

STEP TWO

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

Principle	Theme	Action	Defect	Result
Hope (Cornerstone)	He can	Act "as if"	Contempt/Cynicism	Belief/Comfort

PRAYER

- GOD, I look to this new day with hope and I believe that You can do for me what I could never do for myself. Restore me to sanity.

- I pray for an open mind so I may come to believe in a Power greater than myself. I pray for humility and the continued opportunity to increase my faith. I don't want to be crazy any more.

REWARD - FAITH instead of despair.

NOTES

- STEP SIMPLIFIED: *There is a higher power that wants me to live.*
- Pre-AA STEP: *I believed that I was all powerful, the center of the universe, and that I was sane and rational in every respect.*
- HOW TO WORK THE STEP: **BB page 47**, para. 2, lines 1-4.
- Steps 1, 2, and 3: "Get Right with Higher Power".
- POWER IS THE SOLUTION
- We need a Change in our Personality sufficient to bring about Recovery from Alcoholism.
- All you need is to be open-minded and willing to believe to get a start
- Big Books' *main object is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem* {**12x12 page 45**}
- Most of our experiences are the "educational variety" because they develop slowly over a period of time.* (**BB page 569, 3rd edition**)

REFERENCES: - BB - p. xxvii, p. 25, 28, 42-43, 44-60, 569-570 (3rd edition)

PROMISES:

- ... we have had deep and effective spiritual experiences which have revolutionized our whole attitude toward life, toward our fellows and toward God's universe.* {**BB, p. 25**}
- The central fact of our lives today is the absolute certainty that our Creator has entered into our hearts and lives in a way which is indeed miraculous.* {**BB, p. 25**}
- He has commenced to accomplish those things for us which we could never do by ourselves.* {**BB, p. 25**}
- A new life has been given us or, if you prefer, "a design for living" that really works.* {**BB, p. 28**}
- ...spiritual principles would solve all my problems.* {**BB, p. 42**}
- We found that God does not make too hard terms with those who seek Him.* {**BB, p. 46**}
- To us, the Realm of Spirit is broad, roomy, all inclusive; never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek. It is open, we believe, to all men.* {**BB, p. 46**}
- As soon as a man can say that he does believe, or is willing to believe, we emphatically assure him that he is on his way.* {**BB, p. 47**}
- It has been repeatedly proven among us that upon this simple cornerstone a wonderfully effective spiritual structure can be built.* {**BB, p. 47**}
- In the face of collapse and despair, in the face of the total failure of their human resources, they found that a new power, peace, happiness, and sense of direction flowed into them.* {**BB, p. 50**}
- Sometimes we had to search fearlessly, but He was there. He was as much a fact as we were. We found the Great Reality deep down within us.* {**BB, p. 55**}
- Even so has God restored us all to our right minds.* {**BB, p. 57**}
- But He has come to all who have honestly sought Him.* {**BB, p. 57**}
- When we drew near to Him, He disclosed Himself to us!* {**BB, p. 57**}

Step Two

"Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could Restore us to Sanity"

- a) *Characteristic of the so-called typical alcoholic is a narcissistic egocentric core, dominated by feelings of omnipotence, intent on maintaining at all costs its inner integrity . . . Inwardly the alcoholic brooks no control from man or God. He, the alcoholic, is and must be the master of his destiny. He will fight to the end to preserve that position.* {AA COMES OF AGE, p. 311}
- b) *We needed to ask ourselves but one short question. "Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than myself?" As soon as a man can say that he does believe, or is willing to believe, we emphatically assure him that he is on his way.* {BB, p. 47}

Also, what meaningful evidence do I have, proving I am in control of all my life?

- c) *The minute I stopped arguing, I could begin to see and feel. Right there.* {12 & 12, p. 27}
- . . . I now realize that my insanity and ego were curiously linked. To rid myself of the former, I must give up the latter to one with far broader shoulders than my own.* {DAILY REFLECTIONS, p. 44}
- d) *True humility and an open mind can lead us to faith, and every AA meeting is an assurance that God will restore us to sanity if we rightly relate ourselves to Him.* {12 & 12, p. 33}

Am I sincerely Honest about myself, Open minded, Willing to learn? "Restore us to Sanity," means a lot - it means there is SOMETHING to start with - maybe I was sane at one time.

Finally beaten, I asked for God's help. His presence told me to believe. My obsession for alcohol was taken away and my paranoia has since been lifted. {DAILY REFLECTIONS, p. 46}

- e) *Some have a hard time "finding God", because they fear their projection of God as a Harsh, vengeful Power that will reject and condemn. Then I heard my friend Ed's image of a Higher Power. As a boy he had been allowed a litter of puppies, provided that he assume responsibility for their care. Each morning he would find the unavoidable "byproducts" of the puppies on the kitchen floor. Despite his frustration, Ed said he couldn't get angry because "that's the nature of puppies". Ed felt that God viewed our defects and shortcomings with a similar understanding and warmth.* {unknown}
- f) *At no time had we asked what God's will was for us; instead we had been telling Him what it ought to be.* {12 & 12, p. 31}
- g) *Once we have faith in a Higher Power, we are better able to look at ourselves in the mirror without disgust and see ourselves as we are - the humor in our action, past and present, so that at an AA meeting, we can laugh with our cohorts, not at them. We are then on the road to a life that is, indeed, happy, joyous and free!*
- h) *Come to believe that a power GREATER than ourselves, something other than us can manage our lives. A power that can bring sanity back to the way we live. Who are we to believe that WE are the greatest? When we did Step 1, we admitted that we couldn't manage our own lives. When we took Step 2, we said that someone greater than us could manage us and restore us. We needed new to have a new manager, a living, loving God.* {Clarence Snyder 1944 - A.A. Sponsorship Pamphlet}

All sources stress any HP, not our God.

BB

1. **Doctor's Opinion:** *something more than human power is needed to produce the essential psychic change* (xxvii)
2. **There Is A Solution:**
 - 5 promises (25,28)
 - [agnosticism is] *no great obstacle to a spiritual experience.* (29)
3. **More About Alcoholism:** *...spiritual principles would solve all my problems* (42)
4. **We Agnostics** (44-57):
 - Quandry: Doomed to death from Alcohol, or to live on a spiritual basis. [ref As Bill p201]
 - Big Books' *main object is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem* (45)
 - Morals or Philosophy of Life is not enough, or we'd have gotten sober a long time ago. *...human resources, as marshaled by the will, were not sufficient; they failed utterly. Lack of power, that was our dilemma.* (44-45)
 - Dependence on an HP -> sign of weakness (though we were dependent on alcohol); & who could comprehend an HP anyhow? (46)
 - All you need is to be willing to believe to get a start (lay aside prejudice); later you will be able to accept *many things which then seemed entirely out of reach.* (46-47) [ref As Bill p191]
 - There is no need to define/comprehend God (either your idea or that of another) (46)
 - *... we began to be possessed of a new sense of power and direction, provided we took other simple steps* (like what? Following steps) (46)
 - Handicaps to Step 2: *inability to accept much on faith...obstinacy, sensitiveness, and unreasoning prejudice.* (47-48)
 - Why believe in a power greater than ourselves?
 - We must make some assumptions to put life experiences in context (48-49)
 - Millions of others demonstrate that faith works better than our lack of same (49-51)
 - In the modern age we frequently discard old ideas that no longer work (52)
 - We always lived on faith anyway (in reason, and in non-reason like love) ... even tech advances start from faith (52-55)
5. **Spiritual Experience** (App 2):
 - Spiritual experiences are usually not "white light" variety like for Bill. *Most of our experiences are the "educational variety" because they develop slowly over a period of time.* (569, 3rd edition)
 - *... no one need have difficulty with the spirituality of the program. Willingness, honesty and open mindedness are the essentials of recovery. But these are indispensable.* (570, 3rd edition)
 - The only barrier is *contempt prior to investigation* (570, 3rd edition)

12x12

1. At end: true humility & open mind lead to faith (33)
2. "every AA meeting is an assurance that God will restore us to sanity if we relate ourselves to Him" (33)
3. Types of people with problems with the step
 - a) Belligerent One – won't believe; man is God; worshipped science (25)
 - Take it easy: (26)
 - i. AA does not demand you believe anything; steps are suggestions
 - ii. Take step 2 in pieces
 - iii. All need is an open mind (experiment: try praying, even if don't believe – admit you MIGHT be wrong. Do this and you stop playing God – mind has opened [*Language*, p241]. Do this as long term science project.)
 - iv. Unscientific to ignore AA results (27)
 - v. Stop fighting and it seeps in as work rest of program (27)
 - Make AA your higher power (27)
 - i. this minimum is enough
 - ii. Most broaden to belief in God

- b) Bewildered One -- Those who lost faith – tried both & disappointed; lost comfort of any conviction (even atheism)
 - Indifference – golden rule was enough; sloth toward spirituality...until the alcohol (28)
 - Intellectual ones: self-sufficiency – had to learn humility=“right size” (29)
 - Self-righteous ones: Religious Prejudice – Saw only the hypocrisy and bad done in name of religion; way of building self up as superior, substituting negative thinking for positive (30)
 - Defiant ones because God didn’t answer requests – at no time did we ask what God’s will was...we told him what it oughta be. You can’t believe and defy – need to rely (31)
- c) Already have faith (32)
 - Believes in God; God doesn’t believe in him
 - Faith doesn’t keep him sober – due to quality of his faith, not quantity:
 - i. Supposed we had humility when we didn’t
 - ii. Were superficial but thought we were serious
 - iii. Emotionalism rather than spirituality
 - iv. We hadn’t cleaned house to let grace of God in, and prayed for our wishes

Steps We Took

1. Belief is the starting point; you can’t expect faith from the start
 - Actually starts as speculation or suspicion
 - First believe there is an answer
 - Second believe we can have access to the answer
2. Try out a belief until its proved wrong, then try another
3. Believing but not acting on it is not much good
4. Whatever you believe you are going to become

Language of the Heart

- Bill states Step 2 was a gift for him (p 239)
- “First easy step into ... the realm of faith” (p 251)
- We’ve screwed up sometimes in not stressing that you can pick your own HP; instead, sometimes we stress “do it our way”