and most obvious choice to hear your Fifth Step. The experience of hearing your Fifth Step will help your sponsor guide you through the remaining steps, especially Steps 6, 7, 8, and 9. Make an appointment and take the Step. We are only as sick as our secrets.

When we decide who is to hear our story, we waste no time.... We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past. (p.75)

Points of Focus and Reflection

1. Fear

- a) Step 4 and Step 5 are the most discussed and the most skipped Steps. Why?
- b) Do I have any fears or reservations about doing this Step? What are they?
- c) How has working the first four Steps prepared me for taking Step 5?
- d) Was I so numb that I did not realize my wrongs?

2. Admitted to God [of our own understanding]

- a) Have I opened myself to the presence of a higher power before going over my inventory with my Fifth Step sponsor? How do I do this?
- b) How is my Third Step decision reaffirmed by working the Fifth Step?

3. Admitted...to ourselves

- a) How am I very much the actor? (p.73)
- b) Had I been under constant fear and tension, and did that make for more drinking? (p.73)

4. Admitted...to another human being

- a) What may happen to those who hang on to some of the worst items in stock, or have not told someone else all their life story? (p.73)
- b) How will working Step 5 help me to begin to develop new ways of having relationships?
- c) Am I in complete readiness to talk to the right person, (p.74) and to listen to their response?

5. The exact nature of our wrongs

- a) Can I ...get down to causes and conditions? (p.64)
- b) Have I inventoried my grosser handicaps? (p.71)
- c) What does the exact nature of our defects mean? (p.72) What is behind my alcoholism and the reasons I acted out in the ways I did?
- d) Why do I need to admit the exact nature – my own basic starting point / motive – of my wrongs and not simply the wrongs themselves?
- e) What is the distinction between my motives and my actions or behaviors?
- f) The 5th Step promises: Do I now feel I can look the world in the eye? (p.75)

SEVEN DEADLY SINS

So if the preferred approach is to look at the seven deadly sins, let them be considered realistically as follows:

Pride is not always a negative. Pride of heritage, pride of country, pride of hard-won successes. All are positive attributes and the pride of exaggerated self-esteem melts away in the light of humility. (It is important to view humility in its true light of self-acceptance rather than as the mid-Victorian pseudo-modesty)

Covetousness is a normal state for one whose disintegrating personality causes him or her to resent that the success and happiness which comes to others always seems to be out of his or her grasp. **Greed** is part of this consideration. It needs to be recognized as a characteristic of the unfulfilled child's nature, which is so much a part of the practicing alcoholic's personality.

Lust most often is the search for someone to care. Though it frequently finds expression in sexual excesses, the nature of this drive needs to be explored. In sobriety, this search can be converted into a lust for life — heightened enthusiasms and pleasures in the freedom of a sober, productive existence.

Anger perhaps is one of the most misunderstood, maligned and misinterpreted emotions. Webster describes anger as a feeling of displeasure which results from injury, mistreatment, opposition, etc. Usually anger reveals itself in a desire to fight back at the presumed source of this feeling. Clearly, evil intent is not implied while judgment certainly is implied. And here is where one of the most dangerous pitfalls for the alcoholic surfaces — that of resentment.

When the alcoholic drinks, his or her judgment is impaired and anger turns to rage at those people or things which inflict pain and oppose his wishes. In recovery, the skills of creative assertion are practiced to eliminate the conditioning which has prompted the practicing alcoholic to respond with destructive aggression to that which frightens him or her.

Gluttony obviously can be equated with the phenomenon of *craving* which is a dominant factor in the disease of alcoholism. Social drinkers often feel confusion about the excesses demonstrated by the alcoholic which leads to value judgments and makes the non-alcoholic incapable of understanding the alcoholic's physiological craving for this chemical.

Often in recovery, the craving for alcohol will be diverted into a craving for sugar. "Candyholics" usually return to a normal appetite for sweets in a relatively short time. However, care should be taken not to divert this characteristic into becoming a glutton for work. "Workaholics" frequently drive themselves into the same isolation booth occupied by the problem drinker.

Envy is much like greed. This "poor me" attitude is felt by the alcoholic who is deeply confused as to why he or she gets all the bad luck — while less deserving others get all the breaks. Rare is the human being who goes through life without feeling occasional envy, but in sobriety this feeling can be reduced from the obsessive to the normal.

Sloth. As the disease of alcoholism progresses, the ability to make decisions, to produce, to create and to communicate diminishes. Alcohol is a sedative, a tranquilizer, an anesthetic — therefore, it diminishes ambition and drive before finally rendering the victim incapable of carrying on the most normal activities. Recovery takes time, and sometimes lethargy is slow to dissipate. Belief in one's self and practice in using both physical and mental skills surely will bring a return of energy and enthusiasm. Patience is the key word.

Excerpts from *The Little Red Book: The Original 1946 Edition*, by Ed W., reprinted by The Full Length History Press, P.61-66

The general trend of thought with the new member is to discount the importance of admitting anything to ANOTHER HUMAN BEING.

The founders of our movement knew the value of doing this; they knew that only by so doing could we acquire the humility and spiritual inspiration necessary to continuous development in A.A. philosophy.

Most of us felt that our self appraisals were exacting and because we had conceded to God the error of our former alcoholic thought and conduct we saw no need to go farther. We reasoned that God knew; that He would forgive us and so the matter was closed.

This is sugar-coated alcoholic thinking. It follows the old pattern and is but a pretense, a new form of escape from responsibility. We must give our long hoarded secrets to another person if we are to gain peace of mind, confidence and self respect.

The humility this step brings us is imperative to our future welfare. We will have no spiritual inspiration, no release from anxiety and fear until we remove the skeleton from our closet. We are to stop dodging people and start facing facts and issues, if freedom from dread and tension is to be ours.

If this step seems difficult to you, (and it may well seem that way) remember that you are no exception. Many of us experienced the same reaction. This reaction is nothing more than the reflexes of a dying alcoholic instinct trying to avoid reality. We unconsciously are being dominated by our old thoughts. They are but momentary thoughts of rebellion.

You are now engaged in a business deal with God and another human being. You have no reason to doubt the psychological and spiritual value offered. You will be well rewarded for your effort and will find yourself at a loss to express in words the gratification that will be yours. *Understanding of such things comes only with EXPERIENCE.*

The metamorphosis from the alcoholic to the NEW A.A. PERSONALITY shows its first sign of life upon completion of Step Five.

"Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs"

STEP FIVE REVIEW – Key points in the readings

Into Action

PART I – p.72 *Review and Summary*

1. We have been trying to get a new attitude, a new relationship with our Creator, and to discover the obstacles in our path
 - a. We have admitted certain defects
 - b. We have ascertained in a rough way what the trouble is
 - c. We have put our finger on the weak items in our personal inventory
2. Now these are about to be cast out, this requires action on our part; Step Five

PART II – p.72-73 *Why we should take Step Five*

1. This is perhaps difficult – especially discussing our defects with another person
2. The best reason for doing this is: If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome drinking
 - a. Newcomers who keep parts of their inventory to themselves, almost always got drunk, even if they took the rests of the steps
3. We believe the reason they failed is that they never completed their housecleaning
 - a. They took inventory, but hung on to some of the worst items in stock
 - b. They had not learned enough of humility, fearlessness and honesty, in the sense we find it necessary, *until* they told someone else ALL their life story

PART III – p.73 *Double life*

1. More than most people, the alcoholic leads a double life
 - a. They are very much the actor
 - b. They present a version of themselves they want the world to see
 - c. They want to enjoy a certain reputation, but know in their heart that they don't deserve it
2. This situation is made worse by the things they do on their sprees
 - a. Coming to their senses, they are horrified by things they vaguely remember
 - i. These memories are nightmares
 - ii. They tremble to think someone might have seen them
 - iii. They shove these memories down deep inside themselves
 - iv. They hope no one will ever find out
 - v. They are under constant fear and tension
 - vi. This make for more drinking
3. Psychologists tend to agree with this assessment

- a. Alcoholics seek help from these doctors, but we seldom told them the truth, nor have we followed their advice
 - b. The alcoholic is never completely honest with anyone
4. We must be entirely honest with somebody if we expect to live long or happily in this world

PART IV – p.74-75 *Who do we choose?*

1. Those belonging to a religion which observes confession, may go to the properly appointed authority it is to receive it
 - a. Even if we do not belong to a religious denomination, ordained religious professionals may prove to be a good choice
2. If we don't want a person of religion, we consider the people we know, looking for a close-mouthed and understanding friend
3. Perhaps a doctor or psychologist will be the person
4. It may be a member of our family, as long as they will not be hurt or troubled by the information
5. We do have the option of sharing parts of our story with someone other than our primary choice if we believe they will be negatively affected by it
6. If there is no suitable person available, this step may be postponed, but it should be taken at the first opportunity available

PART V – p.75 *Taking action*

1. Once we have decide who is to hear our inventory, we waste no time
2. We pocket our pride and go to it, we share everything and hold nothing back
3. Once we have done this, we may receive the following promises
 - a. We are delighted
 - b. We can look the world in the eye
 - c. We can be alone at perfect peace and ease
 - d. Our fears fall from us
 - e. We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator
 - f. We now begin to have a spiritual experience
 - g. The feeling that the drink problem has disappeared will often come strongly
 - h. We feel we are on the Broad Highway, walking hand in hand with the Spirit of the Universe

PART VI – p.75 *Epilogue*

1. Returning home we find a place where we can be quiet for an hour
2. We carefully consider the first five steps and whether we have omitted anything
 - a. Omitted: leave out or exclude (someone or something), either intentionally or forgetfully

Step Five, 12x12

PART I – p.55-57 *Why do we need to take Step Five?*

1. All of AA's Twelve Steps ask us to go contrary to our natural desires, because they all deflate our egos
 - a. For this reason, Step Five is one of the harder ones to take
 - b. But our long term sobriety and peace of mind depends on taking Step Five
 - c. The experience of the fellowship is that we cannot live alone with our problems and the character defects which cause them
2. If we have been thorough in taking our Fourth Step it has probably revealed things that we'd rather not remember, but if we have come to see how wrong thinking and action have hurt us and others, then we cannot afford to keep these things to ourselves
 - a. We have to talk to somebody about them
3. So intense is our fear to do this, many search for an easier way
 - a. We make general admissions of our bad behavior when drinking
4. But of the things which we feel deep guilt, shame, or remorse we say nothing
 - a. We hope we can take these secrets to the grave
5. It is unwise and dangerous to hold back on Step Five
 - a. Some are unable to stay sober at all
 - b. Others will relapse periodically until they take this step
 - c. Even old-timers can suffer from trying to keep something to themselves which should be shared with another person
6. The practice of admitting one's defects to another person is very ancient
 - a. It is a common practice of all spiritually centered and truly religious people
 - b. Psychiatrists and psychologists point out the deep need for this practice exists in every human being
 - c. AA experience shows that without this practice we could not stay sober

PART II – p.57-59 *What are we likely to receive from Step Five?*

1. We shall get rid of that terrible sense of isolation we've always had
 - a. Alcoholics are tortured by loneliness
 - b. Joining AA and being around people who seemed to understand us helped, but didn't solve the whole problem
 - c. Taking Step Five and taking someone else through the Step was what made us feel that we belonged
 - d. Step Five is the beginning of true kinship with man and God
2. Step Five was also the beginning of the feeling that we could be forgiven
 - a. Often while working on this Step was the first time we felt that we could truly be able to forgive others
 - b. We inwardly knew that we'd be able to receive forgiveness and give it too

3. Another great benefit of confiding our defects to another human being is humility
 - a. To those who have made progress in AA, it amounts to a clear recognition of what and who we really are, followed by a sincere attempt to become what we could be
 - b. The first move toward humility must consist of recognizing our defects
 - c. Along with the recognition that we could not wish or will them away by ourselves

PART III – p.59-60 *Why can't we do this by ourselves?*

1. More realism and therefore more honesty about ourselves are the great gains we make under the influence of Step Five
 - a. We began to suspect how much trouble self-delusion had been causing us
 - b. So how could we be certain that we had made a true catalog of our defects and had really admitted them, even to ourselves?
2. Therefore it was obvious that we'd have to have outside help if we were surely to know and admit the truth about ourselves – the help of God and another human being
3. Only by discussing ourselves, holding back nothing, only by being willing to take advice and accept direction could we set foot on the road to straight thinking, solid honesty, and genuine humility
4. Until we actually sit down and talk aloud about what we have so long hidden, our willingness to clean house is still largely theoretical
 - a. When we are honest with another person, it confirms that we have been honest with ourselves and with God
 - b. The benefit of talking to another person is that we can get their direct comment and counsel on our situation
 - c. Going it alone in spiritual matters is dangerous

PART IV – p.61 *Who should we take our Fifth Step with?*

1. The most obvious person would be one's sponsor
 - a. If you know and trust them then this would be a good choice
 - b. Your sponsor has the advantage of getting to know your story by having guided you through the first four steps
 - c. You can choose to share just part of your inventory with your sponsor, and share the rest with someone else
 - d. But if there are serious reservations about confiding in your sponsor, you can choose anyone you like; in or out of AA
2. The real tests of choosing someone will be your own willingness to confide in this person, and your confidence that they will keep anything that you tell them to themselves

PART V – p.62 *Promises and Epilogue*

1. Provided you hold nothing back, you may receive the following promises from Step Five
 - a. Your sense of relief will grow throughout the process
 - b. Dammed-up emotions of years may break out of their confinement, and miraculously vanish as soon as they are exposed
 - c. As the pain subsides, a healing tranquility takes place
 - d. Many AA's say that it was during the Fifth Step that they first actually felt the presence of God
 - e. And even those who had faith already often become conscious of God as never before
2. This feeling of being at one with God and man, this emerging from isolation through the open and honest sharing of our terrible burden of guilt, brings us to a resting place where we may prepare ourselves for the following Steps toward a full and meaningful sobriety

Excerpt from *Step 6 of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)*, by Leah Miller, American Addiction Centers (AAC), 2022

What Is Step 6 of AA?

The 6th step in AA states that members “were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.”³ Step 6 relies heavily on what is done in prior steps, especially Step 4 which involves making “a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves,” and Step 5 which involves admitting “to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”^{4,5} Completing this moral inventory, understanding what your faults are, exploring what emotions or fears make you act on these faults, and owning up to them in the presence of another person and your Higher Power gives you a sense of awareness of your character defects and how they affect you and others.^{4,5} Once you have a strong understanding of what your character defects are and how they have been influencing your thoughts and behaviors, you are more likely to understand how these contribute to unhealthy, self-destructive habits that no longer work for you and become ready to let them go.³

Some people may feel uncomfortable with the use of the word “God” in the program and throughout the steps, especially people who don’t have a connection to God or those who identify as agnostic or atheist.^{2,6} However, AA makes sure to emphasize that the fellowship is a spiritual program rather than a religious one. It allows each member to develop their own concept of God, or a Higher Power.^{2,6} For people who are reluctant to use a religious concept of God, they may be more comfortable relying on the AA program, the group, nature, or anything greater than themselves as a Higher Power.^{2,6} It may be suggested that God can be an acronym for “Good, Orderly Direction” or “Group of Drunks” if it makes people feel more comfortable.^{2,6}

Why Is the 6th Step of AA Important?

The character defects that contribute to unhealthy patterns of thought and behavior may commonly have been a part of people’s lives for many years.³ Completing Step 6 in AA has the potential to create major, long-lasting changes by changing established patterns of thoughts and behaviors.³ After completing a thorough moral inventory in Step 4 and admitting the exact nature of your wrongs to yourself, another person, and your Higher Power in Step 5, you and your sponsor can explore how these character defects have an impact on your emotions, thoughts, and behavior, as well as how they affect the people around you.^{4,5} You may notice, or your sponsor may point out patterns of behavior, which will continue until you address the defects that influence your thoughts and lead to the problematic behaviors.³ In addition, your sponsor will also highlight some of your strengths and positive qualities to help you build a balanced view of yourself rather than simply focusing on negative aspects of yourself.⁴

Learning about character defects can seem intimidating or upsetting, but when we view how deeply they impact our lives and those of the people around us, we may become more understanding of how harmful these character defects can be.³ The steps leading up to Step Six open your eyes to how detrimental your character defects have become, and prepare you to work towards freedom from these problematic patterns of thoughts and behaviors.³ Skipping Step 6 can lead to the continued presence of harmful patterns of character defects and eventually contribute to relapse.^{3,7} All Step 6 asks is for you to be willing to have these defects removed, rather than to actively work on them.³

How to Follow Step Six of AA

People in AA tend to have character defects and the resulting patterns of behavior for long periods of time, so it can be scary to make the changes associated with the 12 Steps, especially Step 6. These changes can kick up a variety of fears and insecurities that become a trigger, which can contribute to relapse if they aren't addressed.⁷ Some common triggers surrounding recovery include fears about not liking the person you turn into while working the steps, not being able to successfully work the steps, fears about being too sick to recover, not being able to do the work, or having someone judge you for things you've done or who you are.^{7,8}

Going through the steps with a sponsor is important, primarily because they are there to guide you through the process of recovery and doing the 12 Steps.^{9,10} A sponsor can also give you honest feedback, as well as a sense of acceptance, identification, and hope.⁹ While going through this step, you may feel the urge to control issues, problems, or situations, rather than focusing on willingness to let go of your character defects. Your sponsor may encourage patience with the recovery process so that you can stay focused on the true purpose of this step.¹⁰

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PRINCIPLES, CHARACTER DEFECTS, AND SURRENDER IN STEP SIX

Excerpts from *Drop the Rock: Removing Character Defects - Step Six and Seven*, by Bill P., Todd W., and Sara S., Hazelden Publishing, 2005

p.xviii - Bill Wilson once spoke at an AA group's anniversary meeting in St. Paul, Minnesota, and left the members with a riddle: "If the principles of Twelve Step recovery are not the Twelve Steps, then what are the principles?"

Returning to the same meeting about a year later to present a sponsee with a sobriety medallion and a few people approached him with the following comment: "I've been looking all year, since your talk, in the literature for the principles and can't find them!" Bill's answer to these group members was: "The principles of Twelve Step recovery are the opposite of our character defects."

In recovery, we try to take the opposite of our character defects and shortcomings and turn them into principles. For example, we work to change fear into faith, hate into love, egoism into humility, anxiety and worry into serenity, complacency into action, denial into acceptance, jealousy into trust, fantasy into reality, selfishness into service, resentment into forgiveness, judgmentalism into tolerance, despair into hope, self-hate into self-respect, and loneliness into fellowship. Through this work, we learn to understand the principles of our program. Such work may look like an overwhelming goal to an outsider, but those of us in recovery know that our true goal is "progress not perfection." As the Big Book tells us, we are not destined for sainthood, and we should not be discouraged when we cannot "maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. The point is that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles are guides to progress." Also, the Twelve and Twelve states: "AA's Twelve Steps are a group of principles, spiritual in their nature, which, if practiced as a way of life, can expel the obsession to drink and enable the sufferer to become happy and usefully whole."

p.2 - For the Sixth Step, a spiritual surrender is necessary. Not a passive, waiting surrender, but an active use of the will; a total surrender of mind (thinking) and body (doing).

p.10 - Authenticity is being true to a vision and purpose. We are authentic when we choose to act and feel and choose to behave in balance with the higher values

and principles we've chosen for our lives. If those principles and values are not fully in place and manifested, it doesn't make us phony. *It makes us human.* If we feel the conflict between who we are and who we would become, it is good. It signals that we understand the difference between reality and fantasy and are moving toward reality.

p.13 - Here is where we must rethink the nature of our true, authentic selves and whom we would become, our willingness to go to any length for recovery. It is an act of will—a choice—and we must be willing to assume accountability for that choice. *Steps Six and Seven do not say whom we would become, but who we don't want to be.*

p.19 - To make surrender effective, we must be willing to help the process by using our awareness to move into line with the surrender. We must choose to act "as if." Our awareness must shift so we become aware *when* we aren't acting in accordance with that choice. Changing our awareness can be a slow process, or it can be instantaneous. With grace, it can happen smoothly and quickly. When we are struggling, it can seem to take forever. The difference is willingness. When we stay honest, willing, and especially open-minded, we stay aware.

p.xv - We are very fortunate that all of our defects aren't revealed to us all at once. Recovery works by giving us daily insight into what we can do to remove what blocks us. We need a daily awareness that our character defects are the opposite of the principles of our Program.

p.xvii - Rather than blaming the Program and the people in it for the flatness in our life, maybe it's time to rejuvenate the growth process through a jump start of the Sixth and Seventh Steps, remembering that the Program helps those who help those who help themselves. The Program works for those who understand it.

The following is a list of some defects of character and their opposites, or corresponding positive principles. Bill Wilson once stated, "The principles of Twelve Step recovery are the opposite of our character defects." These lists are often called "Debit/Credit" or "Defect/Asset" lists, but they are all talking about the same thing regarding the Steps; the negative qualities we discover about ourselves in the Fourth and Fifth Steps, that are going to be addressed and dealt with in the Sixth and Seventh Steps on the left, paired with their corresponding positive qualities on the right.

CHARACTER DEFECTS	OPPOSITE PRINCIPLES
Resentment	Forgiving / Empathetic
Anger	Kindness / Equanimity
Fear	Faith
Self-pity	Self-forgetting
Self-justification	Responsibility
Self-importance	Humility
Selfish / Self-centered	Being of Service
Self-condemnation	Self-forgiveness
Dishonesty	Honesty
Impatience	Patience
Domineering	Accommodating
Stubborn	Flexible
Hate	Love
False pride	Humility
Jealousy	Trust / Celebrate
Envy	Self-esteem
Lust	Respect
Laziness	Ambition
Procrastination	Promptness
Insincerity	Sincerity / Truthfulness
Negative thinking	Optimistic
Intolerance	Tolerance
Critical	Kind / Forgiving
Suspicious	Trusting
Gossip	Trustworthy / Respectful
Greed	Generosity
Ungrateful	Grateful
Sulking / Withdrawn	Gregarious
Hypersensitive	Agreeable / Easygoing

MY DEFECTS OF CHARACTER

The source of our Character Defects is from columns #3 and #4 on our inventory sheets in Step Four, and any feedback that we may have received during our Fifth Step.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
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17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____

CHARACTER DEFECTS

The following is a list of some of the acquired character defects (not necessarily a dictionary definition) we uncovered while working the steps as suggested in the Big Book and the Twelve and Twelve which enabled us to write the Step Guides:

1) SELF-CENTEREDNESS - putting myself first; everything and everybody must suit me; I'm the most important person in the world; playing God; "I" am the center of all. It blocks relationships, promotes ego, creates selfishness and self-seeking; causes me to pray for selfish ends; to be obsessed about my needs, and getting my own way.

2) RESENTMENT - to hold ill feelings against anyone; remembering how others have hurt me and desiring retribution and/or retaliation; judging others; wanting revenge; blaming others; well-nursed grudges.

3) ANGER OR HATRED - desiring harm for others; not wanting a good life for others; bitterness; refusing help from others; uncontrollable temper; justifying my "justified" anger.

4) PREJUDICE - automatically pre-judging; others are inferior; being superior to others who are different; despising others of a different race, class, education, addiction, sobriety, etc.; condemn others for their wrongs; maintaining a close mind.

5) MURDER - gossip, character assassination of others; wanting someone dead.

6) CONCEIT - insist on things being done my way; critical of authority; always an "expert"; impatient with those who do not meet my "high standards"; expectations exceeding my actual abilities; thinking too highly of my will; giving God orders; putting intellect or vanity first; thinking my judgment is better than others.

7) GREED - Lusts or desire what belongs to others; not content with what I have; collecting more material things for happiness; basing success on material things; possessions becoming my god; unwilling to share with others; lack and limitation; blind ambition; stealing; envy; jealous of people and things.

CHARACTER DEFECTS (continued)

- 8) LUST - adultery; secret lust for someone else; mental whoring; using sex for happiness; using other people for gratification; envious of lovers; think love is the same as sex; rape; sexual fantasizing.
- 9) INDIFFERENCE - not caring about other people; not caring about God; choosing to ignore God's will; being indifferent to desires and feeling of everyone; to desire to understand; not carrying the message; not practicing His Presence in my life; being negative, inconsiderate; taking things for granted; mediocre.
- 10) PHONINESS - false pride; lying; arrogant dishonesty; a false front; concerned about the impression I make on other people; pretending to be a great philosopher and moralist; trying to give away something I do not have (sobriety, program, spirituality); using alibis to avoid responsibility; putting others down so I feel good; being controlled by the acquired false self.
- 11) FEAR - (chief activator of defects) - dread; gloomy pessimism; lack of trust in God; separation from God; not living in the here and now; negative thoughts and attitudes; guilt of the past; not surrendering my life and will over the care of God; relying on the thinker to solve problems it cannot handle; self-centered fear-primarily fear that we would lose something we already possessed or would fail to get something we demanded; fear of people; rejection ;not living the steps.
- 12) SELF-PITY - feeling sorry for myself; wallowing in my sorrows; magnifying my troubles; thinking that I am different; blaming my problems on others; withdrawing from the world; feeling that no one understands or loves me; feeling hopeless; feeling that I am a victim of circumstance.
- 13) OBSESSION TO DRINK ALCOHOL - refusing to ask God to remove the obsession to drink; failure to do the steps. (especially Step 5)
- 14) SELF-SUFFICIENCY - lack of faith; attempting to manage my life; relying on my will only; having undue confidence; smug or overbearing; putting material things before spiritual things; not living Steps 1,2 & 3- "I'd rather do it myself".

CHARACTER DEFECTS (continued)

15) **DEFIANCE** - anger at God because He has failed to meet my demands, resisting people or God; non-conforming.

16) **INTELLECTUAL** - knowledge is all-powerful; intellect can replace God or play God; controlling my life or others; deluding myself into thinking I have "it"; belief only in my own reasoning; the thinking mind being my master; being self-reliant to the extreme (ego and conceit).

17) **SELF-RIGHTEOUS** - feeling superior to other people; phony form of respectability; putting my values and ideas first; my way is right.

18) **SELF-DECEPTION** - believing my will is God's will; believing that false ideas of myself are true; being something I am not; not living in reality.

19) **SELF-WILL** - blocking the entry of God; in collision with something or somebody, even with good motives; into myself totally; myself regardless of the consequences.

20) **DEPENDENCE** - (false) - emotional dependence upon other people; depending on a stronger person for protection and guidance; leaning on others; insisting on being over-dependent on others - I can't do this myself; depending on people rather than God.

21) **FINANCIAL INSECURITY** - hoarding money; fear of losing a job; extravagant in my finances; manipulating; gambling; placing money over God; lack and limitation; "they don't give me what I deserve".

22) **DOMINATION** - demanding attention, protection, and love from others; attempting to control others; telling others just how their lives should be lived; unreasonable demands on others; playing God by dominating those around me; forcing others to do my will.

23) **FALSE PRIDE** - blind to my liabilities; demands upon me or others that misuse my God-given instincts; hiding defects while blaming others for them; not making amends or a list of all people I had harmed; associated with fear; exaggerated self-importance; feeling superior; braggart; grandiosity; trouble admitting any human weakness at all.

CHARACTER DEFECTS (continued)

24) SELF-JUSTIFICATION - continually making excuses for my behavior.

25) EMOTIONAL INSECURITY - personal relationships which bring continuous or recurring trouble; sex situations that caused anxiety, bitterness, frustration or depression; inability to accept conditions which I cannot change; unworkable relations with other people; over-dependence on people is unsuccessful because all people are fallible; I couldn't control my emotional nature; instincts and intuition gone wild.

26) LACK OF TOLERANCE - failing to practice unconditional love; intolerant of others; not allowing others to have different ways of thinking or living.

27) DISHONESTY - not being honest with God, myself, or other people; lying; cheating; depriving others of not only their worldly goods, but of their emotional security and peace of mind; justifying my behavior; alibis.

28) SELF-DESTRUCTION - obsession for alcohol; attempted suicide.

29) SLOTH - procrastination; laziness; continually putting off things that need to be done now.

30) GLUTTONY - excess eating or drinking; taking or comfort; compulsion to overindulge.

31) RATIONALIZATION - imagining that I had good motives and reasons when I really did not.

32) PERFECTIONISM - unwilling to accept human mistakes - mine or other people's; I set unrealistic standards for me and others, then become frustrated if they are not met; believing my standards are equal to God's.

33) IMPATIENCE - I want what I want, and I want it now; not living in the Now; my timetable - not God's timetable.

DEFINITIONS

IMPATIENCE Most of us expect things to happen fast--it has been said, "We want things when we want them." Unfortunately, the world does not work quite that way. We are therefore burned. We are annoyed. We must try to roll with the punches. Employ the Serenity Prayer at once. This can start a mental binge if not checked.

HATE Hate is considered a full-blown resentment, sometimes called, "A dislike or ill will for." Unfortunately, it makes our blood boil which is unhealthy both mentally and physically. Our goal--not to hate anyone, and to love or say a prayer for them. Love is more powerful than hate. It is impossible to hate anyone when you pray for them. Hate can start a mental binge if not checked.

FALSE PRIDE Not seeing things as they really are. This can cause us no end of trouble. Let us see ourselves as we really are. Let not our false pride keep us from doing the things that are right. Let us not kid ourselves that we might become too good too fast. Practice humility and as for help, ask for it. False pride keeps us from admitting that our attitude or actions are wrong. False pride causes us to high-hat or slight certain people because we consider ourselves superior to them. We develop a false sense of values. Ask for help to understand and recognize our false pride and for power to control it.

LAZINESS Not eager to work or to exert yourself. This is a defect that we must try hard to overcome. One's attitude must be right to combat that. Let's try to take the attitude that we can do our job better. Make a game out of work. Do the hardest part of our work first. Mental laziness is a form of deterioration and starts physical laziness.

PROCRASTINATION This can be one of the most difficult defects to overcome. Write down the most important things you should do today, then proceed to do them. Always try to do the most difficult or most distasteful tasks first. We do these first because if we leave them to the last we are likely to leave them until tomorrow. One of the disastrous things about this defect is that one worries about not doing a certain chore and will always worry until it is done and put out of the way. One must use strong discipline on oneself to overcome this defect. This too can start a mental binge.

DEFINITIONS (continued)

NEGATIVE THINKING A form of being against anything positive and always looking on the bad side of situations. Looking for bad rather than good. One's life can be very depressing and unhappy with negative thinking. Let us search for the good and concentrate on positive things. Let us be optimistic about situations and not pessimistic. Ask for help.

SUSPICION To doubt--to suspect fault or evil. To make friends and learn to know people we must trust. It is up to us to trust first, if we expect other people to trust us. It's when we are suspicious of other people that they shy away from us. Suspecting other people is a form of negative thinking--in effect, looking for the bad. Look for the good with trust in your heart.

SELFISH Too much concern about one's own welfare, to the detriment of others. This is nothing more than being self-centered. The great "I AM". Try to put others ahead of ourselves. Think--try to consider other's feelings. Selfishness is a form of blindness concerning other people. Ask for help to help other people. This exercise will help us to forget ourselves.

WITHDRAWN Reserved. Shy. Some people would not call this a defect. However, it can become very troublesome to us and lead back to drinking. We must go out of our way to be friendly. Try to speak a little louder. If we try hard we can gradually come out of our shell. As we gain confidence we will notice a change in ourselves.

SELF-RIGHTEOUS

HYPOCRITICAL Sometimes we pretend we are power of virtue itself. This can be dangerous. We must remember we are human beings and subject to all weakness. Never look down at the fellow who hasn't made it yet. Sometimes the self-righteous get drunk too.

DESPONDENT A loss of hope, no will to keep living or trying. A sense of utter futility. To give up is a serious defect when it concerns oneself. Dr. Ehrlich called his cure of syphilis #606 because that was the number it took before he was successful. He kept trying and did not give up hope. You too can--ask for help.

"Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character"

STEP SIX REVIEW – Key points in the readings

Into Action

BB – p.76 *Am I willing to change?*

1. If we have taken the time to review and make certain that we have taken the first five steps to the best of our ability, then we look at Step Six
2. Willingness is fundamental to the program of recovery, this is especially true of Step Six
3. Are we now ready to let God remove from us everything that we discovered about ourselves in Step Four and Five that is problematic?
 - a. "We searched out the flaws in our make-up which caused our failure," p.64
 - b. "All the things which we have admitted are objectionable?" p.76
 - c. "Can He now take them all – every one?" p.76
4. If we are unwilling to let go of a character defect, then we pray for the willingness to do this

Step Six, 12x12

PART I – p.63-64 *Can God remove defects of character?*

1. The often disputed question of whether God can – and will, under certain conditions – remove defects of character will be answered "Yes" by most AA members. This will be based primarily on their obsession for alcohol being removed from them
2. Whether this happened quickly or slowly, it usually takes place as part of the ongoing process of education, willingness, and surrender clearly summarized at the end of Steps One and Two, p. 60 of the Big Book
 - a. That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives
 - b. That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism
 - c. That God could and would if He were sought
3. So, when AA's have "become entirely ready" to have God remove the obsession for alcohol from them, then God has proceeded to do exactly that.

PART II – p.64-65 *Why can't we have God remove all our character defects?*

1. Having been granted a perfect release from alcohol, why can't we achieve a perfect release from every other difficulty or defect by the same means?
2. In the case of Alcohol some things seem clear to us
 - a. God gave us instincts so that we can survive in a hostile world
 - b. Alcoholics become powerless over alcohol and lose the power of choice
 - c. Alcoholism overrides our instinctive desire for self-preservation and sets us on a path of self-destruction

- d. In this powerless condition, the alcoholics only hope is a spiritual experience which comes from a higher power
 - e. When we ask God to get us sober and keep us sober, we bring our will into perfect harmony with God's will for us to survive
- 3. But most of our other difficulties are not in the same category as alcohol
 - a. We have not become powerless over our other character defects and we have not lost the power of choice over them
 - b. What has happened is that we have become blind or unaware of how our character defects drive us and the negative effect they have on our lives
 - c. We can ask God to help remove our character defects, but God is not going to do for us what we can do for ourselves

PART III – p.65-69 *The nature of Step Six*

1. Step Six – *Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character*
 - a. Is AA's way of stating the best possible attitude one can take in order to make a beginning on this lifetime job
 - b. This does not mean that we expect all our character defects to be lifted out of us as the drive to drink was
 - c. A few of them may be, but with most of them we shall have to be content with patient improvement
 - d. The words "entirely ready" underline the fact that we want to aim at the very best we know or can learn
 - e. Practically nobody has this degree of readiness, the best we can do is to honestly try to have it
2. Even the best of us will discover defects that we enjoy, and even some that we love. Our willingness to change may be lacking, but we should always avoid the extreme position of, "This I will never give up!" Instead, we should ask God to help us be willing.
3. Only Step One, where we made the 100% admission we were powerless over alcohol, can be practiced with absolute perfection. The remaining eleven Steps state perfect ideals. They are goals toward which we aim, and the measuring sticks by which we estimate our progress
4. If we wish to make progress in the use of Step Six on problems other than alcohol, we shall need to make a brand-new venture into open-mindedness. We need to understand the ideal and be willing to move toward it. The only question will be "Are we ready?"
5. The moment we say, "No, never!" our minds close against the grace of God. Delay is dangerous, and rebellion may be fatal. This is the exact point at which we abandon limited objectives, and move toward God's will for us

"The whole emphasis of Step Seven in on Humility"

1. What is the foundation principle of the each of A.A.'s Twelve Steps?
2. What is our crippling handicap?
3. We had lacked what perspective?
4. What always happened when we had to choose between character and comfort?
5. What is the basic ingredient of all humility?
6. By the time we have gained some measure of release from our more devastating handicaps, what do we enjoy?
7. How had we deprived ourselves of Gods help?
8. What is the chief activator of our defects?
9. How many times does the word "humble", in any form, appear in Step Seven of the 12x12?

HUMILITY

"Humility— a word often misunderstood. To those who have made progress in A.A., it amounts to a clear recognition of what and who we really are, followed by a sincere attempt to become what we could be"

– p.58, Step Five, Twelve and Twelve

"Each of us would like to live at peace with himself and with his fellows. We would like to be assured that the grace of God can do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. We have seen that character defects based upon shortsighted or unworthy desires are the obstacles that block our path toward these objectives . . . The Seventh Step is where we make the change in our attitude which permits us, with humility as our guide, to move out from ourselves toward others and toward God.

– p.76, Step Seven, Twelve and Twelve

"Humility is perpetual quietness of the heart. It is to have no trouble. It is never to fretted of vexed, irritable or sore; to wonder at nothing that is done to me, to feel nothing done against me. It is to be at rest when nobody praises me, and when I am blamed or despised, it is to have a blessed home in myself where I can go in and shut the door and kneel to my Father in secret and be at peace, as in deep sea of calmness, when all about is seeming trouble."

**– Inscription from plaque on Dr. Bob's desk,
which to him, best described Humility.**

Excerpt from *Step 7 of AA: Ask Him to Remove Your Shortcomings*, by Marisa Crane, BS, Alcoholics Resource Center, 2021, alcoholicsanonymous.com

Step 7 of AA: Ask Him to Remove Your Shortcomings

Step 7 of AA is "Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings."

Step 7 builds upon the work you did in Step 4, 5, and 6, in which you acknowledged your shortcomings, admitted them to your higher power and another person, and readied yourself to let them go so you can live a happier and healthier life free from problematic behaviors.

Step 7 of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) is about changing your attitude and moving forward with humility so you can give yourself over to your higher power and ask it to do what you cannot do on your own: rid you of the faults that have harmed yourself and others.

Step 7 helps prepare you for Step 8, which involves making a list of the people you've hurt in your life. Step 8 is going to be an emotionally-challenging step, which is why it's so vital that you give up your pride and ego during Step 7 so that you are able to acknowledge the people you've harmed and then progress to making amends.

You're going to want to take your time during Step 7, as it is the foundation for the rest of the 12 steps of AA. The attitude and perspective you establish in Step 7 will help set you up for success in the future. But let's not jump too far ahead—it's important to know how to get started with Step 7 of AA.

How to Start Step 7 of AA

When you start AA Step 7, you will want to begin from a place of humility. Do everything that you can to shed your ego and pride and approach Step 7 with modesty. This means no defensiveness, no blaming others, and no making excuses for the mistakes you've made in the past.

Now is the time to show your strength through humbleness, through your willingness to take a good hard look at yourself and decide it is time to make a change.

One way you can try to shed your pride is by approaching Step 7 of AA as a positive step toward healing and recovery as opposed to one in which you shame or belittle yourself. Facing your faults is a healthy step—not a negative one. Flipping the script in this way may help to change your attitude and perspective.

Helpful Tips for Working Alcoholics Anonymous Step 7

If you find yourself struggling with Step 7, you can try some of these tips:

- Shift your mindset from self-reliance to reliance on your higher power.
- Focus on transforming from a self-centered life to a selfless one.
- Accept that you need to practice humility in order to successfully complete Step 7.
- Put your progress ahead of your comfort.

Another helpful tip for working Step 7 is to let this step take as long as it's going to take. Going into it with a preconceived notion of how long it'll take to complete will only set you up for disappointment if it ends up taking you longer. Plus, recovery from alcoholism is not a race. It is a self-paced journey that requires reflection, introspection, and radical honesty.

Popular Myths About AA Step 7

As with Step 6, in which you become ready to ask God to remove your defects, you may interpret Step 7's use of "Him" as a God, but that is not the case. In Step 7, like all of the other steps, the higher power refers to your personal entity—not one associated with any specific religion or belief.

Another common misconception about Step 7 AA is that you don't need humility in order to recover from alcoholism, but this is far from the truth—without humility, you won't be able to recognize, admit, and address your shortcomings, and you will fall into the trap of being overly prideful and making excuses for your behaviors.

Humility actually shows great strength of character, and it is a great trait to have not just during Step 7 but for the rest of your life.

Excerpts from *The Little Red Book: The Original 1946 Edition*, by Ed W., reprinted by The Full Length History Press, P.68-71

The several objectives of Steps Six and Seven are:

1. To gain an intimate contact with this POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES.
2. To perfect ourselves in the practice of unselfish prayer.
3. To be aware of our defective character traits.
4. To desire their removal.
5. Complete surrender of all defects of character.
6. To believe the God CAN remove them.
7. To ask Him to take them ALL AWAY.

The spiritual attitude and satisfactory frame of mind necessary to effective fulfillment of these steps has been progressively worked toward in the completion of the first five steps in our program.

Knowledge of our alcoholic problem prompts us to turn to God for help. The alcoholic must pray. There is no standard form of prayer to use. Our remorse over past mistakes and a genuine desire to correct them will indicate how we shall pray.

There is nothing outstanding about an alcoholic's prayer to God. It is just a simple, sincere affair in which the alcoholic has nothing to lose but from which he gains SOBRIETY – SANE THOUGHT AND BEHAVIOR – PEACE OF MIND – AND HAPPINESS FOR HIMSELF AND FAMILY.

There is a latent power within each human being that responds to conscious contact with God. This contact, if honest and unselfish, generates a stable, balanced strength that surmounts seemingly impossible circumstances. THROUGH IT, THE MIRACLE OF A.A. IS POSSIBLE.

Steps Six and Seven utilize this contact which thousands of alcoholics have humbly used in effecting removal of their defects of character. *Without them our rehabilitation is impossible.*

"Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings"

STEP SEVEN REVIEW – Key points in the readings

Into Action

BB – p.76 *Am I ready to ask for help?*

1. If we have taken the time to consider Step Six, determining where we stand on our willingness to change, and feel we are ready, then we look at Step Seven
2. The act of surrender, and the ability to ask for help, are fundamental to the program of recovery, this is especially true of Step Seven
3. We start by turning our self over to the care of God, good and bad
 - a. We do this as an act of humility because Steps Four and Five indicate
 - i. We do not always see ourselves well
 - ii. We do not always know what's best for us
 - iii. We do not always act with clarity
 - b. Therefore we are going to surrender our entire self, trusting that God will sort out the mess
4. We now pray that God remove from us all the things that prevent us from being useful to Him and the people in our lives
5. We now ask God for strength and guidance in carrying out His will as it is revealed to us

Step Seven, 12x12

PART I – p.70 *What is Humility?*

"Humility – a word often misunderstood. To those who have made progress in AA, it amounts to a clear recognition of what and who we really are, followed by a sincere attempt to become what we could be." Step Five, p.58, 12x12

1. The attainment of greater humility is the foundation principle of each of AA's 12 Steps
 - a. Without some degree of humility, no alcoholic can stay sober at all
 - b. Unless we develop more humility than may be required just for sobriety, we still haven't much chance of becoming truly happy

PART II – p.71-73 *Material Achievement vs Humility*

1. Humankind takes great pride in its own achievements, and surely no member of AA wants to deprecate material achievement. Nor do we enter into debate with the many who still cling to the belief that to satisfy our basic natural desires is the main object of life
2. But we *are* sure that no class of people in the world ever made a worse mess of trying to live by this formula than alcoholics

- a. Throughout history we have been demanding more than our share of security, prestige, and romance.
 - b. Never was there enough of what we thought we wanted
 3. We lack the perspective to see that character-building and spiritual values had to come first, and that material satisfactions were not the purpose of life
 - a. Whenever we had to choose between character and comfort, the character-building was lost in the dust of our chase for what we thought was happiness
 - b. We never thought of making honesty, tolerance, and true love of man and God the daily basis of living (but this is exactly what the 12 Steps ask us to do)
 - c. As long as we placed self-reliance first, a genuine reliance upon a Higher Power was out of the question

PART III – p.73-74 *Our first experience of Humility*

1. Our journey in AA begins with our humble admission of powerlessness over alcohol
 - a. So it is that we first see humility as a necessity
2. To be willing to work for humility as something to be desired for itself, takes most of us a long, long time. A whole lifetime geared to self-centeredness cannot be set in reverse all at once
3. As we settle into AA, we reluctantly come to grips with those serious character flaws that made problem drinkers of us in the first place, flaws which must be dealt with to prevent a retreat into alcoholism once again
 - a. We are obliged to choose between the pains of trying and the certain penalties of failing to do so
4. We may not have a high opinion of humility as a personal virtue, but we do recognize it as a necessary aid to our survival

PART IV – p.74-75 *What practicing Humility can do for us*

1. By the time we have taken Steps 4, 5, and 6 our thinking about humility begins to have a greater significance
 - a. In all probability we have gained some measure of release from our more devastating handicaps
 - b. We enjoy moments in which there is something like real peace of mind
 - c. To those of us who have only known excitement, depression, or anxiety this peace is a priceless gift
 - d. Humility now appears to be a principle which can give us serenity
2. We have witnessed how pain had been the admission price into our new sober lives, and as our perception of humility improves, we begin to recognize humility as a healer of pain
 - a. We began to fear pain less, and desire humility more

3. The most profound result of all was the change in our attitude toward God
 - a. We began to get over the idea that our Higher Power was only to be called upon in an emergency
 - b. The notion that we would still live our own lives, God helping a little now and then, began to evaporate
 - c. Refusing to place our Higher Power first, we had deprived ourselves of their help
4. A great turning point in our lives came when we sought for humility as something we really wanted, rather than as something we must have

PART V – p.76 *Epilogue*

1. Our character defects based upon shortsighted or unworthy desires are the obstacles that block our path to peace of mind and serenity, as well as a spiritual solution to our problems
2. The chief activator of our defects has been self-centered fear – primarily fear that we would lose something we already possessed or would fail to get something we demanded.
3. Living upon a basis of unsatisfied demands, we were in a state of continual disturbance and frustration
4. The whole emphasis of Step Seven is on humility. It is really saying to us that we now ought to be willing to try humility in seeking the removal of our other shortcomings just as we did when we admitted that we were powerless over alcohol, and came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

BIG BOOK P. 76-84

1. What is our real purpose in not emphasizing the spiritual feature of the program when we approach a person to make amends?
2. What do and don't we do in making amends to our enemies?
3. What do we do about our creditors?
4. Why must we lose fear of creditors?
5. Before making an amends which might implicate other people, what are the three things we should do?
6. How, in general, do we handle amends of domestic trouble?
7. Why do we feel a person is unthinking when he says that sobriety is enough?
8. When we sit down with the family during the amends process, why must we be careful not to criticize them?
9. We should not talk incessantly to our families about spiritual matters. How will they change in time?

STEP EIGHT: 12 X 12

1. Steps Eight and Nine are concerned with personal relations. What are our three directives?
2. Every A.A. has found that they can make little headway in this new adventure of living, unless what?
3. What are three obstacles that need to be overcome?
4. Why should we make an accurate and really exhaustive survey of our past life as it has affected other people?
5. What is a practical definition of "harm"?
6. What course of action should we hold ourselves to?

STEP NINE: 12 X 12

1. What are the qualities we need to take Step 9?
2. What are the four classifications of making amends?
3. When do most of us begin making certain kinds of direct amends?
4. What does "let's not talk prudence while practicing evasion" refer to?
5. What is the one consideration which should qualify our desire for a complete disclosure of the damage we have done to someone?
6. Although there is no pat answer for all amends, what do all amends require?

Understanding Step 8

The philosophy underlying step 8 is twofold. First, it stresses the importance of self-awareness, making individuals aware of the pain and upheaval they might have inflicted on others. Second, it champions empathy, underscoring the need for genuine remorse and a true willingness to make amends. However, it's crucial to approach this step with a balanced emotional mindset.

Rather than getting entangled in a web of guilt and regret, Step 8 encourages individuals to objectively confront their actions, acknowledging their missteps without letting shame overshadow the primary goal of healing and restoration.

Who do we make amends to?

- All other people we think we have harmed, especially those we feel bad about.
- People we have harmed since we got sober, and whom we might still be harming today.
- People who tell us that we have harmed them and want restitution.

More questions for reflection and discussion:

1. Have I reviewed the list to make sure it includes all the people I've harmed?
2. Have I discussed the list and the circumstances with my sponsor to make sure I understand the nature of the harms done?
3. Do I feel guilty about things I've done or ashamed of myself for doing them? Do I understand the difference between guilt and shame? Have I discussed these feelings with my sponsor, and do I understand how the 8th and 9th Steps can relieve them?
4. Have I prayed for the willingness to make amends to everyone on the list and for willingness to forgive those who've harmed me?
5. Is there anyone on the list I'm not yet willing to make amends to? If so, then why not?
6. Do I understand how holding onto resentments hurts me and my loved ones . . . that by refusing to forgive and make amends I am giving those who wounded me the power to keep me trapped in a painful past?
7. If there are still people I'm unwilling to make amends to, am I at least willing to ask God for the willingness to forgive?

Suggestion Guide for AMEND LIST

The purpose of this guide is to bring to mind some of the types of people who we may have harmed. The member likely has some names already that came up in Step 4. Refer to page 76 of the Big Book and page 79 of the Twelve and Twelve.

OUR FAMILY

People like ourselves had the knack of hurting the people that love us the most and whom we love the most. Let us consider them first on our list.

FRIENDS

We have hurt many of our friends without even knowing it. Our friends didn't leave us, we left them. In many cases, we wouldn't let them be our friends any longer. They are still our friends if we let them. Do not forget the friends we have hurt.

CREDITORS

Most alcoholics have avoided at least some of our creditors. Some of our creditors force us to face up to our obligations. However, there are some that do not put too much pressure on us, so we ignore and avoid them. Keep a place on our list for them.

DECEASED

It is wise to place these people on our list even though we cannot do anything about it. It is good for us to at least recognize the fact that we have harmed them.

ENEMIES

We may not have any enemies, but if we do, please put them down. Having enemies and hate is a luxury an alcoholic cannot afford. If we do, they should be catalogued.

ANYONE

If there are persons that do not fall in the above categories, add them to the list. What about the person who we walk across the street to avoid or the fellow in a crowd or party we manage to stay away from, or at least out of direct contact? We know who they are and should put them down.

YOU MAY WISH TO ADD GOD OR YOURSELF TO THIS LIST...

"Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all"

STEP EIGHT REVIEW – Key points in the readings

Into Action

PART I – BB p.76 *The list and the action required*

1. We have a list of all persons we have harmed and to whom we are willing to make amends
 - a. We made it when we took inventory
2. Now we go out to these persons and repair the damage done in the past
3. If we lack the willingness to do this, we ask until it comes
 - a. Remember it was agreed at the beginning we would go to any lengths for victory over alcohol

PART II – BB p.76-77 *Purpose dictates action*

1. Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us
2. As we review our list of the people we have harmed, we may lack the confidence to go to them on a spiritual basis
3. To be clear, with some people we need not, and probably should not emphasize spirituality when we approach them
 - a. We might prejudice them
4. The people we approach are going to be more impressed with our sincere desire to set right the wrong than our talk of spiritual discoveries
 - a. Actions speak louder than words

PART III – BB p.77 *Why deal with people we don't like?*

1. There may be people we hate on our lists, but our feelings about them does not change action we need to take
2. It is harder to go to an enemy than to a friend, but we find it much more beneficial to us
 - a. The harder amends are more important to our recovery, than the easy ones

PART IV – BB p.77-78 *How do we deal with these people?*

1. We go to them in a helpful and forgiving spirit, confessing our former ill feeling and expressing our regret
 - a. Under no condition do we criticize or argue
 - i. We simply tell them that we will never get over drinking until we have done our utmost to straighten out the past
 - b. We are there to sweep off our side of the street
 - i. Realizing that nothing worthwhile can be accomplished until we do so

- c. We never try to tell them what they should do
 - d. Their faults are not discussed, we shall solely focus on our own shortcomings
- 2. If our manner is calm, frank, and open, we will be gratified with the result
 - a. Rarely do we fail to make satisfactory progress
- 3. If someone rejects our attempt to make amends, it's ok
 - a. We have made the effort and done our part
 - b. We should respect their wishes to be left alone, this is also part of the amends
 - c. Even in these cases, the nature of the amends suggests that we not repeat the behavior with anyone else moving forward

Step Eight, 12x12

PART I – p.77 Our focus is on personal relationships

- 1. Steps Eight and Nine require that
 - a. First, we look back at our lives and try to identify when we have caused others harm
 - b. Second, we make a thorough attempt to repair the damage we have caused
 - c. Third, we take what we have learned about ourselves from taking Steps 8 and 9, use it in the future to create the best possible relationships with everyone we know
- 2. These are things that we will get better at doing, but will still need to practice the rest of our lives

PART II – p.77-79 Our list and the resistance to making it

- 1. To a degree, looking back at our lives to identify when we have caused harm, was done in Step Four, but Step Eight will require looking beyond our Fourth Step inventory
- 2. We may feel resistance to doing this, but if a willing start is made, the benefits will become clear, and the obstacles will fade
- 3. The first obstacle we face has to do with forgiveness
 - a. Twisted or broken relationships put our emotions on the defensive
 - i. To avoid looking at our part, we focus on the wrongs of the others involved
 - b. But it is usually true that our behavior aggravated the defects of others
 - c. If we are going to ask forgiveness for ourselves, how can we deny forgiveness to those we have been conflicted with?
- 4. The next obstacle we face is when we realize that we were preparing to make face-to-face amends to the people we had harmed
 - a. Step Five had been hard enough, but the thought of actually facing the people we had harmed overwhelmed us
 - b. There were some cases where the people we had harmed didn't know it was us, why did we have to go there?
 - c. These are the ways fear conspires with pride that gets in the way of us making a complete list of ALL the people we had harmed

5. The final obstacle some of us face is the idea that when we were drinking, we never hurt anybody but ourselves
 - a. This attitude is the result of purposeful forgetting.
 - b. The chance that our drinking did not harm anyone but ourselves is very slim
 - c. Unless we make a deep and honest search of our motives and actions while drinking, we will never learn the truth about how we affected others when drinking

PART III – p.79-80 *Step Eight as part of our inventory process*

1. One of the key reasons why we should make an accurate and really exhaustive survey of our past life as it has affected other people, is so we can also see how it might have affected us
2. In many cases, we shall find that the harm done others has not been great, the emotional harm we have done ourselves has been significant
 - a. Very deep, sometimes quite forgotten, damaging emotional conflicts persist below the level of consciousness
 - b. These may have given our emotions violent twists which have since altered our personalities for the worse
3. While the purpose of making restitution to others is the top priority in Step Eight, it is equally necessary that we extricate from an examination of our personal relationships every bit of information about ourselves and our fundamental difficulties that we can
4. Since defective relationships with others have nearly always been the immediate cause of our problems, including our alcoholism, no field of investigation could yield more valuable results than this one.
 - a. Calm, thoughtful reflection upon personal relationships can improve our understanding of ourselves
 - b. We can go far beyond those things which were superficially wrong with us, to see flaws which were deep seated
 - c. Flaws that were sometimes responsible for the whole pattern of our lives

PART IV – p.80-81 *Harm*

1. To define the word "harm" in a practical way, we might call it the result of instincts in collision, which cause physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual damage to people
 - a. If our tempers are consistently bad, we arouse anger in others
 - b. If we lie or cheat, we deprive others of their property, but also of their emotional security and peace of mind
 - c. Our behavior becomes an invitation to become contemptuous and vengeful toward us
 - d. If our sex conduct is selfish, we may excite jealousy, misery, and a strong desire to retaliate in kind
2. In context to Step Four, if we can identify what part of self is affected in column 3 – social instinct, security instinct, sex instinct. Then we should also consider whether the threat to our instinct is the result of the other persons instinct for the same thing

3. In context to Step Six, our character defects have the power to trigger, or even create character defects in others, and vice versa

PART V – p.81-82 *Step Eight guidelines*

Guidelines

- a. We should start with our Step Four list
- b. We should add what we learned in Step Six about ourselves to consider who else we might have harmed
- c. We should review our lives as far as memory will reach
- d. Our goal is to construct a long list of people who have been affected by us
- e. We should ponder and weigh each situation carefully
- f. We should hold ourselves to the course of admitting the things we have done, while forgiving the wrongs done us, real or imagined
- g. We should avoid extreme judgments, both of ourselves and of others involved
- h. We must not exaggerate our defects or theirs
- i. A quiet, objective view will be our steadfast aim

PART VI – p.82 *Epilogue*

If we find ourselves struggling with this process, we should remind ourselves that AA experience with this Step is that it is the beginning of the end of isolation from our fellows and from God

Excerpts from *The Little Red Book: The Original 1946 Edition*, by Ed W., reprinted by The Full Length History Press, P.73-84

The objective of Steps Eight and Nine is to *outline* and put into *practice* a working course of conduct which will directly rectify the harm or injury our drinking may have imposed upon other; at the same time start harmoniously relating us to life and to our fellow men.

The practice of the Alcoholics Anonymous philosophy adequately fulfills these requirements. It is a PROVEN WAY OF LIFE by which the alcoholic corrects his past mistakes and makes restitution to relative, friend or enemy as he effects his own recovery from the physical and mental damage alcohol has inflicted upon him.

Many alcoholics have agreed to the effectiveness of our philosophy but have failed to benefit from it because they take too lightly the seriousness of this physical and mental damage and do not wish to inconvenience themselves with the provisions of our program. They also find it difficult to understand that they are spiritual invalids.

Members do not arrest alcoholism or gain recovery by merely agreeing with the principles of A.A. philosophy – **THEY RECOVER ONLY IF THEY LIVE THEM.**

These steps [eight and nine] work in conjunction with each other. We have a list of those we have harmed – we have our grudge list – we have a list of those we are financially obligated to. FEW of us realize that our own names head the list of those we have wronged and that by living this program we are first making amends to ourselves – to our outraged constitutions – to our confused minds and to our troubled spirits.

It is not a difficult thing to list the people who suffered because we drank. Our real problem is to arrive at a state of mind that concedes the damage we have done and embraces a sincere willingness to amend it.

Step Nine is not easily or quickly carried out. Some restitution is started upon our acceptance of the AA program as a "Way of Life." This is usually quite limited as it is not until we have spent several months in AA and have fortified our sobriety with good fundamental knowledge of the program that we acquire the spiritual courage and understanding to discreetly dispense reparation.

The question now arises: Whose names belong on our list? How do we go about making amends to these people? What procedure do we follow?

GROUP ONE – FRIENDS

In this group are the people who have been close friends, business associates, etc., those toward whom we should be friendly, but have severed connections with because of resentments, pride, or fancied wrongs. The ones we have treated unjustly but have not harmed aside from harsh words or acts of asinine behavior.

The technique to be observed in approaching the people in this class is based on sincerity. Our approach is "calm, frank, and open." We aim to convince the party of our good intentions and to assure him that we regret the treatment he has received at our hands. We never make amends that will harm another person.

There will be a few cases where our advances are rejected. If we are unable to establish a reconciliation and are not favorably received, we simply drop the matter in hopes that eventually our sobriety and future dealings will repair the breach between us.

The main point to keep in mind is that we are out to perform a duty, that we will not be upset or discouraged by gruff or unpleasant receptions, that the intent of our visit is a harmonious one and that **UNDER NO CONSIDERATION WILL WE LEAVE IN AN ANGRY OR RESENTFUL MOOD.**

GROUP TWO – FAMILIES

The people under this group are generally found in our families. The outstanding examples are the wives of the alcoholic, or in the case of the alcoholic women, the husbands. Then follow the mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, and often close friends whose lives we have "kept in turmoil because of our selfish and inconsiderate habits." We have been "like a tornado roaring our way through the lives of others," breaking hearts and "killing sweet relationships." The damage we have done to this group has been spread over many years. It will take many years to undo it.

Our approach technique is no problem here, unless homes have been broken up and separation makes reparation contacts impossible. Time may be required to effect reconciliation, but satisfactory adjustments are generally forthcoming.

Often this has been handled through correspondence. Direct contact is preferable in all cases wherever possible.

If the home is still intact the member's family is aware of his desire to treat his alcoholic illness and seldom fails to back him up in this purpose.

A new member needs the full understanding and cooperation of his family (if possible). His amends to them are most thorough and are made with greater ease when they realize what he is trying to do.

Sobriety for us is a blessing to the individuals in Group Two. As a rule, it is the greatest single amend we can make them, yet it is a partial amend that must be followed up with kind and thoughtful acts. Sobriety in itself is not enough. We must be attentive and considerate of the family as a whole. Harmony and cooperation must be established. Evidence of our love and a desire to become worthy of their respect will be most helpful. Irreparable damage is not unusual. When encountered it can only be offset by an obvious manifestation of our willingness to right the condition if it were possible. We lose no time in making the amends that are possible.

GROUP THREE – CREDITORS

"We do not dodge our creditors." The creditor usually knows about our drinking. If not, we should "lay our cards on the table." If payment is impossible, arrange the best deal we can. It may be a future date when we will start paying, or possibly we can pay even small amounts until we become financially able to increase them. The main idea is *to have an UNDERSTANDING*. We must be at ease in this connection, otherwise fear may return us to drinking.

GROUP FOUR – THE DECEASED

The harm we have done to departed relatives or friends is often a cause for self-condemnation. This should not be; it is a harmful practice that is unwise because there is no remedy for it.

We must realize the futility of remorse over wrongs we cannot amend. We do not allow such errors of the past to impair our future usefulness. We reason that the harm done would be partly offset by the new philosophy we are living. That in as much as we cannot reach the departed one, we can still make amends to

living relatives. If this is impossible, we resort to God in prayer, asking Him to see the willingness in our hearts and to forgive us in connection with these people.

Then there are *the amends we must daily make to God*. These become automatic; they are the requirements of each of the Twelve Steps. The AA program is ONE BIG AMEND broken up into twelve parts.

Alcoholism is our disease. It accounts for the imposition of injury to our families and friends; upon those loved ones who have departed. It accounts for our impaired physical condition; it has brought us irrational thinking, insane behavior, and spiritual illness.

We make amends to ourselves, to the personalities we were before becoming alcoholic, by understanding our disease, by illuminating our defects of character, by eliminating them from our lives, by intelligent physical care of our bodies, by restoration of our mental apparatus through sobriety, by treatment of our spiritual illness through recourse to understanding and practice of God's Will. The alcoholic's rehabilitation is contingent upon amends and will be *SO LONG AS HE LIVES*.

We often are inclined to clutter up our list with petty wrongs long forgotten and of no great importance. Amends of this sort would never end; they should be forgotten. Many of us have been uncertain about the advisability of making some amends. The yardstick for us in this connection is your conscience; if the wrong bothers you, it should undoubtedly be amended.

"Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all"

"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others"

Once our Eighth Step list is complete, we will sit down with our sponsor and review each name on the list to determine the following things. This will help us develop a clear plan for making amends in Step Nine.

1. Are amends called for in this situation?
 - a. Did it happen in the world, or did it only happen in my head?
 - b. Did I do something that harmed this person, or am I just feeling guilty about what I was thinking or feeling about them?
2. Will this amends cause this person, or someone else, harm?
 - a. We have no right to make amends that would cause someone further harm
 - b. We have no right to implicate anyone else in our amends
3. What type of amends are to be made?
 - a. General
 - i. Taking responsibility for behavior that we acknowledge caused harm, and making a commitment to not repeat that behavior
 - b. Financial
 - i. Paying back money or replacing property that we owe another person
 - c. Creative solutions
 - i. When direct amends cannot, or should not, be made. We devise a plan to try and bring our past act into balance with the universe
4. What form of amends are to be made?
 - a. Face to face
 - b. Letter
 - c. Phone call
 - d. Text or email
 - e. Living amends
5. What is the timing of amends to be made?
 - a. Now
 - b. Delayed
6. In what order should I make my amends?
 - a. Start with the easy ones that have been indicated to be done now.
 - b. Work through your list until you are finished. This may take years.

"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others"

1. Context: give a brief explanation of why you are talking to them.
 - a. Describe the cause, context, and consequences of the harm you cause them
 - b. Describe the behavior you are about to make a commitment to change
2. "I was wrong"
3. "You deserve better"
4. "I'm sorry"
 - a. Not always necessary, but people we are close to usually need to hear this
5. "To the best of my ability I will not repeat this behavior with you or anyone else"
 - a. This is the nature of a living amends
 - b. This is part of every amends, even the ones we can't make
6. Restitution: an attempt to return something to its original state
 - a. Repay the money you owe this person
 - b. Return, replace, or restore the property you owe this person
 - c. Commit to a course of action that you believe will make up for the harm you may have caused
 - d. Ask them, "What can I do to make this right?"
7. Thoroughness: ask them, "Is there anything I left out?" or "Is there anything you would like to say to me?"

There are two subjects that may come up in an amends; God and/or drinking. Whether these subjects are discussed depends on whether they are appropriate to the situation. We should be clear about our motives if we do bring them up. We should never use either as an excuse for bad past behavior, or as a reason why someone should not be mad at us presently. Here is what our book says about them.

BB p.76-77 – To some people we need not, and probably should not emphasize the spiritual feature on our first approach. . . . But our man is sure to be impressed with a sincere desire to set right the wrong. He is going to be more interested in a demonstration of good will than in our talk of spiritual discoveries.

BB p.77 – We don't use this as an excuse for shying away from the subject of God. When it will serve any good purpose, we are willing to announce our convictions with tact and common sense.

BB p.78 – We do not dodge our creditors. Telling them what we are trying to do, we make no bones about our drinking; they usually know it anyway, whether we think so or not. Nor are we afraid of disclosing our alcoholism on the theory it may cause financial harm.

"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others"

STEP NINE REVIEW – Key points in the readings

Into Action

PART I – BB p.78-79 *Financial amends*

1. Most alcoholics owe money
 - a. We do not dodge our creditors
 - b. We explain what we are trying to do
 - c. We do not hesitate to talk about our drinking
2. We must lose our fear of creditors no matter how far we have to go, for we are liable to drink if we are afraid to face them
 - a. We may have committed a crime
 - b. We may have stolen from our employers
 - c. We may be behind on child support or alimony
3. These financial amends take many different forms, below are some general guidelines which we often find helpful
 - a. Reminding ourselves that we have decided to go to any lengths to find a spiritual experience, we ask that we be given strength and direction to do the right thing
 - b. No matter what the personal consequences
 - c. We may lose our job or reputation, or face jail, but we are willing
 - d. We have to be willing, we must not shy away from anything

PART II – BB p.79-80 *If other people will be affected by our amends*

1. Usually, other people will be affected by our amends, before taking action which might implicate other people we secure their consent
 - a. If we have obtained their permission
 - b. Talked to our sponsor
 - c. Asked God to help
 - d. And if an amends is indicated, we have to go through with it, if a relapse is to be prevented

PART III – BB p.80-82 *Infidelity*

1. Drinking often leads to cheating on our partners. Whatever the situation, we usually have to do something about it.
2. If we are sure our partner does not know, should we tell them?
 - a. Not always, we think
3. If they know in a general way, should we tell them the details?

- a. We should always admit our fault
 - b. We should not reveal who the other person is
 - c. We should say we are sorry for any harm this has caused
 - d. We should commit that we will not repeat this behavior
 - e. More than that we cannot do
4. Though there may be justifiable exceptions to the guidelines above, and though we wish to lay down no rules of any sort, the experience of the fellowship is that this the best course of action

PART IV – BB p.82-83 *Family dynamics*

1. There is plenty we should do at home
 - a. Getting sober and staying sober is just the beginning of our amends to family
2. Selfish and inconsiderate habits have kept the home in turmoil, and have affected everyone
 - a. *"An illness of this sort...involves those about us in a way no other human sickness can...It engulfs all whose lives touch the sufferer's."* BB p.18
 - b. We feel an alcoholic is thoughtless and inconsiderate if they believe sobriety is enough
3. There is a long period of reconstruction ahead for the family
 - a. We must take the lead
 - b. A remorseful mumbling that we are sorry is not nearly enough
 - c. We should sit down with the family and honestly and openly discuss the past
 - d. We must be very careful not to criticize them
 - e. Their defects may be glaring, but the chances are that our own actions are partly responsible, so their faults are not discussed
 - f. We pray that we be shown the way of patience, tolerance, kindness, and love in dealing with those we have harmed

PART V – BB p.83 *A spiritual life*

1. The spiritual life is not a theory – *We have to live it*
 - a. We should not push our program on anyone doesn't ask for help, especially not our families
 - b. We should not talk endlessly about our programs
 - c. If we want to have a positive effect on anyone, we need to be patient, understanding that our behavior will convince them more than our words

PART VI – BB p.83 *Special cases and guiding principles*

1. There may be some wrongs we can never fully right
 - a. We don't worry about them if we can honestly say to ourselves that we would right them if we could
2. Some people cannot be seen
 - a. We can send them an honest letter
3. We don't delay if it can be avoided

4. We should be sensible, tactful, considerate, and humble
5. We should not appear to be excessively willing to serve or please the people we are making amends to
6. We should not beg for forgiveness

PART VII – BB p.83-84 *The Ninth Step Promises*

1. If we work hard at making the amends that we owe the people on our Eight Step lists, we will be amazed before we are halfway through
 - a. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness
 - b. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it
 - c. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace
 - d. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others
 - e. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear
 - f. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows
 - g. Self-seeking will slip away
 - h. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change
 - i. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us
 - j. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us
 - k. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves
2. These promises are happening in our lives – sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, but they will always materialize if we work for them

Step Nine, 12x12

PART I – p.83 *Types of amends*

1. The making of direct amends divides those we should approach into several classes
 - a. There will be those who ought to be dealt with just as soon as we become reasonably confident that we can maintain our sobriety
 - b. There will be those to whom we can make only partial restitution, lest complete disclosures do them or others more harm than good
 - c. There will be other cases where action ought to be deferred
 - d. There will be others in which, by the very nature of the situation, we shall never be able to make direct personal contact at all

PART II – p.83-84 *Our first amends*

1. Most of us begin making certain kinds of direct amends from the day we join AA
 - a. As soon as we tell our families that we are going to work the program, the process has begun
 - b. In this case there seldom any questions of timing or caution

2. At this initial phase of sobriety, we usually want to sit down with some member of the family admit all our faults, but we should not at this point
 - a. At this point, we should only make a general admission of our defects
 - b. Good judgment will suggest that we ought to take our time
 - c. The Steps should be done in order, if we're not on Step Nine, we should not be attempting to make amends
 - d. If we fumble a premature attempt at amends, we may spoil a later opportunity
 - e. We must remember that we cannot be in a rush to buy our own peace of mind at the expense of others
3. These same principles apply to the office or factory, but we may need to use more discretion than we did with the family.
 - a. We may not want to say anything for several weeks or longer
 - b. When we are stable in our sobriety, and the time has come to take Step Nine, we can go to employers and make our amends

PART III – p.85 *Staying on track*

1. Most of the time our amends will be received with a generous and positive response
 - a. This will often surprise us
 - b. It may create a desire to make more amends to get more approval from other people
2. In a few cases we may get a cool or skeptical reception
 - a. This may tempt us to argue, repeat ourselves, or feel the need to say it in a different way
3. But, if we have prepared ourselves well in advance, any response to our amends should not get us off track
4. After we make the easier amends on our lists, we may get such a sense of relief that we may want to stop there, avoiding the more difficult amends on our lists. **REMEMBER**
 - a. "It was agreed at the beginning we would go to any lengths for victory over alcohol." p.76 BB
 - b. "We will never get over drinking until we have done our utmost to straighten out the past." p.77 BB

PART IV – p.86 *The ongoing process of Step Nine*

1. As we grow into our sobriety and have been consistent with our behavior over a long period of time it is usually safe to talk openly with those we have harmed
 - a. These conversations can begin in a casual or natural way without much planning
 - b. But if no opportunity presents itself, we will need to go to the person and make the amends
 - c. We should not wallow in excessive remorse before those we have harmed
 - d. Amends should always be straightforward, honest, and generous
2. The only exceptions will be cases where our disclosure would cause serious harm to the one to whom we are making amends or other people

BIG BOOK P. 84-85

1. Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness, how long should this take?
2. How do we grow in understanding and effectiveness?
3. What is our code?
4. List five of the Step 10 promises from the bottom of p.84 and top of p.85?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
5. Rather than being cured of alcoholism, what are we given?
6. What is our vital sixth sense?

STEP TEN: 12 X 12

1. What are necessities for us?
2. What are the four types of inventories which are distinguished by there time factor?
3. Why is the emphasis on inventory so important?
4. What is the spiritual axiom we need to remember?
5. For the spot-check inventory, what four qualities will we need to possess?
6. Why is the "development of self-restraint" our first objective?
7. Other than disagreeable or unexpected problems, what else must we be on guard for?
8. What do A.A.'s need to do to keep on balance?
9. What constitutes an evening inventory?
10. What permeates human affairs from top to bottom?
11. What is the essence of character building and good living and what are the permanent assets we seek?

Excerpts from *The Little Red Book: The Original 1946 Edition*, by Ed W., reprinted by The Full Length History Press, P.85-91

Step Ten is one of the maintenance steps. Its purpose is to remind us that the moral defects we have recognized in selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear are still problems we daily encounter; that they remain a handicap to normal, happy living; that we should set up a perpetual inventory to guard against them; that we continue to freely admit our wrongs.

These defects are great sources of danger to us. They had much to do with the grief we once suffered from abnormal drinking. They can still return us to the Insanity of Alcoholism.

Step Four provided us with an inventory that served a definite purpose. It exposed character defects we formerly refused to recognize – defects that obstructed successful living. The necessity of knowing these faults is quite clear now but was not so obvious at the time our inventory was taken. . . Step Ten will safeguard this progress if we continue our personal inventories and promptly admit it when we are wrong.

Let us not forget, however, that alcoholics never seem to stay put. Our founders knew this from their own experiences. . . They knew that new character defects would appear and that many of the old ones would present themselves in disguised form. Hence the perpetual inventory to announce the advent of each old habit and a sort of mental sentry on guard to detect the new ones.

Interpretation of Step Ten does not allow us to accept the inventory taken in step Four as complete or final. . . The object of Step Ten is not only to continue our personal inventory, but also to check daily the progress we are making with each step in the A.A. program.

The second part of Step Ten, 'WHEN WE WERE WRONG, PROMPTLY ADMITTED IT,' is not to be taken lightly. . . Recognition of a wrong is not enough; verbal acknowledgement should follow. The requirements of our program are to make amends, if the wrong has harmed anyone. The inventory keeps us alert to our responsibility in this matter.

Do you remember in Step Five when we admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs? How we meditated [considered and faced] our shortcomings in Steps Six and Seven? How vital it was to our well-being at the time?

IT IS STILL VITAL. We haven't changed in that respect, and we never will. Alcoholism has been arrested, but we have not been cured.

Continue this inventory daily. When you are wrong understand the value of getting it off your chest at once. Don't be afraid to admit your mistakes. . . Remember that your NEW PERSONALITY IS NOT COMPATIBLE WITH MORAL DEFECTS OR CONCEALED ERRORS.

MY DAILY INVENTORY

WATCH FOR —X

STRIVE FOR — 0

Month _____ Year _____

LIABILITIES

ASSETS

Check Results DAILY in Proper Column

Day of the Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
Selfish																																	Interested in others
Dishonest																																	Honest
Frightened																																	Courageous
Inconsiderate																																	Considerate
Proud																																	Humble, seeking God's will
Greedy																																	Generous
Angry																																	Calm
Envious																																	Grateful
Slothful																																	Industrious
Gluttonous																																	Moderate
Impatient																																	Patient
Intolerant																																	Tolerant
Resentful																																	Forgiving
Hateful																																	Loving, concerned for others
Self-pitying																																	Self-forgiving
Self-justifying																																	Humble, seek God's will
Self-important																																	Modest
Suspicious																																	Trusting
Doubtful																																	Faithful

CHECK THE SCORE EVERY NIGHT

Eliminate the Negative

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Accentuate the Positive

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

Excerpts from the Transcripts of *Journey to Recovery with Joe M. and Charlie P.*, The Big Book Comes Alive, Recorded in Laughlin, NV, August 1988, free online PDF, p. 149

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

And it looked like if we just continued to take a little inventory and if we were wrong promptly admitted it, we would be doing the intended Step 10. And somehow or other we got the idea that we do that at night. Well, the nighttime portion is over in Step 11 it's not in Step 10. And Charlie and I have discussed this at great detail. We don't get in trouble at night in bed anymore. We need a daytime walking around Step. So, let's look at Step 10 in a different light.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 2 "This thought brings us to Step Ten, which suggests we continue to take personal inventory and continue to set right any new mistakes as we go along. We vigorously commenced this way of living as we cleaned up the past. We have entered the world of Spirit. "

J & C We've had a spiritual awakening.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 2 cont. "Our next function is to grow "

J & C To grow, not maintain, not stay where we are, but to grow.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 2 cont. "in understanding and effectiveness. This is not an overnight matter. It should continue for our lifetime. Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear. "

J & C What Step did we use to look at that in the first place. Anybody remember? Step 4? OK.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 2 cont. "When these crop up, we ask God at once to remove them."

J & C What Steps did we use there? 6 and 7. Alright.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 2 cont. "We discuss them with someone immediately "

J & C And what Step was that? 5. OK.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 2 cont. "and make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone."

J & C What Steps did we use there? 8 and 9.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 2 cont. "Then we resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help. Love and tolerance of others is our code."

J & C It looks to me like if we follow the directions in the book then we will be doing Steps 4,5,6,7,8 and 9 every day, on a daily basis, for the rest of our lives. I would defy anybody in this room to do 4,5,6,7,8 and 9 on a daily basis and stay the way you are. You absolutely cannot do that. I've got that little inventory sheet right up here in my head. Just as plain as day and you do to. And what I've trained myself to do if I get screwed up at 9:00 in the morning, used to be that I'd wait till I went to bed at night to do something about it. But when I do that, I've wasted another day in anger and worry and depression and etc. I finally trained myself that when I get screwed up about 9:00 I get off in the corner by myself. I say OK Charlie,

"Who are you mad at?"

"What did they do to you?"

"What part of self is affected?"

"What did you do, if anything, to set it in motion?"

"Which character defect has come back to the surface?"

I can't get upset unless one of those old character defects has come back.

Selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, frightened, or inconsiderate.

I can spot it just like that. I say "OK God you know I don't want to be this way. Please take this away from me." This selfishness or this dishonesty or whatever it is. I try to discuss it with someone immediately, preferably my sponsor. Sometimes I can sometimes I can't, but I try to. Then I make amends quickly if I hurt anybody in this process. 10-15-20 minutes it's all gone. The rest of the day is OK. I have wasted all the time that I want to waste in resentments and fear and anger and worry and depression and etc. I don't have to do that anymore. My God I love to feel good. I just don't want to waste any more time, what little I've got left in that other kind of jazz. I've got a tool here that works every time. And as you continue to take personal inventory as you continue to look and see who you are mad at and etc and etc and etc you're going to learn more about yourself. As you ask God to take these things away, they become less and less. As you discuss them with another human being, preferably our sponsor, we know more about ourselves. As we make amends quickly our relationship with the world and everybody in it becomes better and better. You can't do Step 10 the way the

book says and stay the way you are. You just can't. Your relationship with God, with yourself, and with your fellow man will become better and better and better and better. A new dimension of living that we never dreamed existed.

Now be careful. This is just like 6 and 7. This is the other changing Step. And if you stay fouled up you can't blame it on anybody else any longer. Cause if you're fouled up and you use Step 10 you can get rid of that stuff. But if you stay fouled up and you stay angry and worried and depressed and selfish and dishonest it's got to be because that's the way you want to be. I can't blame it on anybody or God or anything else any longer. And once in a great while I like to be screwed up. There's times I like to be mad. Cause when I'm mad, I can romp and stomp and raise hell with everybody around me all day long. And that gives me a comfortable feeling of superiority. And once in a while I just love it. There's times I like to be afraid. Cause I can use that to rationalize and justify not doing what I should do or just as importantly doing something I shouldn't do. But when I do that anymore I don't enjoy it like I used to. Somewhere about the middle of it I catch myself. And I say "OK idiot. You're doing it to yourself again". This thing really does work. And you'll continue to grow.

Now after Step 10 you've got another set of promises. Let's look at them for just a moment.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 3. "And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone—even alcohol. For by this time sanity will have returned."

J & C Remember it said, we came to believe that a power greater than ourselves would restore us to sanity? Well, we get our sanity back on page 84, by the way.

Big Book, p. 84, par. 3 cont. "For by this time sanity will have returned. We will seldom be interested in liquor. If tempted, we recoil from it as from a hot flame. We react sanely and normally and will find that this has happened automatically. We see that our new attitude toward liquor has been given us without any thought or effort on our part. It just comes! That is the miracle of it. We are not fighting it, neither are we avoiding temptation. We feel as though we had been placed in a position of neutrality--safe and protected. We have not even sworn off. Instead, the problem has been removed. It does not exist for us. We are neither cocky, nor are we afraid. That is our experience. That is how we react so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition."

J & C And again remember way back on page 45 it said that the main object of this book was to enable me to find a power greater than myself which would solve my problem. And somewhere between there and here we have the first 9 Steps or 10 Steps of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous. And one day into 6 or 7 or 8 months of sobriety and working these Steps I looked up one day and I said what happened to that desire of drink that I used to have. It's just gone. I mean it was just gone, seemingly without any effort on my part. I found the power and the power solved the problem. It was just gone. That's the miracle of it.

Now, the next to the last paragraph on page 85.

Big Book, p. 85, par. 2 "Much has already been said about receiving strength, inspiration, and direction from Him who has all knowledge and power. If we have carefully followed directions, we have begun to sense the flow of His Spirit into us. To some extent we have become God-conscious. We have begun to develop this vital sixth sense. But we must go further and that means more action."

J & C In other words what's happened to us in these Steps of 3 through 10 we've removed enough self-will that we are now becoming God conscious. And by now we are beginning to receive some directions from God. Now if the book says that God has all power and all direction, and I believe he does, the book says so. God dwells within each of us, and I believe he does, because the book says so. Then it really stands to reason that you and I have within ourselves all the knowledge and all the power that we could ever need to handle any situation which comes up in the future.

Daily Inventory.

When we retire at night, we constructively review our day.
Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid?

PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS OF SELF -WILL

- Selfish and Self-Seeking ☐
- Dishonesty ☐
- Frightened ☐
- Inconsideration ☐
- Pride ☐
- Greed ☐
- Lust ☐
- Anger ☐
- Envy ☐
- Sloth ☐
- Gluttony ☐
- Impatience ☐
- Intolerance ☐
- Resentment ☐
- Hate ☐
- Harmful Acts ☐
- Self-Pity ☐
- Self-Justification ☐
- Self-Importance ☐
- Self-Condernation ☐
- Suspicion ☐
- Doubt ☐

PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD'S WILL

- ☐ Interest In Others
- ☐ Honesty
- ☐ Courage
- ☐ Consideration
- ☐ Humility-Seeking God's Will
- ☐ Giving Or Sharing
- ☐ What We Can Do For Others
- ☐ Calmness
- ☐ Gratitude
- ☐ Take Action
- ☐ Moderation
- ☐ Patience
- ☐ Tolerance
- ☐ Forgiveness
- ☐ Love-Concern For Others
- ☐ Good Deeds
- ☐ Self-Forgetfulness
- ☐ Humility-Seek God's Will
- ☐ Modesty
- ☐ Self-Forgiveness
- ☐ Trust
- ☐ Faith

Date: _____
Day: _____

"Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it"

STEP TEN REVIEW – Key points in the readings

Into Action

PART I – BB p.84 *Practicing the Steps Daily*

1. We are not done with the Steps that we have taken up until this point
 - a. We need to continue to practice these Steps daily and clean up any new mistakes as we go along
2. We have grown and changed as a result of taking the Steps so far, our next job is to grow in understanding and effectiveness in practicing these Steps moving forward
 - a. This doesn't happen fast
 - b. It should continue for our lifetime
 - i. Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear [Step 4]
 - ii. When these crop up, we ask God at once to remove them [Step 7]
 - iii. We discuss them with someone immediately [Step 5]
 - iv. We make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone [Step 9]
 - v. Then we resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help [Step 12]
 - vi. Love and tolerance of others is our code [Step 10]

PART II – BB p.84-85 *Step 10 Promises*

1. If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we may receive additional promises such as these
 - a. We will have ceased fighting anything or anyone – even alcohol
 - b. For by this time sanity will have returned
 - i. Meaning, the mental obsession, which triggered the insanity of the first drink, will have left us
 - c. We will seldom be interested in liquor
 - d. If tempted by alcohol, we recoil from it as from a hot flame
 - i. Reference, "There is a complete failure of the kind of defense that keeps one from putting his hand on a hot stove." BB p.24
 - ii. And, "The alcoholic at certain times has no effective mental defense against the first drink. . .His defense must come from a Higher Power." BB p.43
 - iii. Also, "We vigorously commenced this way of living as we cleaned up the past. We have entered the world of the Spirit." BB p.84
 - iv. Meaning, because of the actions we have practiced in taking the Steps up to this point, we have been granted an effective mental defense against the first drink
 - e. We react sanely and normally, and we will find that this has happened automatically

- f. We see that our new attitude toward liquor has been given us without any thought or effort on our part. It just comes! That is the miracle of it
 - g. We are not fighting it, neither are we avoiding temptation.
 - h. We feel as though we had been placed in a position of neutrality – safe and protected
 - i. We have not even sworn off. Instead, the problem has been removed. It does not exist for us.
 - j. We are neither cocky nor are we afraid.
2. This is our experience, as long as we keep in fit spiritual condition

PART III – BB p.85 *Maintaining These Gifts*

- 1. It's easy to be lazy about practicing the Steps on a daily basis, and rely on our past action
 - a. We are headed for trouble if we do, for alcohol is a subtle foe
- 2. WE ARE NOT CURED OF ALCOHOLISM
 - a. What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition
 - i. Meaning, we can postpone the punishment of alcoholism if we continue to practice these principles daily
 - ii. "AA's Twelve Steps are a group of principles, spiritual in their nature, which, if practiced as a way of life, can expel the obsession to drink and enable the sufferer to become happily and usefully whole." 12x12 p.15
- 3. Every day is a day when we must carry the vision of God's will into all our activities
 - a. We can accomplish this with thoughts and prayers of surrender and service
 - i. "How can I best serve Thee – Thy will (not mine) be done."
 - ii. These are thoughts which must go with us constantly
 - iii. We can exercise our will power along this line all we wish. It is the proper use of the will

Step Ten, 12x12

PART I – p.88 *Daily Inventory Practice*

- 1. Step 10 is when we put our AA way of living to practical use every day
 - a. A continuous look at our assets and liabilities, and a real desire to learn and grow by this means, are necessities for us
- 2. The wise have always known that no one can make much of this life until
 - a. Self-searching becomes a regular habit
 - b. We are able to admit and accept what we find
 - c. We patiently and persistently try to correct what is wrong
- 3. Emotional hangovers are the direct result of excesses of negative emotion – anger, fear, jealousy, and the like
 - a. They prevent us from living serenely today and tomorrow

- b. They require an admission and correction of errors now
- 4. Our daily inventory practice enables us to settle with the past and make peace with ourselves, the conviction follows that tomorrow's challenges can be met as they come

PART II – p.89 *Types of Inventories*

- 1. All inventories are alike in principle, but the time factor does distinguish one from another
 - a. The spot-check inventory is to be taken at the time of the disturbance
 - b. The nightly inventory, for reviewing the events of the day just finished
 - c. The weekly or monthly inventory, either alone, with our sponsor, or spiritual adviser we review our progress since the last time
 - d. Annual or semiannual housecleaning – doing a Fourth Step and Fifth Step or going through all the Steps again
 - e. Occasional retreats away from our daily lives where we can quiet down for a day or two of undisturbed self-overhaul and meditation
- 2. The emphasis on inventory in AA is heavy only because a great many of us have never really acquired the habit of accurate self-appraisal
 - a. Once we establish a practice of inventory in our daily lives, it will become so interesting and valuable that the time it takes won't be missed

PART III – p.90 *Spot-check Inventory*

- 1. It is a spiritual axiom that every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong WITH US
 - a. There are almost no exceptions to this rule
 - b. Justifiable anger is a dangerous exception for an alcoholic
- 2. Few people have been more victimized by resentments than have we alcoholics
 - a. "This business of resentment is infinitely grave. We found that it is fatal, ... If we were to live, we had to be free of anger" BB p.66
 - b. Other kinds of disturbances – jealousy, envy, self-pity, or hurt pride – did the same thing
- 3. A spot-check inventory taken during such disturbances can be of very great help in quieting stormy emotion
 - a. A spot-check inventory is intended to deal with things as they happen
 - b. Long-standing problems should be put off, when possible, to times deliberately set aside for that purpose – a Fourth Step, or a meeting with your sponsor

PART III – p.91 *Inventory Guidelines*

- 1. In all situations where we are disturbed, we will need
 - a. Self-restraint
 - b. Honest analysis of what is involved
 - c. A willingness to admit when the fault is ours
 - d. An equal willingness to forgive when the fault is elsewhere

2. We should not beat ourselves up if we exhibit old behavior when trying to practice these things
 - a. These disciplines are not easy
 - b. We shall look for progress, not perfection
3. Our first objective will be the development of self-restraint – this is a top priority
 - a. When we speak or act impulsively or without consideration of the consequences, the ability to be reasonable and tolerant evaporates on the spot
 - b. Nothing pays off like restraint of tongue and pen (text and email too)
 - c. We should train ourselves to step back and think
 - d. We can neither think nor act to good purpose until the habit of self-restraint has become automatic
 - e. We need to remember that self-restraint is not just for when we are upset, we must be quite as careful when we begin to achieve some measure of importance or success
 - i. Blinded by prideful self-confidence, we are apt to play the big shot
 - ii. We need to remember that God got us sober, and they deserve the credit

PART IV – p.92 *A New Perspective*

1. "Finally, we begin to see that all people, including ourselves, are to some extent emotionally ill as well as frequently wrong, and then we approach true tolerance and see what real love for our fellows actually means. It will become more and more evident as we go forward that it is pointless to become angry, or get hurt by people who, like us, are suffering from the pains of growing up." 12x12 p.92
 - a. When a person offended we said to ourselves, "This is a sick person, How can I be helpful to them? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done." BB p.67
2. Whenever we fail any of these people, we can promptly admit it – to ourselves always, and to them also, when the admission would be helpful.

PART V – p.93 *End of Day Inventory*

1. Inventory-taking is not just about the negative, and we give ourselves credit for the things we have done well each day.
2. Regarding the items or issues which deal with the negative, we should carefully examine motive for each thought or act which appears to be wrong
 - a. We need to recognize that we did act or think badly
 - b. Try to visualize how we might have done better
 - c. Resolve with God's help to carry these lessons over into tomorrow
 - d. And make any amends we might owe
3. We must be carefully not to rationalize and justify behavior which is really wrong
 - a. Remembering the spiritual axiom, that every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong WITH US

Excerpts from *The Little Red Book: The Original 1946 Edition*, by Ed W., reprinted by The Full-Length History Press, P.93-106

Knowledge of the need of this step is based on the past experience of A.A. members, *some of whom have demonstrated the ability to forget that they HAVE NOT been CURED OF ALCOHOLISM*. They have mistaken recovery for cure, so after a few months of sobriety have considered practice of the A.A. philosophy unnecessary. They have overlooked the fact that the human mind was not constituted to remember the pain and sorrow suffered from disease. They take their changed personalities TOO MUCH FOR GRANTED, assuming that once acquired they will always stay with them.

When complacency develops, we are apt to forget the part that God has played in effecting our rehabilitation. We overlook the fact that our nervous systems are still those of alcoholics. We seem to forget that as alcoholics we are susceptible to moods and emotions that we formerly appeased with alcohol. Complacency obscures the knowledge that our recovery from alcoholism was granted by a POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES, that without contact with God, reversion to our old low physical and spiritual levels is probable.

Cooperation with a POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES has pulled us out of the alcoholic rut. Step Eleven is a maintenance step that was planned to keep us out and make us stay out.

It keeps us spiritually active and in tune with God. It insures against the dulling of inspiration as our alcoholic problems diminish.

Invariably our trouble FIRST STARTS WITH NEGLECT OF PRAYER and matures when we completely abandon conscious contact with God and service to others.

Our realization of God's help in the past impresses us with the fact that it can be utilized to even better use in the future. A sure way of increasing this help and expanding our contact with God is possible through simple prayers of sincere appreciation.

Prayers of appreciation are not all that we indulge in, but they are unselfish and are the quickest means of bringing us into HIS presence. Contacting God with thanks and appreciation will supply fast inspiration that goes a long way toward improving our understanding and nearness to Him. Such contacts renew our faith and keep us active.

Our understanding of God's will IS TO BE FOUND IN OUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS OUR FELLOW MEN AND IN THE TREATMENT WE ACCORD THEM.

Daily practice of the Alcoholics Anonymous program keeps us close to the spiritual and physical needs of humanity. WE ARE, TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY AND KNOWLEDGE, GAINING AN UNDERSTANDING OF GOD'S WILL THROUGH THE SERVICE WE RENDER OTHERS.

Excerpt from *Two Way Prayer: A Lost Tool for Practicing the 11th Step*, by Bill Wigmore, BA and Matthew Stanford PhD, printed in the ALCOHOLISM TREATMENT QUARTERLY 2017, vol. 35, no. 1, p.75

Two Way Prayer (TWP) adapted for contemporary use

A 1939, two-page Oxford Group pamphlet titled "Listening to God" and published in Akron, Ohio, provides a helpful model for synthesizing the Group's beliefs and prayer practices (Paton, 2000, pp. 305–306). The pamphlet summarizes some of the Group's core beliefs: that God is everywhere, can do anything, cares for all, and will guide those truly seeking to know His will. The pamphlet then notes the conditions required for hearing God's Voice: to be quiet and still, to listen and be honest, and to test each thought by the standards of absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness, and love. When a recorded thought fails to meet any part of that test, they believed, it could be discarded because it could not have originated with God.

One of the authors incorporated these general directions into a two-page, contemporary set of instructions for those engaged in 12-Step recovery. Additional items included were, adding simple breathing exercises, praying in a set place daily, allowing freedom to address God by whatever name one is comfortable using (e.g., God, Lord, Heavenly Father/Mother, My Spirit Guide), writing "a very honest" question to God reflecting the practitioner's emotional state and immediate needs at the time of prayer, for example, "Dear Spirit, I've tried getting clean and sober before, please help me see what I need to do that's different this time." The "question" places each prayer session within the context of the continued inventory practice as recommended by AA's 10th Step.

Another important difference in the contemporary TWP model that can be helpful for individuals without a religious conception of spirituality is the incorporation of C. J. Jung's work on active imagination [12x12, Step 11, p.100; 'constructive imagination'] into the TWP practice (Johnson, 1986, pp. 137–138). Jungian analyst Robert Johnson (1986) writes:

The coming together of conscious and unconscious mind on the common ground of the imaginal plane gives us an opportunity to break down some of the barriers that separate the ego from the unconscious, to set up a genuine flow of communication between the two levels of the psyche, to resolve some of our neurotic conflicts with the unconscious, and thus to learn more about who we are as individuals. (p. 25)

Use of active imagination in prayer can open a powerful source of inner healing for individuals in recovery by encouraging a more conscious and affirming connection with their higher power. The model encourages practitioners to write much as they might approach a creative writing exercise, not concerning themselves whether the voice they hear in their minds is their own or belongs to another.

HOW TO LISTEN TO GOD

These are a few simple suggestions for people who are willing to make an experiment. You can discover for yourself the most important and practical thing any human being can ever learn—how to be in touch with God.

All that is needed is the willingness to try it honestly. Every person who has done this consistently and sincerely has found that it really works.

Before you begin, look over these fundamental points. They are true and are based on the experience of thousands of people.

1. God is alive. He always has been and He always will be.
2. God knows everything.
3. God can do anything.
4. God can be everywhere—all at the same time. (These are the important differences between God and us human beings.)
5. God is invisible—we can't see Him or touch Him—but God is here. He is with you now. He is beside you. He surrounds you. He fills the room or the whole place where you are right now. He is in you now. He is in your heart.
6. God cares very much for you. He is interested in you. He has a plan for your life. He has an answer for every need and problem you face.
7. God will tell you all that you need to know. He will not always tell you all that you want to know.
8. God will help you do anything that He asks you to do.
9. Anyone can be in touch with God, anywhere and at any time, if the conditions are obeyed.

These are the conditions:

- To be quiet and still
- To listen
- To be honest about every thought that comes
- To test the thoughts to be sure that they come from God
- To obey

So, with these basic elements as a background, here are specific suggestions on how to listen to God:

1. *Take Time*

Find some place and time where you can be alone, quiet and undisturbed. Most people have found that the early morning is the best time. Have with you some paper and pen or pencil.

2. *Relax*

Sit in a comfortable position. Consciously relax all your muscles. Be loose. There is no hurry. There needs to be no strain during these minutes. God cannot get through to us if we are tense and anxious about later responsibilities.

3. *Tune In*

Open your heart to God. Either silently or aloud, just say to God in a natural way that you would like to find His plan for your life—you want His answer to the problem or situation that you are facing just now. Be definite and specific in your request.

4. *Listen*

Just be still, quiet, relaxed and open. Let your mind go "loose." Let God do the talking. Thoughts, ideas, and impressions will begin to come into your mind and heart. Be alert and aware and open to every one.

5. *Write!*

Here is the important key to the whole process. Write down everything that comes into your mind. Everything. Writing is simply a means of recording so that you can remember later. Don't sort out or edit your thoughts at this point.

Don't say to yourself:

- This thought isn't important;
- This is just an ordinary thought;
- This can't be guidance;
- This isn't nice;
- This can't be from God;
- This is just me thinking, etc.

Write down everything that passes through your mind:

- Names of people;
- Things to do;
- Things to say;
- Things that are wrong and need to be made right.

Write down everything:

Good thoughts—bad thoughts;
Comfortable thoughts—uncomfortable thoughts;
“Holy” thoughts—“unholy” thoughts;
Sensible thoughts—“crazy” thoughts.

Be Honest! Write down everything. A thought comes quickly, and it escapes even more quickly unless it is captured and put down.

6. Test

When the flow of thoughts slows down, stop. Take a good look at what you have written. Not every thought we have comes from God. So we need to test our thoughts. Here is where the written record helps us to be able to look at them.

- Are these thoughts completely honest, pure, unselfish and loving?
- Are these thoughts in line with our duties to our family, to our country?
- Are these thoughts in line with our understanding of the teachings found in our spiritual literature?

7. Check

When in doubt and when it is important, what does another person who is living two-way prayer think about this thought or action? More light comes in through two windows than one. Someone else who also wants God's plan for our lives may help us to see more clearly.

Talk over together what you have written. Many people do this. They tell each other what guidance has come. This is the secret of unity. There are always three sides to every question—your side, my side, and the right side. Guidance shows us which is the right side—not who is right, but what is right.

8. Obey

Carry out the thoughts that have come. You will only be sure of guidance as you go through with it. A rudder will not guide a boat until the boat is moving. As you obey, very often the results will convince you that you are on the right track.

9. Blocks?

What if I don't seem to get any definite thoughts? God's guidance is as freely available as the air we breathe. If I am not receiving thoughts when I listen the fault is not God's.

Usually it is because there is something I will not do: something wrong in my life that I will not face and make right;

a habit or indulgence I will not give up;
a person I will not forgive;
a wrong relationship in my life I will not give up;
a restitution I will not make;
something God has already told me to do that I will not obey.

Check these points and be honest. Then try listening again.

10. Mistakes

Suppose I make a mistake and do something in the name of God that isn't right? Of course we make mistakes. We are humans with many faults. However, God will always honor our sincerity.

He will work around and through every honest mistake we make. He will help us make it right. But remember this! sometimes when we do obey God, someone else may not like it or agree with it. So when there is opposition, it doesn't always mean you have made a mistake. It can mean that the other person doesn't want to know or to do what is right.

Suppose I fail to do something that I have been told and the opportunity to do it passes? There is only one thing to do. Put it right with God. Tell Him you're sorry. Ask Him to forgive you, then accept His forgiveness and begin again. God is our Father—He is not an impersonal calculator. He understand us far better than we do.

11. Results

We never know what swimming is like until we get down into the water and try. We will never know what this is like until we sincerely try it.

Every person who has tried this honestly finds that a wisdom, not their own, comes into their minds and that Power greater than human power begins to operate in their lives. It is an endless adventure.

There is a way of life, for everyone, everywhere. Anyone can be in touch with the living God, anywhere, anytime, if we fulfill His conditions:

*When man listens, God Speaks.
When man obeys, God Acts.*

This is the law of prayer.

God's plan for this world goes forward through the lives of ordinary people who are willing to be governed by Him.

John E. Batterson

"Before Retiring at Night"

(Big Book, page 86)

Constructively review your day, answering these questions:

1. Was I resentful, selfish, dishonest, or afraid?
2. Do I owe an apology?
3. Have I kept something to myself which should be discussed with another person at once?
4. Was I kind and loving toward all?
5. What could I have done better?
6. Was I thinking of myself most of the time?
7. Was I thinking of what I could do for others, of what I could pack into the stream of life?

Answer these questions in a simple, realistic manner, without judging yourself into worry, remorse, or morbid reflection which would diminish your usefulness to others.

A prayer, with these thoughts, is suggested:

"GOD, I ASK YOUR FORGIVENESS, AND YOUR GUIDANCE AS TO WHAT CORRECTIVE MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN."

Meditation is also suggested:

Do a relaxation exercise, clearing your mind of your own thoughts.

The answers will come as to what corrective measures should be taken, if your motive is usefulness to others.

"Morning Meditation"

(Big Book, pages 86 and 87)

On awakening, consider your plans for the twenty-four hours ahead:

1. Before beginning, use a prayer such as this:

"GOD, I ASK THAT YOU DIRECT MY THINKING, ESPECIALLY THAT IT BE DIVORCED FROM SELF-PITY, DISHONEST OR SELF-SEEKING MOTIVES."

2. For facing indecision in knowing what course to take:

"GOD, GIVE ME INSPIRATION, AN INTUITIVE THOUGHT, OR A DECISION."

Do a short relaxation exercise, followed by a silent meditation, clearing your mind of your own thoughts. The answers will come when your thinking is cleared of wrong motives.

3. Conclude with a prayer with these thoughts:

"GOD, SHOW ME ALL THROUGH THE DAY WHAT MY NEXT STEP IS TO BE. GIVE ME WHATEVER IS NEEDED TO TAKE CARE OF SUCH PROBLEMS. I ASK ESPECIALLY FOR FREEDOM FROM SELF-WILL, THAT I BE GIVEN WHATEVER IS NECESSARY TO HELP OTHERS."

4. Also follow the practice of your denomination, or memorize a few set prayers emphasizing these principles. There are also many helpful books.

A MINI-VACATION

Here is a life-saving stress reducer which takes only a few minutes:

1. Sit comfortably in a chair.
2. Close your eyes, gently please.
3. Notice your breathing. Do not try to control it; just notice it.
4. Say "Let Go", or "Thy Will", or "I Am", as you inhale.
Say "Let Go", or "Thy Will", or "I Am", as you exhale.

Say "Let Go", or "Thy Will", or "I Am", as you inhale.
Say "Let Go", or "Thy Will", or "I Am", as you exhale.

.....and do this for about one minute.

5. Begin to feel the heaviness in your feet, your legs, your torso, your arms and your head.
6. Go to your favorite place, i.e., the beach, the mountains, a lake, and be there for a minute or two.
7. Now come back by slowly counting from 10 to 1 and slowly open your eyes.
8. Now get up slowly and resume your activity.

TOTAL BODY RELAXATION

10 Minutes

1. Take three deep slow breaths to begin relaxation.
2. Begin with hands and arms.
 - Dominant hand – make a fist, noting feelings in palm, back of hand, wrist and forearm.
 - Dominant bicep – touch palm to shoulder, resisting motion, keeping hand relaxed.
 - Non-dominant hand and bicep – repeat same as above.
3. Head
 - Forehead – lift eyebrows as high as you can.
 - Cheeks and nose – squint eyes and wrinkle nose.
 - Jaws – clench teeth, pull corners of mouth back.
 - Lips and tongue – keep teeth separated, press lips together and press tongue on roof of mouth.
 - Neck and throat – touch chin to chest, resisting movement.
4. Upper torso
 - Shoulders and upper back – pull shoulders up and back.
 - Chest – inhale to count of three, exhale to count of three.
 - Stomach and abdomen – tense stomach by pulling in or pushing out.
5. Lower torso
 - Thighs and buttocks – press knees together, squeeze buttocks together to lift off seat.
 - Calves – pull toes up or point down.
 - Feet – curl toes under.

Tighten muscles to count of three, then relax. Repeat.

Make sure muscles do not cramp.

Notice the difference between contraction and cramping.

- Avoid distraction. •

"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

STEP ELEVEN REVIEW – Key points in the readings

Into Action

PART I – BB p.85-86 *Prayer and Meditation*

1. Step Eleven suggests prayer and meditation.
 - a. It works, if we have the proper attitude and work at it
 - b. Here are some definite and valuable suggestions
 - i. Specific, clear-cut instructions that are worth a great deal

PART II – BB p.86 *When we retire at night*

1. Before going to sleep, we review our day in a useful way
 - a. We look for the things we may have done wrong
 - b. For secrets we are keeping to ourselves
 - c. For responsibilities we are avoiding
 - d. Consider how much we thought about ourselves, versus how much we thought of others
 - e. We also look for things we have done well
2. When we are done, we ask for forgiveness and strength to do better tomorrow

PART III – BB p.86-87 *Upon Awakening*

1. First thing in morning we consider our plans for the day; meditation-to consider thoughtfully
 - a. We ask our higher power to direct our thinking
 - i. Especially that it is not selfish, dishonest, or based in self-pity
 - ii. Asking that it be considerate, kind, and useful
2. In thinking about our day, we may be confused about what to do, and what not to do, or what we should do first
 - a. We ask God for clarity in the form of an intuitive thought or decision
 - i. We relax and take it easy
 - ii. We don't struggle
 - b. We are surprised how well this works when we practice it regularly
3. After this period of meditation, we pray that we be shown all day what we should be doing next, and that we be given whatever we need to do it.
 - a. "Praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out." BB p.59
4. We don't have to do this morning meditation alone, and we can include practices from our individual faiths alongside this morning meditation

PART IV – BB p.87-88 *Throughout the Day*

1. As we go through the day we may get upset or confused. At that moment, we stop and again “ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don’t struggle.” BB p.86
2. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show
 - a. “We had to quit playing God. It didn’t work.” BB p.62
 - b. We need to renew our surrender throughout the day by praying something like
 - i. Thy will be done
 - ii. Your will not my will
 - iii. I surrender
 - iv. Standing by, waiting for clarity
3. By practicing these things, we become much more efficient and gain peace and serenity

PART V – BB p.88 *Epilogue*

1. It works – it really does
2. We alcoholics are undisciplined. So, we let God discipline us in the simple way we have just outlined
 - a. We are selfish, willful, and unruly, so we let God help us become courteous, respectful, and useful
 - b. “Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us.” BB p.77

Step Eleven, 12x12

PART I – p.96-98 *Prayer and Meditation*

1. Prayer and meditation are our principal means of conscious contact with God
2. As our sober lives get busy, we often tend to let up on our prayer and meditation
 - a. I’m doing well without it, why do I need to continue practicing it?
3. Almost any AA member who practices prayer and meditation consistently will say that the results they got convinced them that prayer and meditation work and made their lives better
 - a. We have found that this can happen to anyone who gives it a fair trial
4. When we turn away from meditation and prayer, we deprive our minds, our emotions, and our intuitions of vitally needed support
 - a. As the body can fail its purpose for lack of nourishment, so can the soul

PART II – p.98 *Inventory, Prayer, and Meditation*

1. Self-examination, meditation, and prayer can each be practiced individually, but when they are practiced in relation to each other, the result is an unshakable foundation for life
2. We need to always keep in mind that maintenance of our spiritual condition will be based on our daily seeking what God’s will is for us, not on whether we find God
 - a. God may remain a mystery, but the results of the action will be tangible

PART III – p.98 *Inventory*

1. Self-searching, in the form of our inventory work, allows us to see ourselves, take action based on what we find, and ask for the help to change
2. It is critical in the development of that kind of humility that makes it possible for us to receive God's help
 - a. It is the starting point, not the destination

PART IV – p.98-102 *Meditation*

1. Where do we begin if we don't know anything about meditation?
 - a. We should start by selecting something spiritually based to read
 - i. A prayer
 - ii. The Daily Reflection for that day
 - iii. Pages 85-88 in the Big Book
 - iv. Any short spiritually-centered text
 - b. We should read what we have chosen slowly, and multiple times
 - c. We should drop all resistance to what we are reading, try to settle into its meaning
 - d. We should relax and settle into the moment.
 - e. Meditation helps us to envision our spiritual objective before we try to move toward it
2. When our minds revolt, and our thinking disrupts the process, we should consider a few things
 - a. When drinking or using, we used to seek out a state of mind that freed us from reality and the present moment
 - b. Even in sobriety, don't we like to daydream or drift off mentally
 - c. Are we now willing to try and learn how to use this ability to quiet our active-conscious mind and put it to beneficial use?
3. Returning to the process of meditation, we try and settle into a state of mind where we can focus undisturbed on constructive imagination
 - a. We consider the deeper meaning of what we have read, and how it might come into existence
 - b. This should be followed by a good look at where we stand now, and a further look at what might happen in our lives were we able to move closer to the principles we have been meditating on
4. Meditation is a practice that becomes more beneficial the more we practice it
 - a. It is a lifelong journey that is essentially an individual adventure
 - b. We can follow an existing method or figure it out on our own
 - c. The point is always to improve our conscious contact with God
5. Meditation is intensely practical, one of the first benefits is emotional balance

PART V – p.102-103 *Prayer*

1. Prayer is the raising of the heart and mind to our Higher Power
 - a. In this sense it includes meditation
2. Having opened connection with God, practicing the methods outlined above, we try to ask for those right things of which we and others are in the greatest need
 - a. Knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out
3. In the morning, we think of the day ahead of us
 - a. We ask that throughout the day that God provide us the best understanding of His will that we can have for that day
 - b. And that we be given the grace by which we may carry it out
4. Throughout the day, we can pause when challenged or decisions need to be made, and renew our commitment to our morning prayer by saying, "your will, not my will"
 - a. If we are very upset, then repeating a phrase like this over and over to ourselves will often help us move past the moment and calm down

PART VI – p.103-104 *Problems with Prayer*

1. We should be careful not to ask for specific answers to specific questions from God
 - a. In these cases, the thoughts that seem to come from God are not answers at all, but unconscious rationalizations
2. Another situation we should avoid is praying for specific outcomes to situations
 - a. Such prayers assume that we know what God's will is in advance
3. It is AA's experience that particularly in these cases we ought to pray that God's will, whatever it may be, be done for others as well as for ourselves

PART VII – p.104-105 *Promises from Prayer*

1. The experience of AA regarding the consistent use of prayer often provide these promises
 - a. All those who have persisted have found strength not ordinarily their own
 - b. Wisdom beyond their usual capability
 - c. Have increasingly found a peace of mind which can stand firm in the face of difficulty
2. Almost any experienced AA will report how their lives have taken remarkable and unexpected turns for the better when they tried to improve their conscious contact with God
3. They will also report how that even when there were times of grief, loss, or suffering, new lessons for living were learned, and added resources of courage were discovered

PART VIII – p.105 *Promises from Meditation and Prayer*

1. Perhaps one of the greatest rewards of meditation and prayer is the sense of belonging that comes to us, when we experience these promises
 - a. We no longer live in a completely hostile world
 - b. We are no longer lost, frightened, and purposeless
 - c. We are no longer deeply disturbed by all the troubles of human affairs in this world
 - d. We know that God lovingly watches over us
 - e. We know that when we turn to Him, all will be well with us

Excerpt from *Understanding and Practicing Step Twelve*, by Justin Kunst, Amethyst Recovery Center, 2017, amethystrecovery.org

Understanding and Practicing Step Twelve

Now, we must take the principles we learned in previous steps and embody them on a daily basis. This may sound a bit like Step Ten and Step Eleven. That's because, much like those steps, Step Twelve is a way of life. It is the point at which we put *all* of our principles to the test every day. And, perhaps most importantly, it is the point at which we begin wearing these principles on our sleeves. Because while improving our own lives is important, service work is a key component of spiritual growth. Don't forget that the Big Book has an entire chapter ("Working With Others") dedicated solely to our work with other alcoholics. This chapter isn't just errant service work—it's the precise work we should be doing in Step Twelve.

Step Twelve might feel far away for any newcomers reading this simply to learn more about the Twelve Steps. And even for those who are just now reaching the Twelfth Step, it might sound like a pretty tall order. But in many ways, Step Twelve is the end of our 12 step recovery program. Because it was never *just* about quitting drugs and alcohol. Sobriety is about becoming a better person. When we learn to spend every day embodying spiritual principles and helping others, we will know that we are truly good people. This is when our journey becomes more wonderful than ever.

What Is Step Twelve?

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

After spending some time in Step Eleven, many recovering addicts and alcoholics find a new sense of calm. They feel at peace with who they are, and confident that they are growing in recovery. This is when they know that they are ready for Step Twelve.

There's no point in discussing *how* the spiritual awakening occurs. Spiritual experiences are like snowflakes—some seem vaguely alike, but they're all unique in many ways. But when you sense a new freedom in your heart and feel good about being sober today, it's usually a sign that you're on the right track.

Leading by example might be one way in which you can carry the message to other alcoholics. Attend a meeting and talk to the newcomers. Even if you *don't* talk to them, they might get something out of seeing you there. Your attendance shows them that there are others like them. And your willingness to listen as they share their stories will show them that there are people who truly care. Newcomers need this kind of support. Those who have their feet back under them should be the first ones to offer it.

Step Twelve also talks about exhibiting the principles of recovery when managing *all* of our affairs. This part might sound particularly difficult, not to mention confusing. Does this mean we shouldn't choose between Coke and Diet Coke without calling our sponsor? Do we have to pray and meditate before literally every decision? Does our daily inventory for Step Ten need to

cover every little step we took throughout the day? These concerns are a bit overblown, but we nonetheless hear people use almost these exact words to describe their reservations concerning recovery. We'd like to put a few of those to rest.

What It Means

Practicing the principles in all of our affairs basically means that we don't forget about them. Some of us are prone to reach Step Twelve and think "that's it, all done now." The 12&12 talks about that issue here:

*"We temporarily cease to grow because we feel satisfied that there is no need for **all** of A.A.'s Twelve Steps for us. We are doing fine on a few of them. Maybe we are doing fine on only two of them, the First Step and that part of the Twelfth where we 'carry the message.' In A.A. slang, that blissful state is known as 'two-stepping.' And it can go on for years."*

Think of a two-stepper as someone who cares about sobriety, but often lets their principles fall by the wayside. They might stay sober for years, but they still harbor resentments and almost never make amends. Some of these people openly admit to their own selfishness, wearing it on their chest like a badge of honor. These people sometimes have the best of intentions. They simply aren't working some aspects of their recovery. But even if they mean well, two-steppers can be dangerous if certain types of newcomers take them as role models.

The Twelve Steps provide us with numerous learning opportunities. In Step Twelve, we begin to think about these daily instead of acting on impulse. Because, as noted by the 12&12, a lack of inhibitions can be dangerous to our recovery:

"If we place instincts first, we have got the cart before the horse; we shall be pulled backward into disillusionment. But when we are willing to place spiritual growth first—then and only then do we have a real chance."

Those who embody the spiritual awakening of Step Twelve are those who consider their actions. They treat their families with care and put their recovery before their dreams of wealth and power. A true twelve-stepper knows that material security is not the answer to fear. Instead, the answer to fear is to continue living a life of principle. Because any real twelve-stepper knows that a principled life is far more rewarding than any short-term, synthetic source of happiness. Step Twelve is the point at which we no longer seek such false panaceas. We don't need drugs and alcohol so that we can pretend to be happy. In fact, we don't need to pretend at all. We simply *are*. And even when times get rough, we can remember to express gratitude for all we've gained in sobriety.

How to Practice

The secret of Step Twelve is that we already know how to practice. Step One taught us to embrace acceptance rather than denial or false pride. We learned in Step Two and Step Three that the key to doing this is spirituality. Then, Step Four and Step Five taught us the importance of honesty in our moral inventory. In Step Six and Step Seven, we looked back on our character defects and resolved to have them removed. We then confronted our past by

making amends in Step Eight and Step Nine. When we reached Step Ten, we began cataloguing our inventory daily. Then in Step Eleven, we sought to begin prioritizing our spiritual growth in the pursuit of true enlightenment. Step Twelve is simply the point at which we put these puzzle pieces together to form a new way of life for ourselves.

In other words, Step Twelve is about growing up. We don't simply help others because it helps our recovery, but because it is the right thing to do. Instead of feeling like a chore, service work feels like a worthwhile responsibility. If we don't see that we have responsibilities to those around us, we cannot truly claim to have embraced the Twelfth Step. And, as noted in the 12&12, those of us who live spiritually will almost certainly find ourselves with new responsibilities.

"When by devoted service to family, friends, business, or community we attract wide-spread affection and are sometimes singled out for posts of greater responsibility and trust, we try to be humbly grateful and exert ourselves the more in a spirit of love and service. True leadership, we find, depends upon able example and not upon vain displays of power or glory."

Eventually, those who practice Step Twelve should consider sponsorship. But in truth, every moment we spend on the right path allows us to carry the message. People see us, even when we think nobody's watching. Will they feel our stress, or will they bask in our joy? If we carry these principles with us wherever we go, it will often be the latter.

Never let anyone convince you that AA and NA are simply groups of people who talk about their problems. Certainly, addicts and alcoholics require a bit of troubleshooting. But when we reach the Twelfth Step, we don't need to focus on the problem so much. Because in most cases, people will look at us as evidence of the solution. When we reach this point, we will truly be a part of something great. Because, more than anything else, Step Twelve is the path to experiencing true fellowship. The opportunity to be a part of something bigger only serves to enhance our recovery, making it feel sweeter than ever. We should all be so lucky to experience this wonder. And we all can—as long as we stay sober just one day at a time.

Excerpts from *The Little Red Book: The Original 1946 Edition*, by Ed W., reprinted by The Full-Length History Press, P.93-106

Step Twelve is exacting to a high degree, specifically pointing out that a spiritual awakening is possible *only* if we have been living each of the preceding steps, and then suggesting that we draw from our experience and knowledge an objective message which we convey to other interested alcoholics. It further advises us to continue the Alcoholics Anonymous program as a "Design for Living," as our future "Way of Life."

Interpretation and practical application of Step Twelve is simply arrived at by separate considerations of the three divisions into which this step falls.

FIRST DIVISION

"Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps"

The new member is slow to recognize a spiritual experience in his new "Way of Life;" in fact, the terms "Spiritual Experience" or "Awakening" often confuse him by diverting his thought from intended A.A. usage to halos, sprouting wings, religion, mystic phenomena, or drastic emotional upheavals.

Reference to pages 567 and 568, in Appendix 2 of the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous," clarify the meanings of these spiritual terms, explaining that REVOLUTIONARY CHARACTER CHANGES ARE NOT COMMON, but that as we do enlarge upon our spiritual concepts we can develop a God consciousness that will entirely change our reaction toward life and our attitude toward our fellow men.

In arriving at a true picture of this A.A. metamorphosis it is helpful to reflect upon our spiritual experience as steppingstones to the NEW PERSONALITIES we gain by daily practice of the Twelve Steps.

The restraint we exercise with regard to resentment, anger, criticism; the amends we make; our sincerity, honesty, tolerance, these are all possible because of our willingness to accept the spiritual concepts of our program.

Sobriety in itself is a miracle in our case. Looking back over our lives for the past few months we concede a decided improvement in our moral viewpoint. We have developed God-conscious personalities sufficient to effect our recovery from alcoholism. The changes that have made our recovery possible can be identified as spiritual experiences. They have altered seemingly impossible circumstances in our lives.

SECOND DIVISION

"We tried to carry this message to alcoholics"

Much well-meant but misguided effort by sincere members results when they fail to differentiate between "Carrying the Message" and "Working with others."

"Working with others," commonly referred to as "Sponsorship," is the art of helping an alcoholic to arrest his illness.

Sponsorship amounts to a pact between two alcoholics in which one, admitting he is powerless over alcohol, requests help and supervision from the other, a seasoned, qualified A.A. member, who in turn, agrees that he will devote his best effort in helping the other to make A.A. philosophy his "way of life."

The member who sponsors carries the message, but the member who carries the message does not necessarily sponsor.

By this we wish to imply that a member who has been in Alcoholics Anonymous thirty days can carry the message to other alcoholics, but he surely would not attempt to help straighten out another man's thinking or sponsor him when he does not yet understand his own problem.

THIRD DIVISION

"And to practice these principles in all our affairs"

The principles of the Twelve Steps sum up to a logical, practical philosophy that when willingly and honestly lived, guarantees any alcoholic recovery from his disease.

FELLOWSHIP IN THE BIG BOOK

It is often said that there are two parts to the solution offered to us in Alcoholics Anonymous; the Fellowship and the Spiritual solution that comes from doing the Steps. This being the case, we might assume that Fellowship would be a topic which would be featured heavily in the Recovery section of the Big Book (the first 164 pages + *The Doctor's Opinion*), but it's not. I believe the reason for this is because our founders knew from their own experience that alcoholics would confuse the Fellowship for the Solution and avoid doing the work the Steps require to have a Spiritual Awakening. They saw that the Fellowship alone would not keep us sober for long, and that only by doing the work required by the Steps do we have any chance of staying sober one day at a time for the rest of our lives.

The first mention of Fellowship in the Big Book is in the first page of *The Doctor's Opinion*, *"This has become the basis of a rapidly growing fellowship of these men and their families. The second mention is on p.15 in Bill's Story, "...and a fellowship has grown up among us of which it is wonderful thing to feel a part."*

The next mention is on p.17, the first page of chapter 2, *There is a Solution*. Here the fellowship is described as a wonderful part of the program, but it's made very clear that it is not the solution. *"We are people who normally would not mix. But there exists among us a fellowship, a friendliness, and an understanding which is indescribably wonderful. We are like the passengers of a great liner the moment after rescue from shipwreck. . . The feeling of having shared in a common peril is one element in the powerful cement which binds us. But that in itself would never have held us together as we are now joined. The tremendous fact for every one of us it that we have discovered a common solution."* The book later makes clear, on p. 25, that the solution requires, *"self-searching, the leveling of our pride, the confession of shortcomings."* Clearly indicating that the solution is to be found in the Steps.

Later, on p.89, the first page of Chapter 7, *Working with Others*, is the next discussion of Fellowship. *"Life will take on new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends – this is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives."* Later in the chapter on p.94 it says, *"On your first visit tell him about the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. If he shows interest, lend him your copy of this book."* Once again indicating that the Fellowship is a great selling point, *"a wonderful thing,"* and that we have access to it even before we start the steps.

Finally, on p.152, Chapter 11, *A Vision for You*, the last chapter in the Recovery section, Fellowship is discussed in detail;

"I know I must get along without liquor, but how can I? Have you a sufficient substitute?"

Yes, there is a substitute and it is vastly more than that. It is a fellowship in Alcoholics Anonymous. There you will find release from care, boredom and worry. Your imagination will

be fired. Life will mean something at last. The most satisfactory years of your existence lie ahead. Thus we find the fellowship and so will you.

'How is that to come about?' you ask. 'Where am I to find these people?'

You are going to meet these new friends in you own community. Near you, alcoholics are dying helplessly like people in a sinking ship. If you live in a large place, there are hundreds. High and low, rich and poor, these are future fellows of Alcoholics Anonymous. Among them you will make lifelong friends. You will be bound to them with new and wonderful ties, for you will escape disaster together and you will commence shoulder to shoulder your common journey. . ."

"It may seem incredible that these men are to become happy, respected, and useful once more. How can they rise out of such misery, bad repute and hopelessness? The practical answer is that since these things have happened among us, they can happen with you. Should you wish them above all else, and be willing to make use of our experience, we are sure they will come. . ."

"Our hope is that when this chip of a book is launched on the world tide of alcoholism. Defeated drinkers will seize upon it, to follow its suggestions. Many, we are sure, will rise to their feet and march on. They will approach still other sick ones and fellowships of Alcoholics Anonymous may spring up in each city and hamlet, havens for those who must find a way out."

The book proceeds to describe how to create a fellowship. What follows is a ten-page anonymous history of AA from 1935 to 1939. The account starts with Bill W's trip to Akron, OH, where he met and sobered up Dr. Bob, to 1939 when the Big Book was published. At the end of this account, the book continues the discussion of fellowship on p.162;

"Some day we hope that every alcoholic who journeys will find a Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous at his destination. . ."

"Thus we grow. And so can you, though you be but one man with this book in your hand. We believe and hope it contains all you will need to begin.

We know what you are thinking. You are saying to yourself; 'I'm jittery and alone. I couldn't do that.' But you can. You forget that you have just now tapped a source of power much greater than yourself. To duplicate, with such backing, what we have accomplished is only a matter of willingness, patience and labor."

Further on;

"So our fellow worker will soon have friends galore. Some of them may sink and perhaps never get up, but if our experience is a criterion, more than half of those approached will become fellows of Alcoholics Anonymous. . ."

"Still you may say; 'But I will not have the benefit of contact with you who write this book.' We cannot be sure. God will determine that, so you must remember that your real reliance is always upon Him. He will show you how to create the fellowship you crave."

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

STEP TWELVE REVIEW – Key points in the readings

Working with Others

PART I – BB p.89 *Purpose and Promises*

1. Nothing will insure immunity from drinking as much as intensive work with other alcoholics
 - a. It works when other activities fail
 - b. You can help when no one else can
 - c. You can secure their confidence when others fail
2. When we give away what was so freely given to us, "Life will take on new meaning"
 - a. To watch people recover
 - b. To see them help others
 - c. To watch loneliness vanish
 - d. To see a fellowship grow up about you
 - e. To have a host of friends
3. This is an experience you must not miss, we know you will not want to miss it
 - a. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives
4. Because of your own drinking experience, you can be uniquely useful to other alcoholics.
 - a. Don't start out as an evangelist or reformer
 - b. Cooperate, never criticize
 - c. To be helpful is our only aim

PART II – BB p.90-96 *How to Approach a Prospect/Candidate/Newcomer for AA*

1. Firstly, a person does not want to stop drinking, don't waste time trying to persuade them
 - a. You may spoil a future opportunity to help them
2. Sometimes it is wise to wait until they go on a binge.
 - a. But don't deal with them when they are very drunk
3. Wait for the end of the spree, or at least for a lucid interval
 - a. Again, if they don't want to see you, never force yourself on them
4. Call on them while they are still jittery
 - a. They may be more receptive when depressed.
5. If you're in an AA Meeting environment, or a public place, it's ok to see the person alone
 - a. But never go on a 12th Step call alone
 - i. Especially at night
6. Get them talking and slowly shift the conversation to some phase of drinking
7. Tell them enough about your drinking experience to encourage them to speak about themselves

- a. If they want to talk, let them
 - b. If they don't want to talk, give them a more complete picture of your story before AA
 - c. Match their mood
 - i. If they're serious, be serious
 - ii. If they're lighthearted, joke with them
8. When you have won their confidence regarding drinking, start to describe yourself as an alcoholic
- a. Tell them how baffled you were
 - b. How you finally learned that you were sick
 - c. Tell them about your attempts to stop
 - d. Describe the mental twist which leads to the first drink
9. If they are alcoholic, they will understand you at once and start relating to your story
10. If you're satisfied that they are a real alcoholic, start talking about the hopeless condition of alcoholism from your own experience
- a. How the mental obsession concerning that first drink prevents normal functioning of the will power – the failure of self-will p.24, BB
 - b. How you were unable to remember the suffering and humiliation of the past before taking the first drink – the failure of self-knowledge p.39, BB
 - c. How, when you honestly wanted to, you found that you could not quit entirely, or how when you were drinking, you had little control over the amount you drank – the mental obsession and the phenomenon of craving p.44, BB
11. Be careful not to call them an alcoholic or tell them that they are an alcoholic. They have to come to this conclusion on their own.
- a. Don't argue with them if they still think they can control their drinking
 - b. But insist that if they can't control their drinking, there is little chance they can recover without help
12. Continue to speak of alcoholism as an illness; a fatal illness
- a. Talk about the conditions of mind and body which are symptoms of it
 - b. Keep their attention focused mainly on your personal experiences
 - c. Explain that many are doomed who never realize it
13. You will soon have your friend admitting they have many, if not all, of the traits of an alcoholic
- a. Even if they may still doubt whether they are an alcoholic, they will become very curious to know how you got well
14. If they ask you how you stopped drinking, tell them exactly what happened to you
- a. Stress the spiritual feature freely
 - b. Make sure they realize that they don't have to believe what you believe
 - c. Emphasize that they only have to be willing to believe in a power greater than themselves and live by spiritual principles
15. When you talk with a newcomer, or someone who is curious about AA, use everyday language to describe spiritual principles

- a. For example, instead of saying "Grace of God" or "Sunlight of the Spirit", you could say "happy, joyous, and free" or "peace of mind and serenity"
 - b. There is no use triggering someone when you have no idea what their beliefs about God or religion are
16. You may discover that this prospect is deeply religious, and well educated, regarding their spirituality. In that case they might wonder what you could possibly teach them, or they may be resistant to information that could contradict their beliefs
 - a. Be clear with this person that you have no intention of instructing them regarding religion, and that AA is not part of any particular faith or denomination
 - b. That it is "no concern of ours (AA) what religious bodies our member identify themselves with as individuals. This should be an entirely personal affair which each one decides for themselves." P.28, BB
 - c. That AA is dealing only with general principles common to most denominations
 - d. That AA is based on the principle that faith alone is not enough to arrest addiction
 - e. To be vital, faith must be accompanied by self sacrifice and unselfish, constructive action.
 - i. It's not what you believe, it's what you do
17. Outline the program of action, and explain how you:
 - a. Made a self-appraisal – Steps 4 & 5
 - b. Straightened out your past – Steps 6, 7, 8, & 9
 - c. And why you are now trying to be helpful to them – Step 12
18. Make it plain to them that they are under no obligation to you, that you only hope that they will try to help other alcoholics when they escape their own difficulties.
 - a. Suggest how important it is that they place the welfare of other people ahead of their own
19. Make it clear that they are not under any pressure from you, and that they don't have to see you again if they don't want to.
 - a. You should not be offended if they want to call it off
 - b. They may have helped you more than you have helped them
 - c. You may have planted the seed in their mind that will help them get sober at some future date
20. Your candidate may say that there are Steps that they are not willing to do, or simply don't want to do. Don't argue with them or tell them why they have to.
 - a. Tell them you felt the same way when you were a newcomer, but you doubt whether you would have gotten sober if you hadn't done ALL the Steps
 - b. Remind them that they shouldn't worry about steps they're not on yet
 - c. The Steps are in order for a reason and the logic and necessity of each Step should become clear as they are taken in order
21. Tell them about the Fellowship of AA
 - a. The Fellowship is a great selling point of AA
22. Unless your prospect wants to talk further about themselves, don't overstay your welcome

- a. Give them a chance to think it over
 - b. Sometimes a newcomer is anxious to start immediately
 - c. Jumping into step work on your first contact with someone is sometimes a mistake
23. You will be most successful with alcoholics if you do not exhibit any passion for saving them or changing them
- a. Never talk down to an alcoholic from any moral or spiritual high ground
 - b. Simply point to the Steps and explain how they worked for you
 - c. Offer them friendship and fellowship
 - d. Tell them that if they want to get well you will do anything to help work the program
 - i. This does not include lending them money or taking them home
 - e. Do not pressure or push them to do the work
 - i. Everyone has to decide for themselves whether they want to continue
 - ii. The desire must come from within, or it won't work
 - f. If they want to try some other solution to their problem, encourage them to follow their conscience
 - i. We don't have a monopoly on God
 - ii. We simply have a way that worked for us
 - iii. Leave things on a friendly basis
24. Don't be discouraged if your prospect just disappears
- a. Look for someone else to help, and try again
 - b. It's a waste of time to chase after someone who's not ready
 - c. Giving them space may be what they need to become convinced that they need help

PART III – BB p.96-98 *Ongoing Service*

1. Suppose you are seeing this person again and they say that they want to do the Twelve Steps
 - a. If you're in a position to Sponsor them, then you may offer to be their Sponsor
 - b. If you're not in a position to Sponsor them, you might suggest someone you think would be a good choice, but at the very least, give them the best advice you can
 - c. Do not insist that you should be their Sponsor
 - d. Do not take it personally if they choose to work with someone else
2. This person may be broke or homeless, and you may feel the desire to help them
 - a. Talk to your sponsor, or an old timer, before doing anything
 - b. If a newcomer gets the idea that AA is a place to borrow money, get a job, or find a place to stay, rather than a place to hear the message of recovery and find a sponsor, then you have done them a great disservice
 - c. As a general rule; members of AA do not give or lend money to fellow members, nor do we allow them to live in our homes. There are very few exceptions regarding these things
3. Helping others is the foundation of our recovery. Never avoid the responsibility of service to others, but be sure you doing the right thing if you act
 - a. If there is any question, talk to your sponsor first

- b. Never give money or time that is not yours to give
 - i. Don't give money that you can't afford to give, or that your family needs
 - ii. Don't give time when you are supposed to be somewhere, like home or work
 - c. Never give advice that you're not qualified to give
 - d. Regardless of what the book says, interacting with the family of someone who does not want your help, is a very bad idea
4. For the type of alcoholic that wants to recover, charity, in the ordinary sense of the word, is needed or wanted
- a. People who cry for money or shelter before working to get sober, are on the wrong track
 - b. On the other hand, we do help each other along these lines when it is appropriate
 - c. It's not the matter of giving that is in question, but when and how to give
 - d. If we create a situation where the alcoholic comes to rely on us, rather than relying upon God, then we may be aiding in their destruction rather than their recovery
5. Burn the idea into the consciousness of everyone that they can recover regardless of anyone
- a. The only condition is that they trust God and clean house
 - b. We simply do not stop drinking so long as we place dependence upon other people ahead of dependence on God

PART IV – BB p.98-100 *The Domestic Problem*

1. The personal relationships of people in early recovery are usually in some state of damage or disrepair
- a. The newcomer should try and practice the new principles that they are learning in AA, at home
 - b. This should start as soon as possible, it is the beginning of the amends process, which may be weeks or months away
2. The newly sober AA member should concentrate on their own spiritual demonstration at home, and try and not concern themselves with the faults of others
- a. Argument and fault-finding are to be avoided at all cost
 - b. This is difficult, but it must be done if any results are to be expected
 - c. If this is practiced for a few months, it is sure to have a positive effect on everyone
 - d. Little by little the home will develop an atmosphere of helpfulness and friendliness
3. These things will happen naturally and in good time provided that the alcoholic continues to demonstrate that they can be sober, considerate, and helpful, regardless of what anyone says or does.
- a. We will make mistakes and fall short of these goals as we grow
 - b. If we cause harm we must try to repair the damage immediately, if we hope to avoid a relapse into drinking
4. In some cases, relationships and families will not be restored for one reason or another, but this does not prevent anyone from recovering
- a. Remember recovery is not dependent upon people
 - b. It is dependent upon our relationship with God

PART V – BB p.100 *Promises*

1. We, and the people we help, must walk day by day in the path of spiritual progress. If persistent, remarkable things will happen
 - a. When we look back, we realize that the things which came to us when we put ourselves in God's hands were better than anything we could have planned
 - b. Follow the dictates of a Higher Power and you will presently live in a new and wonderful world, no matter what your present circumstances

PART VI – BB p.100-103 *Living Sober*

1. Assuming we are spiritually fit, we can do all sorts of things alcoholics are not supposed to do
 - a. We can exist freely in a world full of alcohol
 - b. We meet these conditions daily
 - c. An alcoholic who cannot meet them still has an alcoholic mind
 - i. There is something the matter with his spiritual status
 - d. Attempting to stay sober by avoiding temptation is doomed to failure
2. Our rule is not to avoid a place where there is drinking, if we have a legitimate reason for being there
 - a. Ask yourself on each occasion, "Have I any good social, business or personal reason for going to this place?"
 - b. If you answer these questions truthfully, you will be clear about what to do
 - c. Go or stay away, whichever seems best
 - d. Be sure you are on solid spiritual ground before you start and that your motive for going is thoroughly good
 - e. Don't think of what you will get out of it, think of what you can bring to it
 - f. If you're shaky, work with another alcoholic instead
3. Our job now is to be at the place where we may be of maximum helpfulness to others, so never hesitate to go anywhere if you can be helpful
 - a. We can be as active as we want. If our motives are good, God will keep us unharmed
4. We are careful never to show intolerance or hatred of drinking as an institution. Experience shows that such an attitude is not helpful to anyone
 - a. We will be of little use if our attitude is one bitterness or hostility
5. After all, our problems were of our own making. Bottles were only a symbol. Besides, we have stopped fighting anybody or anything. We have to!

Step Twelve, 12x12

PART I – 12x12 p.106 *Purpose*

1. Living a happy life is the idea behind the Twelfth Step, and it is achieved through the act of service
 - a. We focus outward to other alcoholics who are still suffering
 - b. We begin to practice all 12 Steps of the program in our daily lives so that we, and all those we come in contact with, may find emotional sobriety

PART II – 12x12 p.106-109 *Spiritual Awakening*

1. When a person has a spiritual awakening, the most important meaning of it is that they have changed and can now do what they could not do before
 - a. This might be a change of ability, emotion, or belief
2. They have been granted a gift which amounts to a new state of consciousness and being
 - a. "the personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism" BB p.567
 - b. Their sense of purpose, direction, and hope have been restored
3. In a very real sense they have been transformed, because they have accessed a source of strength which, up until this point, they have blocked themselves off from
 - a. They have changed because they surrendered their way of doing things to a power greater than themselves and then took action to back up that decision
 - b. In other words, "Trust God, Clean House, Help Others"
4. They possess a new level of honesty, tolerance, unselfishness, peace of mind, and love which they thought they were incapable of
 - a. These gifts were received because they made themselves ready to receive them in the practice of the Twelve Steps of our program
5. The changes that happened to us while taking the Steps was our spiritual awakening
 - a. We can see change in others before they can see it in themselves

PART III – 12x12 p.109-111 *Carrying the Message*

1. Even the newest of newcomers can practice the Twelfth Step when they try to help their fellow alcoholic
 - a. This is not sponsorship, but it is still Twelfth Step work
 - b. This is what Dr Silkworth was referring to when he mentioned Moral Psychology, "The primary function of moral psychology is to address the underlying egotism found in alcoholics 'whose interests center entirely in themselves' and, when successfully applied, it liberates them to the point where they begin to 'ask how they can help others.' The purpose of moral psychology then is to assist alcoholics in overcoming their perspective of extreme self-centeredness and encourage them to adopt an attitude of consideration and care for others."
 - c. The power of this experience can be a critical factor in the newcomers journey

2. Practically every AA member agrees that Sponsoring another alcoholic is a joyful, powerful and satisfying experience
 - a. To watch people's eyes open with wonder as they recover
 - b. To see their lives quickly fill with new purpose and meaning
 - c. To see families reassembled
 - d. To see alcoholic received back into their community
 - e. To watch people awaken to the presence of a loving God in their lives
3. Sponsorship is not the only kind of Twelfth Step work
 - a. We can sit in AA meetings and LISTEN
 - i. To receive something ourselves
 - ii. To reassure and support the others
 - b. If our turn comes to speak, we can try to carry AA's message
 - c. We can take on any number of commitments that AA meetings need filled
4. We may make mistakes and get discouraged as a result of Twelfth Step work
 - a. We may get our hearts set on getting someone sober, only to see them relapse
 - b. We may have several sponsies relapse and doubt our ability to carry the message
 - c. On the other hand, when successful, we may get possessive of these newcomers
 - d. We may give them advice that we're not qualified to give, or shouldn't give at all
 - i. We get hurt if this advice is rejected
 - ii. We get hurt if it's accepted and causes more trouble
 - e. We may be so successful sponsoring newcomers that they look to us as a leader, and forgetting Tradition Two, "Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern," we may be tempted to overmanage things
 - f. All of these experiences are only the pains of growing up, and nothing but good can come from them if we turn more and more to the entire 12 Steps for the answers

PART IV – 12x12 p.111-112 *Practicing These Principles In All Our Affairs*

1. Now comes the biggest questions yet
 - a. Can we take our enthusiasm for AA in all the other aspects of our lives?
 - b. Can we accept and adjust to failure or success without despair or pride?
 - c. Can we accept hardship, illness, and loss with courage and serenity?
2. The answer to all these questions about living is YES
 - a. We see monotony, pain, and even calamity turned to good use by those who continue to practice ALL 12 Steps

PART V – 12x12 p.112-114 *Two-Stepping*

1. None of us are perfect, and without necessarily taking that first drink, we can often drift far off course
2. Our sober lives maybe going so well that we stop practicing most of the Steps on a daily basis, and we settle into "two-stepping" without realizing it.

3. Two-stepping is when our program shrinks down to the "powerless over alcohol" part of the First Step and the "carry the message" part of the Twelfth Step
 - a. I know I can't drink, I've proven that to myself - Step One
 - b. I'll tell you how to do this thing (even though I don't do it myself anymore) - Step Twelve
4. This can work for us for a while, sometimes years, but when it ends we become puzzled and discouraged, and start to doubt AA
5. In this state, if we experience a heavy dose of "life on life's terms" we may NOT have the resources to meet these calamities
6. Our only chance of transforming these calamities into assets, sources of growth and comfort to ourselves and those about us, is by practicing ALL Twelve Steps on a daily basis

PART VI – 12x12 p.114-117 *Instincts vs. Spiritual Growth*

1. As we grow spiritually, we find that our old attitudes towards our instincts need to undergo drastic change
 - a. Our desires for emotional security and wealth
 - b. For personal prestige and power
 - c. For romance
2. By this time we have learned that the satisfaction of instincts cannot be the sole end and aim of our lives
 - a. If our priorities are to satisfy our instincts – we will be pulled backward into disillusionment
 - b. If we place spiritual growth first – then and only then do we have a real chance
3. Our demand for emotional security, for our own way, had constantly thrown us into unworkable relationships with other people
 - a. Either we had tried to play God and dominate those about us
 - b. Or we had insisted on being overdependent upon them
4. As we made spiritual progress, it became clear that if we were to ever feel emotionally secure among other adults, we would have to develop the sense of being in partnership or brotherhood with all those around us
 - a. That we would need to give constantly of ourselves without demands for repayment
 - b. When we did this we gradually found that people were attracted to us as never before
 - c. And even if they failed us we could be understanding and not too seriously affected
5. When we developed still more, we discovered the best possible source of emotional stability to be God
 - a. If we really depended upon God, we couldn't play God to our fellows nor would we feel the need to rely on human protection and care
6. For those of us who used to feel alone in the world, AA provided us with a fellowship of people who understand us
 - a. We begin to outgrow our old habits of dominance or dependence
 - b. We begin to understand we don't have to be alone anymore

PART VII – 12x12 p.117-119 *Relationships in Sobriety*

1. Like all people members of AA have sex and marital problems. The main problem is how to become happily married by eliminating the severe emotional twists that have so often stemmed from alcoholism
2. Alcoholism in a marriage often causes one of the partners to take on roles that would normally not be theirs, or that at least would normally be shared
 - a. This creates a dependance that the alcoholic alternately loves and hates
 - b. These patterns may take a lot of undoing once the alcoholic partner gets sober
3. Once sober, the alcoholic should realize what they have put their partner through, and how much damage they caused their family. They should take on the responsibilities of their relationships with a willingness to repair what they can and accept what they can't
 - a. They should seek to become a true partner, and avoid the old habits of dependence

PART VIII – 12x12 p.119 *Dating in Sobriety*

1. Single AA members who date or marry other AA members, usually have successfully relationships. It is only in cases where newcomers are involved, and love follows at first sight, that difficulties may develop
2. The prospective partners need to be solid AA members that have known each other long enough to be certain that their compatibility on spiritual, mental, and emotional levels are strong and not just wishful thinking

PART IX – 12x12 p.120 *Single in Sobriety*

1. Single people in AA who, for whatever reason, do not have romantic partnerships, can also find companionship and meaningful relation through the fellowship and service work they engage in
 - a. No one needs to be alone or lonely in AA

PART X – 12x12 p.120-122 *Money*

1. While drinking, most of us had a selfish and self-centered relationship to money and material possessions
 - a. When we had it, we spent money like it would never run out
 - b. When we were broke, we did whatever we had to in order to get the next drink
2. Once sober, all that history of waste threw us into panic and often resulted in unreasonable demands for complete financial security. An attitude that placed dependence on ourselves above dependence on God, and so we remained selfish and self-centered
3. With time, and by practicing the AA program as "a way of life" our outlook toward money underwent a drastic revision
 - a. We began to see a job as a way of being of service, not just a means of getting money
 - b. We learned to cheerfully work today without worrying about tomorrow
 - c. When things were good, we no longer dreaded a turn for the worse
 - d. We understood that it did not matter too much what our material condition was, but it did matter what our spiritual condition was

- e. Money gradually became our servant and not our master
- f. Money became a means of exchanging love and service with those around us
- g. We found that freedom from fear was more important than freedom from want

PART XI – 12x12 p.122-124 *Pride and Ego*

1. Personal importance, power, ambition, and leadership were problematic for us while we were drinking
2. A group of psychologists and doctors did an extensive study of a large group of alcoholics when AA was just starting. They wanted to see what personality traits alcoholics had in common
 - a. The conclusion of this study was that most alcoholics were childish, emotionally sensitive, and grandiose
 - b. Eventually we have come to agree with this conclusion
3. We have seen that we were prodded by unreasonable fears or anxieties into making a lifetime of winning fame, money, and what we thought was leadership.
4. This often resulted in “false pride”
 - a. An inflated sense of our abilities or achievements that was not based on reality
 - b. A refusal to acknowledge our limitations or failures
 - c. A lack of self-awareness
 - d. An inability to learn from our own mistakes
5. In well-matured AA members, these distorted drives have been restored to something like their true purpose
 - a. We no longer strive to dominate or rule those about us in order to gain self-importance
 - b. We no longer seek fame and honor in order to be praised
 - c. When we are sometimes singled out for praise, we try to be humbly grateful and exert ourselves more in the spirit of love and service
 - d. We learn that true leadership depends on the power of our behavior, not the power of our ego
6. Still more wonderful is the feeling that we do not have to be specially distinguished among our peers in order to be useful and happy.
7. Service, gladly rendered, obligations squarely met, troubles well accepted or solved with God’s help often lead to the following promises
 - a. The knowledge that we are partners in a common effort
 - b. The well-understood fact that in God’s sight all human beings are important
 - c. The proof that love freely given surely brings a full return
 - d. The certainty that we are no longer isolated and alone in self-constructed prisons
 - e. The surety that we need no longer be square pegs in round holes but can fit and belong in God’s scheme of things
8. These are the permanent and legitimate satisfactions of right living for which no amount of pomp and circumstance, no heap of material possessions, could possibly be substituted for