

The *Big* Workbook

Working the 12 Steps By The Book

www.thebigworkbook.com

The Big Workbook – Working the 12 Steps By The Book
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T h e *B i g* W o r k b o o k

W o r k i n g t h e 1 2 S t e p s B y T h e B o o k

To all those who still suffer, know this...

There is a solution

Table of Contents

PREFACE.....	I
BEFORE YOU BEGIN	1
GETTING STARTED	2
THE ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS FORWARDS.....	4
THE DOCTOR'S OPINION.....	6
FIVE CLASSIFICATIONS OF ALCOHOLICS (XXVIII).....	11
BILL'S STORY	14
EBBY WORKS WITH BILL (9).....	22
BILL TAKES THE STEPS (12)	25
THERE IS A SOLUTION	30
THREE TYPES OF ALCOHOLICS (20)	33
SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE (APPENDIX II)	39
ROLLAND'S STORY (26).....	42
MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM	46
THE THIRTY-YEAR-OLD'S STORY (32)	49
JIM'S STORY (35)	52
THE CRAZY JAYWALKER'S STORY (54)	54
FRED'S STORY (39).....	56
WE AGNOSTICS	61
STEP 1, PART 1 (44).....	61
UNMANAGEABILITY INVENTORY (52).....	70
STEP 1, PART 2 (52).....	78
<i>The Atheist's Story (56)</i>	82
STEP 2 (57).....	83
HOW IT WORKS.....	84
THE TWELVE STEPS (59).....	85
STEP 3 (60).....	87

<i>The Controlling Actor (60)</i>	87
<i>Third Step Promises (63)</i>	90
<i>Understanding Step 3 (63)</i>	91
<i>My Third Step Prayer (63)</i>	93
STEP 4 (64).....	95
<i>Causes of Character Defects and Spiritual Illness</i>	96
RESENTMENT INVENTORY (64)	97
<i>Resentment Inventory Form</i>	99
<i>Glossary of Blame</i>	107
FEAR INVENTORY (67).....	108
<i>Fear Inventory Form</i>	111
<i>Fourth Step Promises (68)</i>	114
<i>Glossary of Direction</i>	117
SEX INVENTORY (68).....	119
<i>Relationship Inventory Form</i>	122
<i>Glossary of Ideals</i>	125
INTO ACTION	129
STEP 5 (72).....	129
<i>Fifth Step Promises (75)</i>	134
<i>Fifth Step Completion Form</i>	135
STEP 6 (76).....	136
STEP 7 (76).....	137
<i>My Seventh Step Prayer</i>	138
STEP 8 (76).....	140
STEP 9 (76).....	141
<i>Guiding Principles (76-83)</i>	142
<i>Money & Crime (79)</i>	145
<i>The Furious Ex-wife's Story (79)</i>	146
<i>The Slanderer's Story (80)</i>	147
<i>Intimate Relationships (81)</i>	148
<i>The Tornado Story (82)</i>	149
<i>The Ninth Step Promises (83-84)</i>	152
MAKING AN AMENDS	153
<i>Amends Form</i>	154
STEP 10 (84).....	156
<i>Tenth Step Thinking</i>	157

<i>Tenth Step Promises (84-85)</i>	158
STEP 11 (85).....	159
<i>Eleventh Step – Evening</i>	161
<i>Eleventh Step – Morning</i>	166
<i>Eleventh Step – Throughout the day</i>	167
WORKING WITH OTHERS	168
STEP 12 (89).....	168
<i>The Approach (89)</i>	169
<i>The Unwilling (95)</i>	176
<i>Relationships (98)</i>	180
<i>The Twelfth Step Promises (100)</i>	182
<i>Temptation (100)</i>	183
<i>Your Attitude (102-103)</i>	185
WORKING PART 1 OF STEP 12.....	186
WORKING PART 2 OF STEP 12.....	187
<i>Working With Others Worksheet</i>	188
<i>Meetings to Recomend</i>	189
<i>Cards for Newcomers</i>	190
WORKING PART 3 OF STEP 12.....	191

Preface

The Big Workbook project comes from a desire to help those who suffer and an absolute certainty that recovery can be found in the **12 Steps** as they were applied by the first 100 men and women of Alcoholics Anonymous. Therefore, **The Big Workbook** is entirely based on the program of recovery as described in the original First Edition of the book, “Alcoholics Anonymous”, and uses it as a step-by-step guide for working the **12 Steps**.

To make comments, suggestions or submit corrections, look for “**The Big Workbook**” community page on **facebook**.

Note to Sponsors

- The Big Workbook is not meant to be a substitute for sponsorship. Real miracles in the A.A. program come from *one alcoholic reaching out to another*.
- The Big Workbook should be studied along with a copy of the Alcoholics Anonymous book. If you don’t see how comments and instructions come from the A.A. book, *please ignore them!*
- If you don’t like a comment, explanation or instruction, cross it out or edit it. This workbook can serve as a framework for your own style of sponsorship. Point out what is important to you from your own experience. *Add your own wisdom!*

But the ex-problem drinker who has found this solution, who is properly armed with facts about himself, can generally win the entire confidence of another alcoholic in a few hours.

— Alcoholics Anonymous, THERE IS A SOLUTION, page 18

Carry **this message** to other alcoholics! You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others fail. Remember they are very ill.

— Alcoholics Anonymous, WORKING WITH OTHERS, page 89

We simply wish to be helpful to those who are afflicted.

— Alcoholics Anonymous, FORWARD, page xiv

Note to Editors

The unorthodox application of singular and plural pronouns is intentional. Commas are used where a pause in speech should occur. Italics are used to emphasize a word or a phrase.

The Big Workbook incorporates the text from the first 103 pages of the original First Edition of the book “Alcoholics Anonymous” which is in the public domain. Bolding and highlighting have been added to callout or emphasize words and phrases. Pages are broken across multiple pages when necessary to systematically *do the work*, otherwise the original text and sequence is maintained.

Before You Begin

You should know this.

The 12 Steps do not work unless...

YOU

Do The Work!

The **12 Step** program is miraculous, but not magical. It will not work for you unless *you* work it!

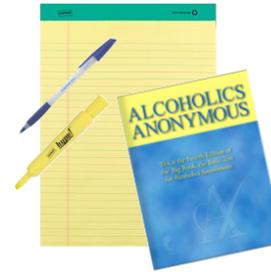
Getting Started

The Big Workbook is an instruction manual for working the Alcoholics Anonymous **12 Step** program. It is based entirely on the instructions found in the original, First Edition “Alcoholics Anonymous” text, often called the “The Big Book”. This workbook should be used along with your own up-to-date copy of the Alcoholics Anonymous book, a trusted friend or sponsor and attendance at healthy A.A. meetings. These are all important tools for recovery.

What you need:

You will need the following items:

1. Your own copy of the Alcoholics Anonymous book.
2. Several notepads.
3. A blue ballpoint pen.
4. A yellow highlighter.



How to use The Big Workbook:

Read this book and *Do The Work* from beginning to end. **DO NOT SKIP ANYTHING!** **DO NOT READ AHEAD!**

As you read the basic text on the left-hand side of each page, also read the remarks and follow the instructions on the right-hand side.

Basic Text – Read the basic Alcoholics Anonymous text carefully.

This is a **Promise**. It tells you what to expect when you do the work (*or when you don't do the work*).

This is a **Prayer**. When you find a prayer, say it to yourself.

The **Explanations** clarify and explain the basic text. Read each one of these thoroughly.

Instructions – When you find instructions, follow them carefully. This is working the **12 Steps**.

Read the **Definitions and Explanations**. They will give you a better understanding of the basic text.

Follow the instructions:

When you come to a **Do The Work** callout, carefully follow all of the directions it contains. When you have completed the work, put a checkmark or an **“X”** in the small box to indicate that you have completed the work.

When someone asks what step you are on, tell them the first number in the instructions that you just completed. In this example, **“one.”** If they are familiar with The Big Workbook you could tell them **“one point three.”**

1.x.4 - Do I suffer depression?	
How much of the week are you depressed?	<i>Almost every single day.</i>
When you are depressed, can you get out of it?	<i>Rarely, not.</i>
Do you withdraw or go into hiding?	<i>Yes, I tend to spend all my time alone.</i>
When you are depressed, do you fantasize about:	
Wishing you were dead?	<i>Yes</i>
Wishing you were somebody else?	<i>Wishing things were different.</i>
Do you want to drink?	<i>Sometimes I want to drink to escape!</i>
List examples of your behavior when you are depressed:	
<i>I look for ways to escape, alcohol, drugs, sex. Whatever I can find that will cover up the feelings. I get irritable and grumpy.</i>	

Some of the instructions have forms for you to fill out. Carefully consider each question and answer honestly. Spelling and grammar do not matter. This is your work and your own personal journey. *If you can read it, that's all that counts.*

Add your own notes and highlights:

Add your own notes and highlighting **anywhere and everywhere**. When you relate to something or want to remember it, highlight it. If it's really important to you, underline it or circle it. The Big Workbook is meant to be written all over.

THE ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS FORWARDS

xiii	FORWARD TO FIRST EDITION
<p>We, of Alcoholics Anonymous, are more than one hundred men and women who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body. To show other alcoholics <i>precisely how we have recovered</i> is the main purpose of this book. For them, we hope these pages will prove so convincing that no further authentication will be necessary. We think this account of our experiences will help everyone to better understand the alcoholic. Many do not comprehend that the alcoholic is a very sick person. And besides, we are sure that our way of living has its advantages for all.</p> <p>It is important that we remain anonymous because we are too few, at present to handle the overwhelming number of personal appeals which may result from this publication. Being mostly business or professional folk, we could not well carry on our occupations in such an event. We would like it understood that our alcoholic work is an avocation.</p> <p>When writing or speaking publicly about alcoholism, we urge each of our Fellowship to omit his personal name, designating himself instead as "a member of Alcoholics Anonymous."</p> <p>Very earnestly we ask the press also, to observe this request, for otherwise we shall be greatly handicapped.</p> <p>We are not an organization in the conventional</p>	

Each of the editions of the Alcoholics Anonymous book contain forwards with important information about A.A..

Promise – People that came before you have recovered. They are not just recovering, they are recovered.

The main purpose of this book is to show you exactly how to recover.

Our way of living the **12 Steps** can work for anyone with any problem. Replace the words *alcohol*, *alcoholic*, and *drinking* with your own presenting problem as you read on.

anonymous – having no known name, identity or known source.

avocation – an activity that a person does with passion outside of their workplace, usually without pay.

conventional – a set of agreed, stipulated or generally accepted standards.

xiv FORWARD TO FIRST EDITION

sense of the word. There are no fees or dues whatsoever. The only requirement for membership is an **honest** desire to stop drinking. We are not allied with any particular faith, sect or denomination, nor do we oppose anyone. We simply wish to be **helpful** to those who are afflicted.

We shall be interested to hear from those who are getting results from this book, particularly from those who have commenced work with other alcoholics. We should like to be **helpful** to such cases.

Inquiry by scientific, medical, and religious societies will be welcomed.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS.

An **honest desire** to stop is absolutely necessary to your recovery. If you are reading this for any other reason, it won't work!

1.0 – Do The Work
I have an honest desire to stop drinking.
Initial here: _____

The Alcoholics Anonymous organization is there to support you in your recovery. **Use them! They sincerely want to help you.**

1.1 – Do The Work

1. In your own A.A. book, read The Forwards to the Second, Third and Forth editions (plus any editions that may have been added).

2. What is the most important fact that you learned about your own recovery from reading The Forwards?

requirement – a necessity, anything indispensable, a prerequisite, something that is required in advance.

honest - speaking truth and creating trust, not disposed to cheat or defraud, not deceptive or fraudulent.

afflicted – mentally or physically unfit.

augury – an event that indicates important things to come, a good omen (from the Forward to Second Edition).

THE DOCTOR'S OPINION

xxiii

THE DOCTOR'S OPINION

WE OF Alcoholics Anonymous believe that the reader will be interested in the medical estimate of the plan of recovery described in this book. Convincing testimony must surely come from medical men who have had experience with the sufferings of our members and have witnessed our return to health. A well known doctor, chief physician at a nationally prominent hospital specializing in alcoholic and drug addiction, gave Alcoholics Anonymous this letter:

To Whom It May Concern:

I have specialized in the treatment of alcoholism for many years.

In late 1934 I attended a patient who, though he had been a competent business man of good earning capacity, was an alcoholic of a type I had come to regard as hopeless. In the course of his third treatment he acquired certain ideas concerning a possible means of recovery. As part of his rehabilitation he commenced to present his conceptions to other alcoholics, impressing upon them that they must do likewise with still others. This has become the basis of a rapidly growing fellowship of these men and their families. This man and over one hundred others appear to have recovered.

I personally know scores of cases who were of the type with whom other methods had failed completely.

These facts appear to be of extreme medical importance; because of the extraordinary possibilities of rapid

This is what an addiction expert thinks of the **12 Steps**.

This patient was Bill W.

The doctor saw Bill as **hopeless**, no chance of recovery.

Bill had the idea for the **12 Steps** and Alcoholics Anonymous.

Helping others helps YOU!
Reach out to someone now.
Help out at A.A. meetings.

Promise – You can recover, too.

Nothing else worked.

addiction – being abnormally tolerant to and dependent on something that is psychologically or physically habit-forming.

xxiv

THE DOCTOR'S OPINION

growth inherent in this group they may mark a new epoch in the annals of alcoholism. These men may well have a remedy for thousands of such situations.

You may rely absolutely on anything they say about themselves.

Very truly yours,
William D. Silkworth, M.D.

The physician who, at our request, gave us this letter, has been kind enough to enlarge upon his views in another statement which follows. In this statement he confirms what we who have suffered alcoholic torture must believe — that the body of the alcoholic is quite as abnormal as his mind. It did not satisfy us to be told that we could not control our drinking just because we were maladjusted to life, that we were in full flight from reality, or were outright mental defectives. These things were true to some extent, in fact, to a considerable extent with some of us. But we are sure that our bodies were sickened as well. In our belief, any picture of the alcoholic which leaves out this physical factor is incomplete.

The doctor's theory that we have an **allergy to alcohol** interests us. As laymen, our opinion as to its soundness may, of course, mean little. But as ex-problem drinkers, we can say that his explanation makes good sense. It explains many things for which we cannot otherwise account.

Though we work out our solution on the spiritual as well as an altruistic plane, we favor hospitalization for the alcoholic who is very jittery or befogged. More often than not, it is imperative that a man's brain be cleared before he is approached, as he has then a bet-

William Duncan Silkworth, M.D., (1873-1951) was a specialist in the treatment of alcoholism and director of the Charles B. Towns Hospital for Drug and Alcohol Addictions in New York City.

Why do you do something even when you don't want to?

The body's health is an important part of recovery.

The allergy theory explains your behavior.

Detox the body first.

annals – historical writings that record events chronologically.
altruistic – unselfish interest in the welfare of others.
allergy – a disorder where a predictable and rapid reaction to a substance is acquired.

xxv

THE DOCTOR'S OPINION

ter chance of understanding and accepting what we have to offer.

The doctor writes:

The subject presented in this book seems to me to be of paramount importance to those afflicted with alcoholic addiction.

I say this after many years' experience as Medical Director of one of the oldest hospitals in the country treating alcoholic and drug addiction.

There was, therefore, a sense of real satisfaction when I was asked to contribute a few words on a subject which is covered in such masterly detail in these pages.

We doctors have realized for a long time that some form of moral psychology was of urgent importance to alcoholics, but its application presented difficulties beyond our conception. What with our ultra-modern standards, our scientific approach to everything, we are perhaps not well equipped to apply the powers of good that lie outside our synthetic knowledge.

Many years ago one of the leading contributors to this book came under our care in this hospital and while here he acquired some ideas which he put into practical application at once.

Later, he requested the privilege of being allowed to tell his story to other patients here and with some misgiving, we consented. The cases we have followed through have been most interesting; in fact, many of them are amazing. The unselfishness of these men as we have come to know them, the entire absence of profit motive, and their community spirit, is indeed inspiring to one who has labored long and wearily in this alcoholic field. They believe in themselves, and still more in the Power which pulls chronic alcoholics back from the gates of death.

Of course an alcoholic ought to be freed from his physical

What we have to offer you is the 12 Steps.

The A.A. book is very important to alcoholics.

A Spiritual Awakening is of vital importance to alcoholics.

Bill W. took the 12 Steps.

Bill shared his experience, strength and hope with other alcoholics.

This is Alcoholics Anonymous.

moral psychology – Spiritual Awakening
synthetic knowledge – learning and reasoning that is man-made.
consented – given permission to do something.

xxvi

THE DOCTOR'S OPINION

craving for liquor, and this often requires a definite hospital procedure, **before** psychological measures can be of maximum benefit.

We believe, and so suggested a few years ago, that the action of alcohol on these chronic alcoholics is a manifestation of an **allergy**; that the **phenomenon of craving** is limited to this class and never occurs in the average temperate drinker. These allergic types can never safely use alcohol in any form at all; and once having formed the habit and found they cannot break it, once having lost their self-confidence, their reliance upon things human, their problems pile up on them and become astonishingly difficult to solve.

Frothy emotional appeal seldom suffices. The message which can interest and hold these alcoholic people must have depth and weight. In nearly all cases, their ideals must be grounded in a **power greater than themselves**, if they are to re-create their lives.

If any feel that as psychiatrists directing a hospital for alcoholics we appear somewhat sentimental, let them stand with us a while on the firing line, see the tragedies, the despairing wives, the little children; let the solving of these problems become a part of their daily work, and even of their sleeping moments, and the most cynical will not wonder that we have accepted and encouraged this movement. We feel, after many years of experience, that we have found nothing which has contributed more to the rehabilitation of these men than the altruistic movement now growing up among them.

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

□ 1.2 – Do The Work

Stop drinking! Go to A.A. meetings. Talk with another alcoholic. See your doctor and tell the truth about your problem.

You cannot benefit from the 12 steps while you are still using alcohol.

The 12 Steps have the depth and weight to solve your problems.

The 12 Steps will help you recreate your life.

Promise – The 12 Steps work!

Simple. You drink because you like the way it makes you feel.

When you are not drinking, you feel bad.

You cannot see the truth.

manifestation – an appearance in bodily form.
phenomenon – an observable occurrence or event.
frothy – high spirited or excited.
injurious – causing harm or injury.

xxvii	THE DOCTOR'S OPINION
<p>the sense of ease and comfort which comes at once by taking a few drinks — drinks which they see others taking with impunity. After they have succumbed to the desire again, as so many do, and the phenomenon of craving develops, they pass through the well-known stages of a spree, emerging remorseful, with a firm resolution not to drink again. This is repeated over and over, and unless this person can experience an entire psychic change there is very little hope of his recovery.</p> <p>On the other hand — and strange as this may seem to those who do not understand — once a psychic change has occurred, the very same person who seemed doomed, who had so many problems he despaired of ever solving them, suddenly finds himself easily able to control his desire for alcohol, the only effort necessary being that required to follow a few simple rules.</p> <p>Men have cried out to me in sincere and despairing appeal: "Doctor, I cannot go on like this! I have everything to live for! I must stop, but I cannot! You must help me!"</p> <p>Faced with this problem, if a doctor is honest with himself, he must sometimes feel his own inadequacy. Although he gives all that is in him, it often is not enough. One feels that something more than human power is needed to produce the essential psychic change. Though the aggregate of recoveries resulting from psychiatric effort is considerable, we physicians must admit we have made little impression upon the problem as a whole. Many types do not respond to the ordinary psychological approach.</p> <p>I do not hold with those who believe that alcoholism is entirely a problem of mental control. I have had many men who had, for example, worked a period of months on some problem or business deal which was to be settled on a certain date, favorably to them. They took a drink a day or so prior to the date, and then the phenomenon of craving at once became paramount to all other interests so that the</p>	

You see that other people can drink normally.

Even though you promise never to drink again, you still drink again.

The only answer is a Spiritual Awakening.

Promise – A Spiritual Awakening will solve all your problems.

The simple rules we follow are the **12 Steps**.

You cannot solve your problem with human power alone. Medicine, psychology and even religion are not enough.

The problem is not a lack of mental control.

impunity – exemption from punishment or loss.
essential – absolutely necessary; vitally necessary; basic and fundamental.
aggregate – data combined from several measurements.

xxviii **THE DOCTOR'S OPINION**

important appointment was not met. These men were not drinking to escape; they were drinking to overcome a craving beyond their mental control.

There are many situations which arise out of the **phenomenon of craving** which cause men to make the supreme sacrifice rather than continue to fight.

The classification of alcoholics seems most difficult, and in much detail is outside the scope of this book. There are, of course, the psychopaths who are emotionally unstable. We are all familiar with this type. They are always "going on the wagon for keeps." They are over-remorseful and make many resolutions, but **never a decision**.

There is the type of man who is unwilling to admit that he cannot take a drink. He plans various ways of drinking. He changes his brand or his environment. There is the type who always believes that after being entirely free from alcohol for a period of time he can take a drink without danger. There is the **manic-depressive type**, who is, perhaps, the least understood by his friends, and about whom a whole chapter could be written.

Then there are types entirely normal in every respect except in the effect alcohol has upon them. They are often able, intelligent, friendly people.

All these, and many others, have one symptom in common: they cannot start drinking without developing the **phenomenon of craving**. This phenomenon, as we have suggested, may be the manifestation of an allergy which differentiates these people, and sets them apart as a distinct entity. It has never been, by any treatment with which we are familiar, permanently eradicated. The only relief we have to suggest is entire abstinence.

This immediately precipitates us into a seething caldron of debate. Much has been written pro and con, but among physicians, the general opinion seems to be that most chronic alcoholics are doomed.

The craving overpowers all mental control.

At certain times nothing is more important than satisfying the craving.

Classification of alcoholics:

Class 1. Unstable.

Class 2. Denial.

Class 3. Delusional.

Class 4. Depressed.

Class 5. Most of us are able, friendly and intelligent *until we take a drink*.

We all have one symptom in common. Once we start drinking, we cannot stop. This is chronic.

Chronic alcoholics are doomed unless they can stop drinking permanently.

resolution – an oath or pledge.
decision - making up your mind about something.
manic-depressive – disorder characterized by alternating mania and depression.
abstinence – refraining from indulging in a habit or craving.
precipitates – brought about abruptly.

xxix

THE DOCTOR'S OPINION

What is the solution? Perhaps I can best answer this by relating one of my experiences.

About one year prior to this experience a man was brought in to be treated for chronic alcoholism. He had but partially recovered from a gastric hemorrhage and seemed to be a case of pathological mental deterioration. He had lost everything worth while in life and was only living, one might say, to drink. He frankly admitted and believed that for him there was no hope. Following the elimination of alcohol, there was found to be no permanent brain injury. He accepted the plan outlined in this book. One year later he called to see me, and I experienced a very strange sensation. I knew the man by name, and partly recognized his features, but there all resemblance ended. From a trembling, despairing, nervous wreck, had emerged a man brimming over with self-reliance and contentment. I talked with him for some time, but was not able to bring myself to feel that I had known him before. To me he was a stranger, and so he left me. A long time has passed with no return to alcohol.

When I need a mental uplift, I often think of another case brought in by a physician prominent in New York. The patient had made his own diagnosis, and deciding his situation hopeless, had hidden in a deserted barn determined to die. He was rescued by a searching party, and, in desperate condition, brought to me. Following his physical rehabilitation, he had a talk with me in which he frankly stated he thought the treatment a waste of effort, unless I could assure him, which no one ever had, that in the future he would have the "will power" to resist the impulse to drink.

His alcoholic problem was so complex, and his depression so great, that we felt his only hope would be through what we then called "moral psychology," and we doubted if even that would have any effect.

The doctor's experience with the 12 Steps.

The doctor treated chronic and hopeless alcoholic #1.

Alcoholic #1 took the 12 Steps.

One year later, alcoholic #1 had recovered.

Another of the doctor's experiences with the 12 Steps.

Alcoholic #2 realized he was chronic and hopeless.

The doctor doubted if even a Spiritual Awakening would help.

contentment – happiness with one's situation in life.

xxx

THE DOCTOR'S OPINION

However, he did become "sold" on the ideas contained in this book. He has not had a drink for a great many years. I see him now and then and he is as fine a specimen of manhood as one could wish to meet.

I earnestly advise every alcoholic to read this book through, and though perhaps he came to scoff, he may remain to pray.

William D. Silkworth, M.D.

Alcoholic #2 took the **12 Steps** and had a Spiritual Awakening.

Alcoholic #2 has been recovered for years.

The doctor's advice to you is to read this book carefully.

Prayer – In your own way, with sincerity and even if you don't believe, just *ask God to help you recover*.

Step 1 came from Dr. William Silkworth.

Step 2 came from Dr. Carl Jung.

Bill Wilson (Bill W.) (1895-1971) - Primary author of the book titled "Alcoholics Anonymous" and co-founder of A.A. He achieved sobriety in 1934 and maintained it throughout his life.

BILL'S STORY

1

BILL'S STORY

War fever ran high in the New England town to which we new, young officers from Plattsburg were assigned, and we were flattered when the first citizens took us to their homes, making us feel heroic. Here was love, applause, war; moments sublime with intervals hilarious. I was part of life at last, and in the midst of the excitement I discovered liquor. I forgot the strong warnings and the prejudices of my people concerning drink. In time we sailed for "Over There." I was very lonely and again turned to alcohol.

We landed in England. I visited Winchester Cathedral. Much moved, I wandered outside. My attention was caught by a doggerel on an old tombstone:

"Here lies a Hampshire Grenadier
Who caught his death
Drinking cold small beer.
A good soldier is ne'er forgot
Whether he dieth by musket
Or by pot."

Ominous warning — which I failed to heed.

Twenty-two, and a veteran of foreign wars, I went home at last. I fancied myself a leader, for had not the men of my battery given me a special token of appreciation? My talent for leadership, I imagined, would place me at the head of vast enterprises which I would manage with the utmost assurance.

□ 1.3 – Do The Work

As you read Bill's Story underline the parts that you personally relate to.

Bill discovered that alcohol made him feel good. When he already felt good, alcohol made him feel even better.

And when he felt bad, alcohol would make him feel good.

Warning of Bill's future.

In his mind, Bill imagined he was a great man.

And Bill imagined his talents would take him to the top.

sublime – worthy of adoration or reverence.

doggerel – a poem or verse of irregular construction.

Hampshire Grenadier – an infantryman equipped with grenades from a county in southern England.

assurance – freedom from doubt; belief in yourself and your abilities.

2

BILL'S STORY

I took a night law course, and obtained employment as investigator for a surety company. The drive for success was on. I'd prove to the world I was important. My work took me about Wall Street and little by little I became interested in the market. Many people lost money — but some became very rich. Why not I? I studied economics and business as well as law. Potential alcoholic that I was, I nearly failed my law course. At one of the finals I was too drunk to think or write. Though my drinking was not yet continuous, it disturbed my wife. We had long talks when I would still her forebodings by telling her that men of genius conceived their best projects when drunk; that the most majestic constructions of philosophic thought were so derived.

By the time I had completed the course, I knew the law was not for me. The inviting maelstrom of Wall Street had me in its grip. Business and financial leaders were my heroes. Out of this alloy of drink and speculation, I commenced to forge the weapon that one day would turn in its flight like a boomerang and all but cut me to ribbons. Living modestly, my wife and I saved \$1,000. It went into certain securities, then cheap and rather unpopular. I rightly imagined that they would some day have a great rise. I failed to persuade my broker friends to send me out looking over factories and managements, but my wife and I decided to go anyway. I had developed a theory that most people lost money in stocks through ignorance of markets. I discovered many more reasons later on.

We gave up our positions and off we roared on a motorcycle, the sidecar stuffed with tent, blankets, a change of clothes, and three huge volumes of a finan-

Why did Bill need to prove anything to the world? Because he had low self-esteem.

Alcohol is already beginning to interfere with Bill's goals.

The people who love you are concerned long before you are.

Bill needed an easier way to be a "genius".

\$1000 in the 1930's would be a very large sum of money in today's dollars.

Think about how much money you have lost because of your alcoholism.

Wall Street – a street where the New York Stock Exchange is located; symbol of American finance.

maelstrom – whirlpool; a powerful circular current.

speculation – an investment that is risky but could yield great profits.

3

BILL'S STORY

cial reference service. Our friends thought a lunacy commission should be appointed. Perhaps they were right. I had had some success at speculation, so we had a little money, but we once worked on a farm for a month to avoid drawing on our small capital. That was the last honest manual labor on my part for many a day. We covered the whole eastern United States in a year. At the end of it, my reports to Wall Street procured me a position there and the use of a large expense account. The exercise of an option brought in more money, leaving us with a profit of several thousand dollars for that year.

For the next few years fortune threw money and applause my way. I had arrived. My judgment and ideas were followed by many to the tune of paper millions. The great boom of the late twenties was seething and swelling. Drink was taking an important and exhilarating part in my life. There was loud talk in the jazz places uptown. Everyone spent in thousands and chattered in millions. Scoffers could scoff and be damned. I made a host of fair-weather friends.

My drinking assumed more serious proportions, continuing all day and almost every night. The remonstrances of my friends terminated in a row and I became a lone wolf. There were many unhappy scenes in our sumptuous apartment. There had been no real infidelity, for loyalty to my wife, helped at times by extreme drunkenness, kept me out of those scrapes.

In 1929 I contracted golf fever. We went at once to the country, my wife to applaud while I started out to overtake Walter Hagen. Liquor caught up with me much faster than I came up behind Walter. I began to be jittery in the morning. Golf permitted drinking

Bill was successful. Everything was going his way.

His drinking began to be important to him. He began to rely on it.

He drank every day.

He lost all his friends.

lunacy commission – an organization established to oversee asylums and the welfare of mentally ill people.
remonstrances – the act of expressing earnest opposition or protest.
sumptuous – magnificent and splendid, suggesting abundance and great expense.
Walter Hagen (1892-1969) – A champion golf pro.

4

BILL'S STORY

every day and every night. It was fun to carom around the exclusive course which had inspired such awe in me as a lad. I acquired the impeccable coat of tan one sees upon the well-to-do. The local banker watched me whirl fat checks in and out of his till with amused skepticism.

Abruptly in October 1929 hell broke loose on the New York stock exchange. After one of those days of inferno, I wobbled from a hotel bar to a brokerage office. It was eight o'clock—five hours after the market closed. The ticker still clattered. I was staring at an inch of the tape which bore the inscription XYZ-32. It had been 52 that morning. I was finished and so were many friends. The papers reported men jumping to death from the towers of High Finance. That disgusted me. I would not jump. I went back to the bar. My friends had dropped several million since ten o'clock so what? Tomorrow was another day. As I drank, the old fierce determination to win came back.

Next morning I telephoned a friend in Montreal. He had plenty of money left and thought I had better go to Canada. By the following spring we were living in our accustomed style. I felt like Napoleon returning from Elba. No St. Helena for me! But drinking caught up with me again and my generous friend had to let me go. This time we stayed broke.

We went to live with my wife's parents. I found a job; then lost it as the result of a brawl with a taxi driver. Mercifully, no one could guess that I was to have no real employment for five years, or hardly draw a sober breath. My wife began to work in a department store, coming home exhausted to find me drunk.

Bill drank every day, all day and long into the night.

The stock market crashed and Bill lost everything.

Drinking gave Bill a feeling of confidence.

Bill's drinking compromised even his most generous friendships.

He turned to the generosity of family and then just stayed drunk.

XYZ-32 – The price of stock for company XYZ is down 32 dollars.

Napoleon (1769-1821) – French general who became emperor.

Elba – an island in Tuscany, Italy. Site of Napoleon's first exile in 1814.

5

BILL'S STORY

I became an unwelcome hanger - on at brokerage places. Liquor ceased to be a luxury; it became a necessity. "Bathtub" gin, two bottles a day, and often three, got to be routine. Sometimes a small deal would net a few hundred dollars, and I would pay my bills at the bars and delicatessens. This went on endlessly, and I began to waken very early in the morning shaking violently. A tumbler full of gin followed by half a dozen bottles of beer would be required if I were to eat any breakfast. Nevertheless, I still thought I could control the situation, and there were periods of sobriety which renewed my wife's hope.

Gradually things got worse. The house was taken over by the mortgage holder, my mother-in-law died, my wife and father-in-law became ill.

Then I got a promising business opportunity. Stocks were at the low point of 1932, and I had somehow formed a group to buy. I was to share generously in the profits. Then I went on a prodigious bender, and that chance vanished.

I woke up. This had to be stopped. I saw I could not take so much as one drink. I was through forever. Before then, I had written lots of sweet promises, but my wife happily observed that this time I meant business. And so I did.

Shortly afterward I came home drunk. There had been no fight. Where had been my high resolve? I simply didn't know. It hadn't even come to mind. Someone had pushed a drink my way, and I had taken it. Was I crazy? I began to wonder, for such an appalling lack of perspective seemed near being just that.

Renewing my resolve, I tried again. Some time

Bill crossed the line. He had no choice. He had to drink even when he didn't want to.

Bill believed he could control his drinking with will-power.

Drinking was even more important than rebuilding his career.

Bill realized that he was powerless over alcohol.

Bill discovered the mental twist that led him to take the first drink which activates the phenomenon of craving.

prodigious – colossal; great in size or extent.

6

BILL'S STORY

passed, and confidence began to be replaced by cock-sureness. I could laugh at the gin mills. Now I had what it takes! One day I walked into a cafe to telephone. In no time I was beating on the bar asking myself how it happened. As the whisky rose to my head I told myself I would manage better next time, but I might as well get good and drunk then. And I did.

The remorse, horror and hopelessness of the next morning are unforgettable. The courage to do battle was not there. My brain raced uncontrollably and there was a terrible sense of impending calamity. I hardly dared cross the street, lest I collapse and be run down by an early morning truck, for it was scarcely daylight. An all night place supplied me with a dozen glasses of ale. My writhing nerves were stilled at last. A morning paper told me the market had gone to hell again. Well, so had I. The market would recover, but I wouldn't. That was a hard thought. Should I kill myself? No not now. Then a mental fog settled down. Gin would fix that. So two bottles, and — oblivion.

The mind and body are marvelous mechanisms, for mine endured this agony two more years. Sometimes I stole from my wife's slender purse when the morning terror and madness were on me. Again I swayed dizzily before an open window, or the medicine cabinet where there was poison, cursing myself for a weakling. There were flights from city to country and back, as my wife and I sought escape. Then came the night when the physical and mental torture was so hellish I feared I would burst through my window, sash and all. Somehow I managed to drag my mattress to a lower floor, lest I suddenly leap. A doctor came with

Bill tried will-power again and again. Will-power always failed.

1.4 – Do The Work

Put a checkmark next to each of the symptoms of alcoholism listed below that you have shared with Bill.

- Remorse
- Horror
- Hopelessness
- Brain Racing Uncontrollably
- Terror
- Sense of Impending Doom
- Writhing Nerves
- Thoughts of Suicide
- Mental Fog
- Oblivion
- Madness
- Seeking Escape
- Physical and Mental Torture

remorse – a feeling of deep regret (usually for some misdeed).

impending calamity – event resulting in great loss and misfortune that is about to happen.

oblivion – state of being totally disregarded or forgotten.

7

BILL'S STORY

a heavy sedative. Next day found me drinking both gin and sedative. This combination soon landed me on the rocks. People feared for my sanity. So did I. I could eat little or nothing when drinking, and I was forty pounds under weight.

My brother-in-law is a physician, and through his kindness and that of my mother I was placed in a nationally-known hospital for the mental and physical rehabilitation of alcoholics. Under the so-called belladonna treatment my brain cleared. Hydrotherapy and mild exercise helped much. Best of all, I met a kind doctor who explained that though certainly selfish and foolish, I had been seriously ill, bodily and mentally.

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. My incredible behavior in the face of a desperate desire to stop was explained. Understanding myself now, I fared forth in high hope. For three or four months the goose hung high. I went to town regularly and even made a little money. Surely this was the answer — self-knowledge.

But it was not, for the frightful day came when I drank once more. The curve of my declining moral and bodily health fell off like a ski-jump. After a time I returned to the hospital. This was the finish, the curtain, it seemed to me. My weary and despairing wife was informed that it would all end with heart failure during delirium tremens, or I would develop a wet brain, perhaps within a year. She would soon have to give me over to the undertaker of the asylum.

They did not need to tell me. I knew, and almost welcomed the idea. It was a devastating blow to my

Switching addictions didn't work for Bill.

Bill learned about his condition. He learned that he was seriously ill both physically and mentally. He gained self-knowledge.

But like will-power, self-knowledge also failed.

belladonna treatment – treatment for depression and muscle spasms; powerful sedative, narcotic and muscle relaxant; made from poisonous Deadly Nightshade.
delirium tremens – state of violent mental agitation caused by acute alcohol poisoning.

8

BILL'S STORY

pride. I, who had thought so well of myself and my abilities, of my capacity to surmount obstacles, was cornered at last. Now I was to plunge into the dark, joining that endless procession of sots who had gone on before. I thought of my poor wife. There had been much happiness after all. What would I not give to make amends. But that was over now.

No words can tell of the loneliness and despair I found in that bitter morass of self-pity. Quicksand stretched around me in all directions. I had met my match. I had been overwhelmed. Alcohol was my master.

Trembling, I stepped from the hospital a broken man. Fear sobered me for a bit. Then came the insidious insanity of that first drink, and on Armistice Day 1934, I was off again. Everyone became resigned to the certainty that I would have to be shut up somewhere, or would stumble along to a miserable end. How dark it is before the dawn! In reality that was the beginning of my last debauch. I was soon to be catapulted into what I like to call the fourth dimension of existence. I was to know happiness, peace, and usefulness, in a way of life that is incredibly more wonderful as time passes.

Near the end of that bleak November, I sat drinking in my kitchen. With a certain satisfaction I reflected there was enough gin concealed about the house to carry me through that night and the next day. My wife was at work. I wondered whether I dared hide a full bottle of gin near the head of our bed. I would need it before daylight.

My musing was interrupted by the telephone. The cheery voice of an old school friend asked if he might

Bill took step 1 – He admitted he was powerless over alcohol and that his life had become unmanageable.

Bill had tried will-power and self-knowledge. Now he tried fear. They all failed to keep him sober!

Step 1 Promises – You will know happiness, peace, usefulness and a life that is more wonderful each day.

debauch – corrupted, immoral or self-indulgent.
catapulted – shoot forth or launched as if from a catapult or slingshot..
fourth dimension – harmony of space and time as a complete framework of all natural experiences.

Ebby works with Bill (9)

9 **BILL'S STORY**

come over. *He was sober.* It was years since I could remember his coming to New York in that condition. I was amazed. Rumor had it that he had been committed for alcoholic insanity. I wondered how he had escaped. Of course he would have dinner, and then I could drink openly with him. Unmindful of his welfare, I thought only of recapturing the spirit of other days. There was that time we had chartered an airplane to complete a jag! His coming was an oasis in this dreary desert of futility. The very thing — an oasis! Drinkers are like that.

The door opened and he stood there, fresh-skinned and glowing. *There was something about his eyes. He was inexplicably different.* What had happened?

I pushed a drink across the table. He refused it. Disappointed but curious, I wondered what had got into the fellow. He wasn't himself.

"Come, what's all this about?" I queried.

He looked straight at me. Simply, but smilingly, he said, *"I've got religion."*

I was aghast. So that was it — last summer an alcoholic crackpot; now, I suspected, a little cracked about religion. He had that starry-eyed look. Yes, the old boy was on fire all right. But bless his heart, let him rant! Besides, my gin would last longer than his preaching.

But he did no ranting. In a matter of fact way he told how *two men had appeared in court*, persuading the judge to suspend his commitment. They had told of a simple religious idea and a practical program of action. That was two months ago and the result was self-evident. It worked!

He had come to pass his experience along to me — if

Bill's old school friend was Ebby Thatcher. He had only been sober two months when he reached out to Bill.

Ebby had a Spiritual Awakening.

Ebby was practicing the four absolutes of the Oxford Group. Purity, Honesty, Unselfishness, and Love.

The two men were Rolland Hazard and Sieber Graves from the Oxford Group.

Ebby was working **Step 12** on Bill.

Oxford Group — a Christian movement that had a following in Europe and America in the 1920s and 30s.

- The Six Oxford Group Steps were:**
- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Complete Deflation. | 4. Confession. |
| 2. Dependence and guidance from a Higher Power. | 5. Restitution. |
| 3. Moral Inventory. | 6. Work with others. |

10

BILL'S STORY

I cared to have it. I was shocked, but interested. Certainly I was interested. I had to be, for I was hopeless.

He talked for hours. Childhood memories rose before me. I could almost hear the sound of the preacher's voice as I sat, on still Sundays, way over there on the hillside; there was that proffered temperance pledge I never signed; my grandfather's good natured contempt of some church folk and their doings; his insistence that the spheres really had their music; but his denial of the preacher's right to tell him how he must listen; his fearlessness as he spoke of these things just before he died; these recollections welled up from the past. They made me swallow hard.

That war-time day in old Winchester Cathedral came back again.

I had always believed in a **Power greater than myself**. I had often pondered these things. I was not an atheist. Few people really are, for that means blind faith in the strange proposition that this universe originated in a cipher and aimlessly rushes nowhere. My intellectual heroes, the chemists, the astronomers, even the evolutionist, suggested vast laws and forces at work. Despite contrary indications, I had little doubt that a mighty purpose and rhythm underlay all. How could there be so much of precise and immutable law, and no intelligence? I simply had to believe in a **Spirit of the Universe**, who knew neither time nor limitation. But that was as far as I had gone.

With ministers, and the world's religions, I parted right there. When they talked of a **God** personal to me, who was love, superhuman strength and direction, I became irritated and my mind snapped shut against such a theory.

Ebby's talk reminded Bill of his childhood spiritual understanding.

Bill remembered the warning about the future that had caught his attention years before.

Bill had a foundation for **Step 2** because he believed in a power greater than himself.

But Bill was closed minded about what religion taught.

spheres (Greek mythology) – celestial orbs made of the ethereal transparent fifth element (quintessence), like jewels.

proffered temperance pledge – offer to promise solemnly and formally to abstain from excess.

cipher – nothing: a quantity of no importance.

immutable – not subject or susceptible to change or variation in form, quality or nature.

11

BILL'S STORY

To Christ I conceded the certainty of a great man, not too closely followed by those who claimed Him. His moral teaching — most excellent. For myself, I had adopted those parts which seemed convenient and not too difficult; the rest I disregarded.

The wars which had been fought, the burnings and chicanery that religious dispute had facilitated, made me sick. I honestly doubted whether, on balance, the religions of mankind had done any good. Judging from what I had seen in Europe and since, the power of **God** in human affairs was negligible, the Brotherhood of Man a grim jest. If there was a Devil, he seemed the Boss Universal, and he certainly had me.

But my friend sat before me, and he made the point-blank declaration that **God had done for him what he could not do for himself**. 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, suddenly taken from the scrap heap to a level of life better than the best he had ever known!

Had this power originated in him? Obviously it had not. There had been no more power in him than there was in me at that minute; and this was none at all.

That floored me. **It began to look as though religious people were right after all**. Here was something at work in a human heart which had done the impossible. My ideas about **miracles** were drastically revised right then. Never mind the musty past; **here sat a miracle directly across the kitchen table**. He shouted great tidings.

I saw that my friend was much more than inwardly

Ebby claimed that God had done for him what he could not do for himself.

Like Bill, Ebby had taken **Step 1** and admitted he was powerless. But, Ebby had a Spiritual Awakening that solved his problems.

Bill began to rethink his ideas about religion.

Bill could not deny his own eyes.

chicanery – trickery; the use of tricks to deceive someone.
miracle – an amazing or wonderful occurrence; a marvelous event.

Bill takes the Steps (12)

12

BILL'S STORY

reorganized. He was on different footing. His roots grasped a new soil.

Despite the living example of my friend there remained in me the vestiges of my old prejudice. The word **God** still aroused a certain antipathy. When the thought was expressed that there might be a **God** personal to me this feeling was intensified. I didn't like the idea. I could go for such conceptions as **Creative Intelligence, Universal Mind** or **Spirit of Nature** but I resisted the thought of a **Czar of the Heavens**, however loving His sway might be. I have since talked with scores of men who felt the same way.

My friend suggested what then seemed a novel idea. He said, "*Why don't you choose your own conception of God?*"

That statement hit me hard. It melted the icy intellectual mountain in whose shadow I had lived and shivered many years. I stood in the sunlight at last.

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. I saw that growth could start from that point. Upon a foundation of complete willingness I might build what I saw in my friend. *Would I have it? Of course I would!*

Thus was I convinced that God is concerned with us humans when we want Him enough. At long last I saw, I felt, I believed. Scales of pride and prejudice fell from my eyes. A new world came into view.

The real significance of my experience in the Cathedral burst upon me. For a brief moment, I had needed and wanted God. There had been a humble willingness to have Him with me — and He came. But soon the sense of His presence had been blotted out by

Ebby suggested that Bill come up with his own idea of God.

Bill realized that all he had to do was be willing to believe in a Power Greater than himself.

Bill took step 2 – He began to believe that a Power greater than himself could restore him to sanity.

Bill saw that God had come to him years ago when he read about the Hampshire Grenadier, but his mind soon took over again.

prejudice – forming your opinion in advance; preconceived belief, opinion, or judgment.
antipathy – a feeling of intense dislike.
Czar – person having great power; monarch or emperor.

13

BILL'S STORY

worldly clamors, mostly those within myself. And so it had been ever since. How blind I had been.

At the hospital I was separated from alcohol for the last time. Treatment seemed wise, for I showed signs of delirium tremens.

There I humbly offered myself to God, as I then I understood Him, to do with me as He would. I placed myself unreservedly under His care and direction. I admitted for the first time that of myself I was nothing; that without Him I was lost. I ruthlessly faced my sins and became willing to have my new-found Friend take them away, root and branch. I have not had a drink since.

My schoolmate visited me, and I fully acquainted him with my problems and deficiencies. We made a list of people I had hurt or toward whom I felt resentment. I expressed my entire willingness to approach these individuals, admitting my wrong. Never was I to be critical of them. I was to right all such matters to the utmost of my ability.

I was to test my thinking by the new God-consciousness within. Common sense would thus become uncommon sense. I was to sit quietly when in doubt, asking only for direction and strength to meet my problems as He would have me. Never was I to pray for myself, except as my requests bore on my usefulness to others. Then only might I expect to receive. But that would be in great measure.

My friend promised when these things were done I would enter upon a new relationship with my Creator; that I would have the elements of a way of living which answered all my problems. Belief in the power of God, plus enough willingness, honesty and humility

Bill recognized that his own mind had obscured the truth from him.

Bill took step 3 – He made a decision to turn his will and life over to the care of God as he then understood God. He said a prayer.

Bill took steps 4, 5, 6 and 7 – He fearlessly faced his mistakes and admitted them. He asked God to remove his flawed thinking. He quit drinking!

Bill took steps 8 and 9 – He made a list of all persons he had harmed and made amends to them.

Bill practiced steps 10 and 11 – He continuously evaluated his thinking and behavior and sought through prayer and meditation to improve his God consciousness.

Promise – When these steps are complete you will have a new relationship with God and will live in a way that solves not only your alcohol problem, but all of your problems.

14

BILL'S STORY

to establish and maintain the new order of things, were the essential requirements.

Simple, but not easy; a price had to be paid. It meant destruction of self-centeredness. I must turn in all things to the **Father of Light** who presides over us all.

These were revolutionary and drastic proposals, but the moment I fully accepted them, the effect was electric. There was a sense of victory, followed by such a peace and serenity as I had never know. There was utter confidence. I felt lifted up, as though the great clean wind of a mountain top blew through and through. God comes to most men gradually, but His impact on me was sudden and profound.

For a moment I was alarmed, and called my friend, the doctor, to ask if I were still sane. He listened in wonder as I talked.

Finally he shook his head saying, "Something has happened to you I don't understand. But you had better hang on to it. Anything is better than the way you were." The good doctor now sees many men who have such experiences. He knows that they are real.

While I lay in the hospital the thought came that there were thousands of hopeless alcoholics who might be glad to have what had been so freely given me. Perhaps I could help some of them. They in turn might work with others.

My friend had emphasized the absolute necessity of demonstrating these principles in all my affairs. Particularly was it imperative to work with others as he had worked with me. Faith without works was dead, he said. And how appallingly true for the alcoholic! For if an alcoholic failed to perfect and enlarge his

Simple – but not easy. Believe in God. Be willing, honest and humble. Think of others more than yourself. Turn everything over to God.

Promise – When you accept the **12 Steps**, the effect will be awesome. You will know victory, peace and serenity. You will be confident. God will come to you in a deep and meaningful way.

Other people could see the change in Bill.

Bill had the idea for the **12 Steps** and Alcoholics Anonymous.

Bill realized that to help himself, *he must help others.*

willing – of your own free will; freely and spontaneously.
honest – not disposed to cheat or defraud; not deceptive or fraudulent.
humble – lack of false pride.

15

BILL'S STORY

spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others, he could not survive the certain trials and low spots ahead. If he did not work, he would surely drink again, and if he drank, he would surely die. Then faith would be dead indeed. With us it is just like that.

My wife and I abandoned ourselves with enthusiasm to the idea of helping other alcoholics to a solution of their problems. It was fortunate, for my old business associates remained skeptical for a year and a half, during which I found little work. I was not too well at the time, and was plagued by waves of self-pity and resentment. This sometimes nearly drove me back to drink, but I soon found that when all other measures failed, work with another alcoholic would save the day. Many times I have gone to my old hospital in despair. On talking to a man there, I would be amazingly lifted up and set on my feet. It is a design for living that works in rough going.

We commenced to make many fast friends and a fellowship has grown up among us of which it is a wonderful thing to feel a part. The joy of living we really have, even under pressure and difficulty. I have seen hundreds of families set their feet in the path that really goes somewhere; have seen the most impossible domestic situations righted; feuds and bitterness of all sorts wiped out. I have seen men come out of asylums and resume a vital place in the lives of their families and communities. Business and professional men have regained their standing. There is scarcely any form of trouble and misery which has not been overcome among us. In one western city and its environs there are one thousand of us and our families. We meet frequently so that newcomers may find the fellowship

Working with others would get Bill through the hardships in life that were sure to come without him going back to alcohol.

Bill practiced step 12 – He and his beloved vigorously helped other alcoholics and their families.

The hardships did come for Bill, but working with others always kept him sober. This is a new design for living.

Promise – You will make many genuine friends and feel like you belong. You will live joyfully even during hard times. You will see miracles of recovery. You will witness others return to happy and useful lives. You will see God working through YOU.

This is why we have Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. So newcomers can find us!

enthusiasm – overflowing with eager enjoyment or approval.
vital – absolutely necessary.

16

BILL'S STORY

they seek. At these informal gatherings one may often see from 50 to 200 persons. We are growing in numbers and power.

An alcoholic in his cups is an unlovely creature. Our struggles with them are variously strenuous, comic, and tragic. One poor chap committed suicide in my home. He could not, or would not see our way of life.

There is, however, a vast amount of fun about it all. I suppose some would be shocked at our seeming worldliness and levity. But just underneath there is deadly earnestness. Faith has to work twenty-four hours a day in and through us, or we perish.

Most of us feel we need look no further for Utopia. We have it with us right here and now. Each day my friend's simple talk in our kitchen multiplies itself in a widening circle of peace on earth and good will to men.

Promise – The **12 Step** program is fun. Your goal is to be happy and useful. What could be more fun than that?

But we are serious, deadly serious. This is life or death. Faith is as important to us as oxygen. We must live it twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week!

One person reaching out to another over the kitchen table mushroomed into the worldwide Alcoholics Anonymous organization in a few short years. If this can happen, what might God have in store when YOU finally reach out?

worldliness – experienced in human affairs.

levity – a manner lacking seriousness; lightness of manner or speech.

peace – the absence of mental stress or anxiety; harmonious relations; freedom from disputes.

THERE IS A SOLUTION

17

THERE IS A SOLUTION

We, of Alcoholics Anonymous, know thousands of men and women who were once just as hopeless as Bill. Nearly all have recovered. They have solved the drink problem.

We are average Americans. All sections of this country and many of its occupations are represented, as well as many political, economic, social, and religious backgrounds. 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 when camaraderie, joyousness and democracy pervade the vessel from steerage to Captain's table. Unlike the feelings of the ship's passengers, however, our joy in escape from disaster does not subside as we go our individual ways. 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 is that we have discovered a common solution. We have a way out on which we can absolutely agree, and upon which we can join in brotherly and harmonious action. This is the great news this book carries to those who suffer from alcoholism.

Promise – Thousands of people have solved their problem using the **12 Steps**.

YOU CAN SOLVE YOUR PROBLEM!

The **12 Steps** work for anybody.

The fellowship among us is like no other.

We have been where you are and have felt the way you feel.

The **12 Steps** are the solution that we all share.

There is a way out. Many have gone before you and you can follow.

camaraderie – quality of affording easy familiarity and sociability; friendship, cooperative and supportive relationships.

18

THERE IS A SOLUTION

An illness of this sort — and we have come to believe it an illness — involves those about us in a way no other human sickness can. If a person has cancer all are sorry for him and no one is angry or hurt. But not so with the alcoholic illness, for with it there goes annihilation of all the things worth while in life. It engulfs all whose lives touch the sufferer's. It brings misunderstanding, fierce resentment, financial insecurity, disgusted friends and employers, warped lives of blameless children, sad wives and parents — anyone can increase the list.

We hope this volume will inform and comfort those who are, or who may be affected. There are many.

Highly competent psychiatrists who have dealt with us have found it sometimes impossible to persuade an alcoholic to discuss his situation without reserve. Strangely enough, wives, parents and intimate friends usually find us even more unapproachable than do the psychiatrist and the doctor.

But the ex-problem drinker who has found this solution, who is properly armed with facts about himself, can generally win the entire confidence of another alcoholic in a few hours. Until such an understanding is reached, little or nothing can be accomplished.

That the man who is making the approach has had the same difficulty, that he obviously knows what he is talking about, that his whole deportment shouts at the new prospect that he is a man with a real answer, that he has no attitude of Holier Than Thou, nothing whatever except the sincere desire to be helpful; that there are no fees to pay, no axes to grind, no people to please, no lectures to be endured these are the condi-

Alcoholism is a disease.

Alcoholism destroys everything worthwhile in life. It effects you and everyone around you.

Those who love you the most are least able to help you. You won't let them.

Promise – Someone who has experienced the same problem and feelings and has found the solution in the **12 Steps** can help you.

Often called a *sponsor*, this person has nothing but a sincere desire to help you.

annihilation – total destruction.

engulfs – overwhelmed, surrounded or covered up.

psychiatrist – a physician who specializes in the branch of medicine dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders.

deportment – behavior; actions or reactions to the environment.

19

THERE IS A SOLUTION

tions we have found most effective. After such an approach many take up their beds and walk again.

None of us makes a sole vocation of this work, nor do we think its effectiveness would be increased if we did. We feel that elimination of our drinking is but a beginning. A much more important demonstration of our principles lies before us in our respective homes, occupations and affairs. All of us spend much of our spare time in the sort of effort which we are going to describe. A few are fortunate enough to be so situated that they can give nearly all their time to the work.

If we keep on the way we are going there is little doubt that much good will result, but the surface of the problem would hardly be scratched. Those of us who live in large cities are overcome by the reflection that close by hundreds are dropping into oblivion every day. Many could recover if they had the opportunity we have enjoyed. How then shall we present that which has been so freely given us?

We have concluded to publish an anonymous volume setting forth the problem as we see it. We shall bring to the task our combined experience and knowledge. This should suggest a useful program for anyone concerned with a drinking problem.

Of necessity there will have to be discussion of matters medical, psychiatric, social, and religious. We are aware that these matters are from their very nature, controversial. Nothing would please us so much as to write a book which would contain no basis for contention or argument. We shall do our utmost to achieve that ideal. Most of us sense that real tolerance of other people's shortcomings and viewpoints and a respect for their opinions are attitudes which make us

Stopping drinking is only the beginning. It is more important that you practice the principles of the **12 Steps** in every part of your life.

□ 1.5 – Do The Work
 You are preparing yourself to help others.

As you read and *do the work*, keep in mind that *you* will be guiding someone else through the **12 Steps** in the future.

- Make notes.
- Underline and highlight.
- Find out more about the material.
- Read the definitions.
- Lookup words in the dictionary.

There are many people near you with the same problems you have. Once you recover, *you* can offer them the opportunity to recover.

It is necessary to look at your physical, mental and spiritual situation. All three are important to recovery.

- vocation** – career; occupation for which you are trained.
- demonstration** – proof by a show or display.
- physical** – involving the body and its functions.
- mental** – involving the mind or intellectual process.
- spiritual** – concerned with or affecting the spirit or soul.

21

THERE IS A SOLUTION

him physically and mentally. It may cause him to die a few years before his time. If a sufficiently strong reason – ill health, falling in love, change of environment, or the warning of a doctor becomes operative, this man can also stop or moderate, although he may find it difficult and troublesome and may even need medical attention.

But what about the **real alcoholic**? He may start off as a moderate drinker; he may or may not become a continuous hard drinker; but at some stage of his drinking career he begins to lose all control of his liquor consumption, once he starts to drink.

Here is a fellow who has been puzzling you, especially in his lack of control. He does absurd, incredible, tragic things while drinking. He is a real Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. He is seldom mildly intoxicated. He is always more or less insanely drunk. His disposition while drinking resembles his normal nature but little. He may be one of the finest fellows in the world. Yet let him drink for a day, and he frequently becomes disgustingly, and even dangerously anti-social. He has a positive genius for getting tight at exactly the wrong moment, particularly when some important decision must be made or engagement kept. He is often perfectly sensible and well balanced concerning everything except liquor, but in that respect he is incredibly dishonest and selfish. He often possesses special abilities, skills, and aptitudes, and has a promising career ahead of him. He uses his gifts to build up a bright outlook for his family and himself, and then pulls the structure down on his head by a senseless series of sprees. He is the fellow who goes to bed so intoxicated he ought to sleep the clock around. Yet early next

Type #3 – The real alcoholic has lost all control.

The real alcoholic is a completely different person when drinking.

The real alcoholic may be perfectly normal and even brilliant, but only when not drinking.

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde – Robert Louis Stevenson novel about a doctor with a split personality, one good and the other bad.
disposition – mood; inclination; attitude of mind.

22

THERE IS A SOLUTION

morning he searches madly for the bottle he misplaced the night before. If he can afford it, he may have liquor concealed all over his house to be certain no one gets his entire supply away from him to throw down the wastepipe. As matters grow worse, he begins to use a combination of high-powered sedative and liquor to quiet his nerves so he can go to work. Then comes the day when he simply cannot make it and gets drunk all over again. Perhaps he goes to a doctor who gives him morphine or some sedative with which to taper off. Then he begins to appear at hospitals and sanitariums.

This is by no means a comprehensive picture of the true alcoholic, as our behavior patterns vary. But this description should identify him roughly.

Why does he behave like this? If hundreds of experiences have shown him that one drink means another debacle with all its attendant suffering and humiliation, why is it he takes that one drink? Why can't he stay on the water wagon? What has become of the common sense and will power that he still sometimes displays with respect to other matters?

Perhaps there never will be a full answer to these questions. Opinions vary considerably as to why the alcoholic reacts differently from normal people. We are not sure why, once a certain point is reached, little can be done for him. We cannot answer the riddle.

We know that while the alcoholic keeps away from drink, as he may do for months or years, he reacts much like other men. We are equally positive that once he takes any alcohol whatever into his system, something happens, both in the bodily and mental sense, which makes it virtually impossible for him to

Behavior may vary, but we all have one thing in common. We are dishonest and selfish when it comes to alcohol.

If all you had to do to recover was never take that first drink, then why do you take that first drink?

You react differently than normal people. We don't know why.

Once any alcohol at all is taken, it is almost impossible to stop.

sedative – a drug (usually narcotic) that reduces excitability and calms a person.

23

THERE IS A SOLUTION

stop. The experience of any alcoholic will abundantly confirm this.

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 in his body. If you ask him why he started on that last bender, the chances are he will offer you any one of a hundred alibis. Sometimes these excuses have a certain plausibility, but none of them really makes sense in the light of the havoc an alcoholic's drinking bout creates. They sound like the philosophy of the man who, having a headache, beats himself on the head with a hammer so that he can't feel the ache. If you draw this fallacious reasoning to the attention of an alcoholic, he will laugh it off, or become irritated and refuse to talk.

Once in a while he may tell the truth. And the truth, strange to say, is usually that he has no more idea why he took that first drink than you have. Some drinkers have excuses with which they are satisfied part of the time. But in their hearts they really do not know why they do it. Once this malady has a real hold, they are a baffled lot. There is the obsession that somehow, someday, they will beat the game. But they often suspect they are down for the count.

How true this is, few realize. 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. He has lost

Important! – The main problem of the alcoholic centers in the mind.

Alcoholics have lost the mental ability to choose not to drink.

Those who care about you hope someday that you will control the situation.

academic – hypothetical or theoretical and not expected to produce an immediate or practical result.

plausibility – apparently valid and true.

fallacious – containing or based on a falsehood; deceitful; intended to deceive.

24

THERE IS A SOLUTION

control. At a certain point in the drinking of every alcoholic, he passes into a state where the most powerful desire to stop drinking is of absolutely no avail. This tragic situation has already arrived in practically every case long before it is suspected.

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.

The almost certain consequences that follow taking even a glass of beer do not crowd into the mind to deter us. If these thoughts occur, they are hazy and readily supplanted with the old threadbare idea that this time we shall handle ourselves like other people. There is a complete failure of the kind of defense that keeps one from putting his hand on a hot stove.

The alcoholic may say to himself in the most casual way, "It won't burn me this time, so here's how!" Or perhaps he doesn't think at all. How often have some of us begun to drink in this nonchalant way, and after the third or fourth, pounded on the bar and said to ourselves, "For God's sake, how did I ever get started again?" Only to have that thought supplanted by "Well, I'll stop with the sixth drink." Or "What's the use anyhow?"

When this sort of thinking is fully established in an individual with alcoholic tendencies, he has probably placed himself beyond human aid, and unless locked up, may die or to permanently insane. These stark and ugly facts have been confirmed by legions of alco-

You cross the line long before you realize it. Once you cross the line, no desire is powerful enough to solve your problem.

The alcoholic has no choice and at some point will not be able to resist taking the first drink.

This mental state puts the alcoholic beyond any help any human can give.

consequences – the outcome of an event especially as relative to an individual.

nonchalant – casual; marked by unconcern.

legions – numerous; amounting to a large indefinite number.

25

THERE IS A SOLUTION

holics throughout history. But for the **grace of God**, there would have been thousands more convincing demonstrations. So many want to stop but cannot.

There is a solution. Almost none of us liked the self-searching, the leveling of our pride, the confession of shortcomings which the process requires for its successful consummation. But we saw that it really worked in others, and we had come to believe in the hopelessness and futility of life as we had been living it. When, therefore, we were approached by those in whom the problem had been solved, there was nothing left for us but to pick up the simple kit of spiritual tools laid at our feet. We have found much of heaven and we have been rocketed into a fourth dimension of existence of which we had not even dreamed.

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. 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. He has commenced to accomplish the things for us which we could never do by ourselves.

If you are a **psychic** or **psychicist**, we believe there is no middle of the road solution. We were in a position where life was becoming impossible, and if we had passed into the region from which there is no return through human aid, 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. This

Promise – There is a solution!

The **12 Steps** are a set of *spiritual tools* that lead you to the solution.

Promise – When you work the **12 Steps** Honestly, Openly and Willingly, you will have a *spiritual awakening* that will bring you the solution.

A Spiritual Experience ranges anywhere from a sudden realization to a gentle and gradual process.
The book explains this in Appendix II so you will read this appendix next.

effective – capable of producing an intended result.
spiritual experience – sacred, mystical or unexplained experience.
certainty – mental state of being without doubt.

Read Appendix II on the

NEXT PAGE

Appendix II-1 SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

The terms “**spiritual experience**” and “**spiritual awakening**” are used many times in this book which, upon careful reading, shows that the personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism has manifested itself among us in many different forms.

Yet it is true that our first printing gave many readers the impression that these personality changes, or religious experiences, must be in the nature of sudden and spectacular upheavals. Happily for everyone, this conclusion is erroneous.

In the first few chapters a number of sudden revolutionary changes are described. Though it was not our intention to create such an impression, many alcoholics have nevertheless concluded that in order to recover they must acquire an immediate and overwhelming “God-consciousness” followed at once by a vast change in feeling and outlook.

Among our rapidly growing membership of thousands of alcoholics such transformations, though frequent, are by no means the rule. Most of our experiences are what the psychologist William James calls the “educational variety” because they develop slowly over a period of time. Quite often friends of the newcomer are aware of the difference long before he is himself. He finally realizes that he has undergone a profound alteration in his reaction to life; that such a change could hardly have been brought about by himself alone. What often takes place in a few months could seldom have been accomplished by years of self-discipline. With few exceptions our members find that they have tapped an unsuspected

Appendix II expands on the definition of a Spiritual Experience.

The goal of a Spiritual Awakening is to bring about enough of a personality change to recover. This can take many different forms.

It does not mean you have to have a sudden religious conversion.

Most Spiritual Experiences develop gradually and gently over time. Other people will often see it in you before you even see it in yourself.

Promise – You will completely change the way you react to life.

profound – having intellectual or emotional depth.
alteration – act of making something different.

Appendix II-2 SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

inner resource which they presently identify with their own conception of a **Power greater than themselves**.

Most of us think this awareness of a **Power greater than ourselves** is the essence of spiritual experience. Our more religious members call it “**God-consciousness**.”

Most emphatically we wish to say that any alcoholic capable of honestly facing his problems in the light of our experience can recover, provided he does not close his mind to all spiritual concepts. He can only be defeated by an attitude of intolerance or belligerent denial.

We find that 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.*

“There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance—that principle is contempt prior to investigation.”

—Herbert Spencer

Promise – If you can honestly face all of your problems, you can recover!

The only thing that will prevent recovery is closed mindedness, intolerance or belligerent denial.

All that is required to recover is **Honesty, Open mindedness and Willingness. H.O.W.**

If you think you know what a Spiritual Experience is before you even look into it, you will remain ignorant.

denial – act of refusing to believe the truth; asserting that something true is false.

belligerent – aggressiveness; disposition of hostility.

Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) – an English philosopher and sociological theorist.

25

THERE IS A SOLUTION

holics throughout history. But for the **grace of God**, there would have been thousands more convincing demonstrations. So many want to stop but cannot.

There is **PAGE 25 part 2** *no one* liked the self-searching, the leveling of our pride, the confession of shortcomings which the process requires for its successful consummation. But we saw that it really *did* help others, and we had come to believe in the *value* and futility of life as we had been *living* it. Therefore, we were approached by those who said that if our problem had been solved, there was no need for us but to pick up the simple kit of spiritual tools and go on our feet. We have found much of heaven at our feet. We have rocketed into a fourth dimension of existence which we had not even dreamed.

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**. 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. **He** has commenced to accomplish those things for us which we could never do by ourselves.

If you are as seriously alcoholic as we were, we believe **there is no middle-of-the-road solution**. We were in a position where life was becoming impossible, and if we had passed into the region from which there is no return through human aid, 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. This

1.6 – Do The Work

I am willing to be open minded and to honestly explore a spiritual solution to my problem.

Initial here: _____

Promise – By working the **12 Steps** you will find that God is doing for you what you cannot do for yourself.

Your choice – Go on suffering *or* work the **12 Steps** and accept a spiritual solution.

consciousness – an alert cognitive state in which you are aware of yourself and your situation.

26

THERE IS A SOLUTION

we did because we honestly wanted to, and were willing to make the effort.

A certain American business man had ability, good sense, and high character. For years he had floundered from one sanitarium to another. He had consulted the best known American psychiatrists. Then he had gone to Europe, placing himself in the care of a celebrated physician (the psychiatrist, Dr. Jung) who prescribed for him. Though experience had made him skeptical, he finished his treatment with unusual confidence. His physical and mental condition were unusually good. 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. More baffling still, he could give himself no satisfactory explanation for his fall.

So he returned to this doctor, whom he admired, and asked him point-blank why he could not recover. He wished above all things to regain self-control. He seemed quite rational and well-balanced with respect to other problems. Yet he had no control whatever over alcohol. Why was this?

He begged the doctor to tell him the whole truth, and he got it. In the doctor's judgment he was utterly hopeless; he could never regain his position in society and he would have to place himself under lock and key or hire a body-guard if he expected to live long. That was a great physician's opinion.

But this man still lives, and is a free man. He does not need a bodyguard nor is he confined. He can go anywhere on this earth where other from men may go

Rolland's Story – This business man was Rolland Hazard. He was a real alcoholic.

Rolland had access to the best psychological minds available. He acquired a profound understanding of his condition. Yet, he still relapsed.

The doctor saw Rolland as utterly hopeless, no chance for recovery.

But Rolland did recover and lived a free man.

Dr. Carl Jung (1865-1961) – Swiss psychiatrist considered the first to state that the human psyche is "by nature religious" and to explore it in depth.

27

THERE IS A SOLUTION

without disaster, provided he remains willing to maintain a **certain simple attitude**.

Some of our alcoholic readers may think they can do without spiritual help. Let us tell you the rest of the conversation our friend had with his doctor.

The doctor said: "You have the mind of a chronic alcoholic. I have never seen one single case recover, where that state of mind existed to the extent that it does in you." Our friend felt as though the gates of hell had closed on him with a clang.

He said to the doctor, "Is there no exception?"

"Yes," replied the doctor, "there is. Exceptions to cases such as yours have been occurring since early times. Here and there, once in a while, alcoholics have had what are called **vital spiritual experiences**. To me these occurrences are phenomena. They appear to be in the nature of **huge emotional displacements and rearrangements**. Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast to one side, and a **completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them**. In fact, I have been trying to produce some such emotional rearrangement within you. With many individuals the methods which I employed are successful, but I have never been successful with an alcoholic of your description."

Upon hearing this, our friend was somewhat relieved, for he reflected that, after all, he was a good church member. This hope, however, was destroyed by the doctor's telling him that while his religious convictions were very good, in his case they did not spell the necessary **vital spiritual experience**.

By working the **12 Steps**, Rolland developed a certain simple attitude of humility that allowed him to go anywhere without fear of relapse.

The doctor diagnosed Rolland a chronic alcoholic and told him he had never seen anyone like him recover.

The only exception was when a chronic alcoholic had a Vital Spiritual Experience which completely rearranged thinking, ideas and attitudes.

Religious convictions were not enough.

chronic – a disease that is long-lasting or recurrent.
phenomena –observable occurrences or events.
humility – a disposition to be humble; a lack of false pride.

28

THERE IS A SOLUTION

Here was the terrible dilemma in which our friend found himself when he had the **extraordinary experience**, which as we have already told you, made him a free man.

We, in our turn, sought the same escape with all the desperation of drowning men. What seemed at first a flimsy reed, has proved to be the **loving and powerful hand of God**. A new life has been given us or, if you prefer, "**a design for living**" that really works.

The distinguished American psychologist, William James, in his book "Varieties of Religious Experience," indicates a multitude of ways in which men have discovered **God**. We have no desire to convince anyone that there is only one way by which faith can be acquired. If what we have learned and felt and seen means anything at all, it means that all of us, whatever our race, creed, or color are the 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. Those having religious affiliations will find here nothing disturbing to their beliefs or ceremonies. There is no friction among us over such matters.

We think it no concern of ours what religious bodies our members identify themselves with as individuals. This should be an entirely personal affair which each one decides for himself in the light of past associations, or his present choice. Not all of us join religious bodies, but most of us favor such memberships.

In the following chapter, there appears an explanation of alcoholism, as we understand it, then a chapter addressed to the agnostic. Many who once were in this class are now among our members. Surprisingly

Rolland had a Spiritual Awakening sufficient to recover from chronic alcoholism. Rolland worked the **12 Steps**!

The **12 Steps** are a design for living that really works.

The **12 Steps** are all-inclusive. Anyone can use them successfully regardless of their race, gender, economic status or religion.

You decide for yourself what spiritual path to follow. No one in A.A. has a right to criticize your choice.

William James (1842-1910) – a pioneering American psychologist and philosopher who was trained as a medical doctor..

29

THERE IS A SOLUTION

enough, we find such convictions no great obstacle to a **spiritual experience**.

Further on, clear-cut directions are given showing how we recovered. These are followed by forty-three personal experiences.

Each individual, in the personal stories, describes in his own language and from his own point of view the way he established his **relationship with God**. These give a fair cross section of our membership and a clear-cut idea of what has actually happened in their lives.

We hope no one will consider these self-revealing accounts in bad taste. Our hope is that many alcoholic men and women, desperately in need, will see these pages, and we believe that it is only by fully disclosing ourselves and our problems that they will be persuaded to say, "Yes, I am one of them too; I must have this thing."

Later on in this workbook, simple directions for working the **12 Steps** are given. Keep reading!

The number of personal stories in the A.A. book varies depending on which edition you have.

1.7 – Do The Work

In your own copy of the A.A. book, select and read a few of the personal stories that begin on page 165.

Which of the stories that you read did you relate to the most?

relationship – state of being connected to another person.

MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

30 MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

Most of us have been unwilling to admit we were real alcoholics. No person likes to think he is **bodily and mentally different from his fellows**. Therefore, it is not surprising that our drinking careers have been characterized by countless **vain attempts to prove we could drink like other people**. The idea that somehow, someday he will control and enjoy his drinking is the great **obsession** of every abnormal drinker. The persistence of this **illusion** is astonishing. Many pursue it into the gates of **insanity** or death.

We learned that we had to fully concede to our **innermost selves** that we were alcoholics. This is the first step in recovery. The delusion that we are like other people, or presently may be, has to be smashed.

We alcoholics are men and women who have lost the ability to control our drinking. We must accept that no real alcoholic ever recovers control. All of us felt at times that we were regaining control, but such intervals – usually brief –

NEXT PAGE

unwilling – refusal to do something.

admit – declare to be true; admit the reality of the truth.

bodily – relating to a bodily organ or bodily functions.

mentally – involving the mind or intellectual process; mental state.

characterized – describing distinctive characteristics or essential features.

countless – too numerous to be counted; an infinite number of reasons; innumerable difficulties.

vain – false pride; having an exaggerated sense of self-importance.

attempts – earnest and conscientious activity intended to do or accomplish something.

obsession – an unhealthy and compulsive preoccupation with something.

illusion – an erroneous mental representation; believing something that is false.

insanity – disorder of the mind; behaviors characterized by abnormal mental patterns.

delusion – false belief that is held in the face of evidence to the contrary.

or MORE ABOUT INSANITY

You are physically and mentally different than other people.

You tried to drink like other people many times, but always fail.

You are obsessed with the illusion that someday it will be different. This is insanity.

Step 1 is admitting to yourself that you are powerless to stop this insane thinking.

Most of us have been unwilling to admit we were real alcoholics. No person likes to think he is bodily and mentally different from his fellows. Therefore, it is not surprising that our drinking careers have been characterized by countless vain attempts to prove we could drink like other people. The idea that somehow, someday he will control himself is the great obsession of every abnormal drinker. The persistence of this illusion is astonishing. Many pursue it into the gates of insanity or death.

We learned that we had to fully concede to our **innermost selves** that we were alcoholics. This is the first step in recovery. The delusion that we are like other people, or presently may be, has to be smashed.

We alcoholics are men and women who have lost the ability to control our drinking. We know that **no real alcoholic ever recovers control**. All of us felt at times that we were regaining control, but such intervals – usually brief – were inevitably followed by still less control, which led in time to **pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization**. We are convinced to a man that alcoholics of our type are **in the grip of a progressive illness**. **Over any considerable period we get worse, never better.**

We are like men who have lost their legs; they never grow new ones. Neither does there appear to be any kind of treatment which will make alcoholics of

PAGE 30 part 2

If you are a real alcoholic, you will never regain control over your drinking.

You may regain control for a short time, but you always end up down again.

It always gets worse, never better.

incomprehensible – impossible to explain; incapable of being understood or accounted for.
demoralization – destroying moral basis; a state of disorder and confusion; depression resulting from undermining your confidence.
progressive – always growing; increasing.
illness – impairment of normal physiological function affecting part or all of an organism.

31

MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

our kind like other men. We have tried every imaginable remedy. In some instances there has been brief recovery, followed always by a still worse relapse. Physicians who are familiar with alcoholism agree there is no such thing as making a normal drinker out of an alcoholic. Science may one day accomplish this, but it hasn't done so yet.

Despite all we can say, many who are real alcoholics are not going to believe they are in that class. By every form of self-deception and experimentation, they will try to prove themselves exceptions to the rule, therefore nonalcoholic. If anyone who is showing inability to control his drinking can do the right-about-face and drink like a gentleman, our hats are off to him. Heaven knows, we have tried hard enough and long enough to drink like other people!

Here are some of the methods we have tried: Drinking beer only, limiting the number of drinks, never drinking alone, never drinking in the morning, drinking only at home, never having it in the house, never drinking during business hours, drinking only at parties, switching from scotch to brandy, drinking only natural wines, agreeing to resign if ever drunk on the job, taking a trip, not taking a trip, swearing off forever (with and without a solemn oath), taking more physical exercise, reading inspirational books, going to health farms and sanitariums, accepting voluntary commitment to asylums – we could increase the list ad infinitum.

We do not like to pronounce any individual as alcoholic, but you can quickly diagnose yourself. Step over to the nearest barroom and try some controlled drinking. Try to drink and stop abruptly. Try it

We have tried everything! You cannot make a normal drinker out of an alcoholic.

Your own experiments confirm that you cannot drink like other people.

1.8 – Do The Work

List some of the methods you have used to control your drinking.

self-deception – denying the truth in the face of solid evidence and logical argument.

experimentation – testing a thought or idea; conducting investigations.

exception – instance that does not conform to a rule or generalization.

ad infinitum – to infinity; seemingly without limit.

32 MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

more than once. It will not take long for you to decide, if you are honest with yourself about it. It may be worth a bad case of jitters if you get a full knowledge of your condition.

Though there is no way of proving it, we believe that early in our drinking careers most of us could have stopped drinking. But the difficulty is that few alcoholics have enough desire to stop while there is yet time. We have heard of a few instances where people, who showed definite signs of alcoholism, were able to stop for a long period because of an overpowering desire to do so. Here is one.

A man of thirty was doing a great deal of spree drinking. He was very nervous in the morning after these bouts and quieted himself with more liquor. He was ambitious to succeed in business, but saw that he would get nowhere if he drank at all. Once he started, he had no control whatever. He made up his mind that until he had been successful in business and had retired, he would not touch another drop. An exceptional man, he remained bone dry for twenty-five years and retired at the age of fifty-five, after a successful and happy business career. Then he fell victim to a belief which practically every alcoholic has — that his long period of sobriety and self-discipline had qualified him to drink as other men. Out came his carpet slippers and a bottle. In two months he was in a hospital, puzzled and humiliated. He tried to regulate his drinking for a little while, making several trips to the hospital meantime. Then, gathering all his forces, he attempted to stop altogether and found he could not. Every means of solving his problem which

Test #1 - If you have any doubt that you are an alcoholic, you can use this test to diagnose yourself.

At some point in the past, you probably could have stopped drinking.

The Thirty-year-old's Story

Here is an alcoholic that used will-power to stop drinking when he was thirty years old.

Because he had stayed dry for so many years, he believed he could drink like other people.

Then he found he could not stop no matter how hard he tried.

diagnose – determine or distinguish the nature of a problem or an illness through analysis.

33

MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

money could buy was at his disposal. Every attempt failed. Though a robust man at retirement, he went to pieces quickly and was dead within four years.

This case contains a powerful lesson. Most of us have believed that if we remained sober for a long stretch, we could thereafter drink normally. But here is a man who at fifty-five years found he was just where he had left off at thirty. We have seen the truth demonstrated again and again: "Once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic." Commencing to drink after a period of sobriety, we are in a short time as bad as ever. If we are planning to stop drinking, there must be no reservation of any kind, nor any lurking notion that someday we will be immune to alcohol.

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. Several of our crowd, men of thirty or less, had been drinking only a few years, but they found themselves as helpless as those who had been drinking twenty years.

To be gravely affected, one does not necessarily have to drink a long time nor take the quantities some of us have. This is particularly true of women. Potential female alcoholics often turn into the real thing and are gone beyond recall in a few years. Certain drinkers, who would be greatly insulted if called alcoholics, are astonished at their inability to stop. We, who are familiar with the symptoms, see large numbers of potential alcoholics among young

Within four years, he was dead.

Will-power failed.

There is no doubt. Once you become an alcoholic, you will always be an alcoholic.

If you want to stop drinking, you must have no doubts at all about it.

You cannot stop using will-power alone. You have probably developed the type of thinking that always leads to the first drink.

The amount of time spent drinking makes little difference. Some people turn into real alcoholics very quickly.

reservation – an unstated doubt that prevents you from accepting something wholeheartedly.
lurking notion – impression or secretive idea in which some confidence is placed.
immune – secure against.
peculiar mental twist – curious or unexpected thinking process that leads to an unforeseen development.

34

MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

people everywhere. But try and get them to see it!

As we look back, we feel we had gone on drinking many years beyond the point where we could quit on our will power. If anyone questions whether he has entered this dangerous area, let him try leaving liquor alone for one year. If he is a real alcoholic and very far advanced, there is scant chance of success. In the early days of our drinking we occasionally remained sober for a year or more, becoming serious drinkers again later. Though you may be able to stop for a considerable period, you may yet be a potential alcoholic. We think few, to whom this book will appeal, can stay dry anything like a year. Some will be drunk the day after making their resolutions; most of them within a few weeks.

For those who are unable to drink moderately the question is how to stop altogether. We are assuming, of course, that the reader desires to stop. Whether such a person can quit upon a nonspiritual basis depends upon the extent to which he has already lost the power to choose whether he will drink or not. Many of us felt that we had plenty of character. There was a tremendous urge to cease forever. Yet we found it impossible. This is the baffling feature of alcoholism as we know it this utter inability to leave it alone, no matter how great the necessity or the wish.

How then shall we help our readers determine, to their own satisfaction, whether they are one of us? The experiment of quitting for a period of time will be helpful, but we think we can render an even greater service to alcoholic sufferers and perhaps to the med

Test #2 - If you still doubt that you are an alcoholic, try to stop drinking for a year. If you have become a real alcoholic, you wont be able to do it.

1.9 – Do The Work

Do you want to stop?

- YES
- NO
- maybe

If you did not answer, YES – you may need to try Test #1 or Test #2 above.

If you have lost the choice whether to drink or not, a spiritual solution may be the only answer for you.

You have to make the decision yourself. No one can make it for you.

moderately - controlled; lessen the intensity of; holding in restraint.
baffling – hard to comprehend, solve or believe.

35 MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

ical fraternity. 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? Friends who have reasoned with him after a spree which has brought him to the point of divorce or bankruptcy are mystified when he walks directly into a saloon. Why does he? Of what is he thinking?

Our first example is a friend we shall call Jim. This man has a charming wife and family. He inherited a lucrative automobile agency. He had a commendable World War record. He is a good salesman. Everybody likes him. He is an intelligent man, normal so far as we can see, except for a nervous disposition. He did no drinking until he was thirty-five. In a few years he became so violent when intoxicated that he had to be committed. On leaving the asylum he came into contact with us.

We told him what we knew of alcoholism and the answer we had found. He made a beginning. His family was re-assembled, and he began to work as a salesman for the business he had lost through drinking. All went well for a time, but he failed to enlarge his spiritual life. To his consternation, he found himself drunk half a dozen times in rapid succession. On each of these occasions we worked with him, reviewing carefully what had happened. He agreed he was a real alcoholic and in a serious condition. He knew he faced another trip to the asylum if he kept on. Moreover, he would lose his family for whom he had a deep affection.

The thinking that leads to taking the first drink is the most important problem.

Jim's Story – Jim had it good.

Jim started drinking late in life and quickly became a real alcoholic.

We told him about step 1.

We told him about step 2.

Jim took step 3.

But Jim did not work the other steps and he soon hit bottom again.

crux – the most important point.
lucrative – producing a sizeable profit.
commendable – admirable; worthy of high praise.

36

MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

Yet he got drunk again. we asked him to tell us exactly how it happened. This is his story: "I came to work on Tuesday morning. I remember I felt irritated that I had to be a salesman for a concern I once owned. I had a few words with the brass, but nothing serious. Then I decided to drive to the country and see one of my prospects for a car. On the way I felt hungry so I stopped at a roadside place where they have a bar. I had no intention of drinking. I just thought I would get a sandwich. I also had the notion that I might find a customer for a car at this place, which was familiar for I had been going to it for years. I had eaten there many times during the months I was sober. I sat down at a table and ordered a sandwich and a glass of milk. Still no thought of drinking. I ordered another sandwich and decided to have another glass of milk.

"Suddenly the thought crossed my mind that if I were to put an ounce of whiskey in my milk it couldn't hurt me on a full stomach. I ordered a whiskey and poured it into the milk. I vaguely sense I was not being any too smart, but I reassured as I was taking the whiskey on a full stomach. The experiment went so well that I ordered another whiskey and poured it into more milk. That didn't seem to bother me so I tried another."

Thus started one more journey to the asylum for Jim. Here was the threat of commitment, the loss of family and position, to say nothing of that intense mental and physical suffering which drinking always caused him. He had much knowledge about himself as an alcoholic. Yet all reasons for not drinking were

This is what happened to Jim.

Jim resented having to work at a business he once owned. (Resentment is extremely dangerous to alcoholics. You will learn why later.)

Jim was just hungry. He had no thoughts of drinking.

Then Jim had the insane thought that if he drank alcohol with milk, he wouldn't get drunk.

Jim took that first drink and then could not stop. In exchange for that drink he was threatened with losing everything and went straight back into severe mental and physical anguish.

Self-knowledge failed.

commitment – the official act of consigning a person to confinement.

intense mental and physical suffering – acute agony and misery of the mind and body.

37

MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

easily pushed aside in favor of the foolish idea that he could take whiskey if only he mixed it with milk!

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?

You may think this an extreme case. To us it is not far-fetched, for this kind of thinking has been characteristic of every single one of us. We have sometimes reflected more than Jim did upon the consequences. But 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. Next day we would ask ourselves, in all earnestness and sincerity, how it could have happened.

In some circumstances we have gone out deliberately to get drunk, feeling ourselves justified by nervousness, anger, worry, depression, jealousy or the like. 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. We now see that when we began to drink deliberately, instead of casually, there was little serious or effective thought during the period of premeditation of what the terrific consequences might be.

Our behavior is as absurd and incomprehensible with respect to the first drink as that of an individual with a passion, say, for jay-walking. He gets a thrill out of skipping in front of fast-moving vehicles. He enjoys himself for a few years in spite of friendly warnings. Up to this point you would label him as a foolish

Jim's thinking was totally insane!

This type of thinking is abnormal. It gives you false justification to do something you know is destructive.

Sometimes you may deliberately get drunk because you feel justified. You believe that feeling bad is a good excuse.

The terrible penalty is not even considered.

The Crazy Jaywalker's Story

curious mental phenomenon – abnormal thinking process that leads to an unexpected development.

insanely trivial excuse – mental derangement producing a reason or cause for justification of a poor decision.

premeditation – plotting in advance of acting.

terrific consequences – huge, intense outcome of some action.

The Crazy Jaywalker's Story (54)

38

MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

chap having queer ideas of fun. Luck then deserts him and he is slightly injured several times in succession. You would expect him, if he were normal, to cut it out. Presently he is hit again and this time has a fractured skull. Within a week after leaving the hospital a fast-moving trolley car breaks his arm. He tells you he has decided to stop jay-walking for good, but in a few weeks he breaks both legs.

On through the years this conduct continues, accompanied by his continual promises to be careful or to keep off the streets altogether. Finally, he can no longer work, his wife gets a divorce and he is held up to ridicule. He tries every known means to get the jay-walking idea out of his head. He shuts himself up in an asylum, hoping to mend his ways. But the day he comes out he races in front of a fire engine, which breaks his back. Such a man would be crazy, wouldn't he?

You may think our illustration is too ridiculous. But is it? We, who have been through the wringer, have to admit if we substituted alcoholism for jay-walking, the illustration would fit exactly. 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 it true?

Some of you are thinking: "Yes, what you tell is true, but it doesn't fully apply. We admit we have some of these symptoms, but we have not gone to the extremes you fellows did, nor are we likely to, for we understand ourselves so well after what you have told us that such things cannot happen again. We have not lost everything in life through drinking and we

The Crazy Jaywalker's Story (cont.)

He cannot stop jaywalking even though he is always injured. If he were *normal*, he would just stop.

This behavior continues throughout his life even though he makes numerous promises to stop jaywalking.

Finally he breaks his back. This guy is *crazy*!

An alcoholic is just like the crazy jaywalker.

Probably intelligent, but *strangely insane*!

jaywalker – a reckless pedestrian who crosses streets illegally.
normal – in accordance with natural laws.
crazy – brainsick; affected with insanity; foolish.
ridiculous – absurd; inviting ridicule; humorous.

39 MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

certainly do not intend to. Thanks for the information."

That may be true of certain nonalcoholic people who, though drinking foolishly and heavily at the present time, are able to stop or moderate, because their brains and bodies have not been damaged as ours were. But the actual or potential alcoholic, with hardly any exception, will be *absolutely unable to stop drinking on the basis of self-knowledge*. This is a point we wish to emphasize and re-emphasize, to smash home upon our alcoholic readers as it has been revealed to us out of bitter experience. Let us take another illustration.

Fred is a partner in a well known accounting firm. His income is good, he has a fine home, is happily married and the father of promising children of college age. He has so attractive a personality that he makes friends with everyone. If ever there was a successful business man, it is Fred. To all appearance he is a stable, well balanced individual. Yet, he is alcoholic. We first saw Fred about a year ago in a hospital where he had gone to recover from a bad case of jitters. It was his first experience of this kind, and he was much ashamed of it. Far from admitting he was an alcoholic, he told himself he came to the hospital to rest his nerves. The doctor intimated strongly that he might be worse than he realized. For a few days he was depressed about his condition. He made up his mind to quit drinking altogether. It never occurred to him that perhaps he could not do so, in spite of his character and standing. Fred would not believe himself an alcoholic, much less accept a spiritual remedy for his problem. We told him what

Promise – With very few exceptions, even potential alcoholics that have not suffered much will be absolutely unable to stop drinking based on *self-knowledge*.

Fred's Story.

Fred is doing well and is normal in every way except that he is an alcoholic.

The doctor told Fred his condition was very serious.

However, Fred would not believe he was an alcoholic.

absolutely – totally and definitely; completely and without qualification.

40

MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

we knew about alcoholism. He was interested and conceded that he had some of the symptoms, but he was a long way from admitting that he could do nothing about it himself. 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.

We heard no more of Fred for a while. One day we were told that he was back in the hospital. This time he was quite shaky. He soon indicated he was anxious to see us. The story he told is most instructive, for here was a chap absolutely convinced he had to stop drinking, who had no excuse for drinking, who exhibited splendid judgment and determination in all his other concerns, yet was flat on his back nevertheless.

Let him tell you about it: "I was much impressed with what you fellows said about alcoholism, and I frankly did not believe it would be possible for me to drink again. 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. I reasoned I was not so far advanced as most of you fellows, that I had been usually successful in licking my other personal problems, and that I would therefore be successful where you men failed. 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.

"In this frame of mind, I went about my business and for a time all was well. I had no trouble refusing drinks, and began to wonder if I had not been making too hard work of a simple matter. One day I went to Washington to present some accounting evidence to

Fred believed that his fear and the memory of the suffering would keep him sober.

Fred thought that his success in life would allow him to control his alcohol problem.

humiliating – awareness of your shortcomings; demeaning.
subtle – elusive; difficult to detect by the mind.

41

MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

a government bureau. I had been out of town before during this particular dry spell, so there was nothing new about that. Physically, I felt fine. Neither did I have any pressing problems or worries. My business came off well, I was pleased and knew my partners would be too. It was the end of a perfect day, not a cloud on the horizon.

"I went to my hotel and leisurely dressed for dinner. *As I crossed the threshold of the dining room, the thought came to mind that it would be nice to have a couple of cocktails with dinner. That was all. Nothing more.* I ordered a cocktail and my meal. Then I ordered another cocktail. After dinner I decided to take a walk. When I returned to the hotel it struck me a highball would be fine before going to bed, so I stepped into the bar and had one. I remember having several more that night and plenty next morning. I have a shadowy recollection of being in a airplane bound for New York, and of finding a friendly taxicab driver at the landing field instead of my wife. The driver escorted me for several days. I know little of where I went or what I said and did. Then came the hospital with the unbearable mental and physical suffering.

"As soon as I regained my ability to think, I went carefully over that evening in Washington. 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 had commenced to drink as carelessly as though the cocktails were ginger ale. I now remembered what my alcoholic friends had told me, how they prophesied that if I had an alcoholic mind, the time and place would come — I would drink

Everything in Fred's life was wonderful. Then he *thought* about having a drink. And he did.

Then came the unbearable *mental and physical suffering* for Fred.

Fred had not resisted the first drink at all.

unbearable – intolerable; incapable of being put up with.
suffering – agony; acute pain; misery resulting from affliction; distress; psychological pain.

42

MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

again. They had 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. I had never been able to understand people who said that a problem had them hopelessly defeated. I knew then. It was a crushing blow.

"Two of the members of Alcoholics Anonymous came to see me. They grinned, which I didn't like so much, and then asked me if I thought myself alcoholic and if I were really licked this time. I had to concede both propositions. They piled on me heaps of evidence to the effect that an alcoholic mentality, such as I had exhibited in Washington, was hopeless condition. They cited cases out of their own experience by the dozen. This process snuffed out the last flicker of conviction that I could do the job myself.

"Then they outlined the **spiritual answer** and **program of action** which a hundred of them had followed successfully. Though I had been only a nominal churchman, their proposals were not, intellectually, hard to swallow. But the program of action, though entirely sensible, was pretty drastic. It meant I would have to throw several lifelong conceptions out of the window. That was not easy. But the moment I made up my mind to go through with the process, I had the curious feeling that my alcoholic condition was relieved, as in fact it proved to be.

"Quite as important was the discovery that **spiritual principles** would solve all my problems. I have since

Will-power, self-knowledge and fear all failed Fred!

Fred finally admitted he was an alcoholic and in a hopeless situation.

Fred made up his mind to work the 12 Steps and he recovered.

Fred discovered that living the 12 Steps solved ALL of his other problems, too.

splendid judgment – excellent cognitive process; drawing accurate conclusions.
hopeless condition – no possibility of success over an illness, disease, or other medical problem

43

MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

been brought into a way of living infinitely more satisfying and, I hope, more useful than the life I lived before. My old manner of life was by no means a bad one, but I would not exchange its best moments for the worst I have now. I would not go back to it even if I could."

Fred's story speaks for itself. We hope it strikes home to thousands like him. He had felt only the first nip of the wringer. Most alcoholics have to be pretty badly mangled before they really commence to solve their problems.

Many doctors and psychiatrists agree with our conclusions. One of these men, staff member of a world-renowned hospital, recently made this statement to some of us: "What you say about the general hopelessness of the average alcoholic's plight is, in my opinion, correct. As to two of you men, whose stories I have heard, there is no doubt in my mind that you were 100% hopeless, apart from **divine help**. Had you offered yourselves as patients at this hospital, I would not have taken you, if I had been able to avoid it. People like you are too heartbreaking. Though not a religious person, I have profound respect for the **spiritual approach** in such cases as yours. For most cases, there is virtually no other solution."

Once more: The alcoholic at certain times has no effective mental defense against the first drink. Except in a few cases, neither he nor any other human being can provide such a defense. His defense must come from a **Higher Power**.

Fred's life after working the **12 Steps** was better than anything he had ever known.

Most alcoholics have to be badly hurt before they are willing to work the **12 Steps**.

Many doctors and psychiatrists agree. For most alcoholics, the only solution is the **12 Steps**.

An alcoholic has no defense against the first drink.

An alcoholic's only defense must come from a **Higher Power**.

mangled – hurt, mutilated, twisted, or disfigured.
commence – take the first step in carrying out an action.

WE AGNOSTICS

Step 1, part 1 (44)

44

WE AGNOSTICS

In the preceding chapters you have learned something of alcoholism. We hope we have made clear the distinction between the alcoholic and the nonalcoholic. 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. If that be the case, you may be suffering from an illness which only a **spiritual experience** will conquer.

To one who feels he is an atheist or agnostic such an experience seems impossible, but to continue as he is means disaster, especially if he is an alcoholic of the hopeless variety. To be doomed to an alcoholic death or to **live on a spiritual basis** are not always easy alternatives to face.

But it isn't so difficult. About half our original fellowship were of exactly that type. At first some of us tried to avoid the issue, hoping against hope we were not true alcoholics. But after a while we had to face the fact that we must find a **spiritual basis of life** — or else. Perhaps it is going to be that way with you. But cheer up, something like half of us thought we were atheists or agnostics. Our experience shows that you need not be disconcerted.

If a mere code of morals or a better philosophy of life were sufficient to overcome alcoholism, many of us

If you are suffering from a sickness which only a spiritual awakening will cure, then you are an alcoholic.

Step 1 – *We admitted we were powerless over alcohol* – that our lives had become unmanageable.

1.10 – Do The Work

The reading to this point should have you convinced that you are powerless over alcohol. Take the first part of **Step 1**. Sign your name in the space provided.

I, _____, admit that I am powerless over alcohol.

Promise – If you do not believe in God or you are not sure if God exists, **the 12 Steps will still work for you.**

agnostic – someone without knowledge about the existence of God but does not deny that God might exist.

atheist – someone who denies the existence of God.

alcoholic – someone suffering from a sickness which only a spiritual awakening will cure.

45

WE AGNOSTICS

would have recovered long ago. But we found that such codes and philosophies did not save us, no matter how much we tried. We could wish to be moral, we could wish to be philosophically comforted, in fact, we could will these things with all our might, but the needed power wasn't there. Our human resources, as marshalled by the will, were not sufficient; they failed utterly.

Lack of power, that was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a **Power greater than ourselves**. Obviously. But where and how were we to find this Power?

Well, that's exactly what this book is about. Its main object is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem. That means we have written a book which we believe to be **spiritual** as well as moral. And it means, of course, that we are going to talk about God. Here difficulty arises with agnostics. Many times we talk to a new man and watch his hope rise as we discuss his alcoholic problems and explain our fellowship. But his face falls when we speak of spiritual matters, especially when we mention God, for we have re-opened a subject which our man thought he had neatly evaded or entirely ignored.

We know how he feels. We have shared his honest doubt and prejudice. Some of us have been violently anti-religious. To others, the word "God" brought up a particular idea of Him with which someone had tried to impress them during childhood. Perhaps we rejected this particular conception because it seemed inadequate. With that rejection we imagined we had abandoned the God idea entirely. We were bothered

If you already have spiritual beliefs, they are not working for the alcohol problem.

You do not have the power to solve your problem. You must find a Power greater than yourself.

The goal of the **12 Steps** is to help you find a Power that will solve your problem.

Even if you are anti-religious or unsatisfied with the idea of God, **The 12 Steps will still work for you.**

philosophies – a belief or system of beliefs; doctrine; any personal belief about how to live or how to deal with a situation.
power – controlling influence; force that directs events; an authority.
dilemma – a state of uncertainty or perplexity.

46

WE AGNOSTICS

with the thought that faith and dependence upon a Power beyond ourselves was somewhat weak, even cowardly. We looked upon this world of warring individuals, warring theological systems, and inexplicable calamity, with deep skepticism. We looked askance at many individuals who claimed to be godly. How could a Supreme Being have anything to do with it all? And who could comprehend a Supreme Being anyhow? Yet, in other moments, we found ourselves thinking, when enchanted by a starlit night, "Who, then, made all this?" There was a feeling of awe and wonder, but it was fleeting and soon lost.

Yes, we of agnostic temperament have had these thoughts and experiences. Let us make haste to reassure you. 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 commenced to get results, even though it was impossible for any of us to fully define or comprehend that **Power, which is God.**

Much to our relief, we discovered we did not need to consider another's conception of God. Our own conception, however inadequate, was sufficient to make the approach and to effect a **contact with Him.** As soon as we admitted the possible existence of a **Creative Intelligence,** a **Spirit of the Universe** underlying the totality of things, we began to be possessed of a new sense of power and direction, provided we took other simple steps. We found that God does not make too hard terms with those who seek Him. 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.

You may have given up on the idea of God because of the state of this world.
The 12 Steps will still work for you.

Promise – As soon as you just become *willing* to believe in a Power greater than yourself, you will begin to get results.

You do not need to accept anybody else's ideas about God.
Your own idea about God is all you need.

The **12 Steps** are a spiritual program, *not a religious program.*

skepticism – doubt about the truth of something; incredulity.

askance – with suspicion or disapproval.

religion – a strong belief in a supernatural power that controls human destiny; an institution used to express belief in a divine power.

prejudice – a preconceived belief, opinion, or judgment about something.

47

WE AGNOSTICS

When, therefore, we speak to you of **God**, we mean **your own conception of God**. This applies, too, to other spiritual expressions which you find in this book. Do not let any prejudice you may have against spiritual terms deter you from honestly asking yourself what they mean to you. At the start, this was all we needed to commence spiritual growth, to effect our first conscious relation with **God as we understood Him**. Afterward, we found ourselves accepting many things which then seemed entirely out of reach. That was growth, but if we wished to grow we had to begin somewhere. So we used our own conception, however limited it was.

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. It has been repeatedly proven among us that upon this simple cornerstone a **wonderfully effective spiritual structure** can be built.*

That was great news to us, for we had assumed we could not make use of **spiritual principles** unless we accepted many things on faith which seemed difficult to believe. When people presented us with spiritual approaches, how frequently did we all say, "I wish I had what that man has. I'm sure it would work if I could only believe as he believes. But I cannot accept as surely true the many articles of faith which are so plain to him." So it was comforting to learn that we could commence at a simpler level.

Besides a seeming inability to accept much on faith,

* See appendix II on page 39 of this workbook

□ 1.11 – Do The Work

From now on when you read the word "**God**" in this book, think of your own idea about God. Also do this with the other spiritual terms that you come across.

Your own idea about God is all you need to begin the **12 Steps**.

□ 1.12 – Do The Work

Ask yourself this question. Are you *willing* to believe in a Power greater than yourself?

Promise – Once you are *willing* to believe, you are on your way to creating a wonderful and effective spiritual life.

You can relax knowing that starting the **12 Steps** is simple.

conception – an abstract idea formed from specific examples; an invention; the creation of something in the mind.

cornerstone – basis; the fundamental assumptions from which something is begun and developed.

48

WE AGNOSTICS

we often found ourselves handicapped by obstinacy, sensitiveness, and unreasoning prejudice. Many of us have been so touchy that even casual reference to spiritual things make us bristle with antagonism. This sort of thinking had to be abandoned. Though some of us resisted, we found no great difficulty in casting aside such feelings. Faced with alcoholic destruction, we soon became as open minded on **spiritual matters** as we had tried to be on other questions. In this respect alcohol was a great persuader. It finally beat us into a state of reasonableness. Sometimes this was a tedious process; we hope no one else will be prejudiced for as long as some of us were.

The reader may still ask why he should believe in a **Power greater than himself**. We think there are good reasons. Let us have a look at some of them.

The practical individual of today is a stickler for facts and results. Nevertheless, the twentieth century readily accepts theories of all kinds, provided they are firmly grounded in fact. We have numerous theories, for example, about electricity. Everybody believes them without a murmur of doubt. Why this ready acceptance? Simply because it is impossible to explain what we see, feel, direct, and use, without a reasonable assumption as a starting point.

Everybody nowadays, believes in scores of assumptions for which there is good evidence, but no perfect visual proof. And does not science demonstrate that visual proof is the weakest proof? It is being constantly revealed, as mankind studies the material world, that outward appearances are not inward reality at all. To illustrate:

The prosaic steel girder is a mass of electrons whirling

The **12 Steps** will not work if you are stubborn and inflexible.

1.13 – Do The Work
Be receptive, reasonable and open minded as you read on. Change your thinking!

Your problem leaves you no other choice but to be practical and reasonable.

You can accept the idea of God simply because it is impossible to explain what you experience otherwise.

helpful hint – What you see outside of yourself is not inward reality. This fact has been proven by science.

handicapped – disabled; incapable of functioning.
obstinacy – stubbornness; resolute adherence to your own desires.
sensitiveness – being susceptible to the attitudes, feelings, or circumstances of others.
unreasoning – irrational; blind; not based on reason or evidence.

49

WE AGNOSTICS

around each other at incredible speed. These tiny bodies are governed by precise laws, and these laws hold true throughout the material world, Science tells us so. We have no reason to doubt it. When, however, the perfectly logical assumption is suggested that underneath the material world and life as we see it, there is an **All Powerful, Guiding, Creative Intelligence**, right there our perverse streak comes to the surface and we laboriously set out to convince ourselves it isn't so. We read wordy books and indulge in windy arguments, thinking we believe this universe needs no God to explain it. Were our contentions true, it would follow that life originated out of nothing, means nothing, and proceeds nowhere.

Instead of regarding ourselves as intelligent agents, spearheads of **God's** ever advancing **Creation**, we agnostics and atheists chose to believe that our human intelligence was the last word, the alpha and the omega, the beginning and end of all. Rather vain of us, wasn't it?

We, who have traveled this dubious path, beg you to lay aside prejudice, even against organized religion. We have learned that whatever the human frailties of various faiths may be, those faiths have given purpose and direction to millions. People of faith have a logical idea of what life is all about. Actually, we used to have no reasonable conception whatever. We used to amuse ourselves by cynically dissecting spiritual beliefs and practices when we might have observed that many **spiritually-minded** persons of all races, colors, and creeds were demonstrating a degree of stability, happiness and usefulness which we should have sought ourselves.

Science appears to confirm the existence of an Underlying Power. There is no reason to doubt it.

In a godless universe, life came from nothing, means nothing and is going nowhere.

Try to set aside even what you think you know about organized religion.

Spiritually minded people everywhere are stable, happy and useful.

vain – false pride; exaggerated sense of self-importance; conceited.
stability – constancy; enduring and free; quality of being steadfast.
happiness – state of well-being; emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy.
usefulness – being of service; quality of being of practical use.

50

WE AGNOSTICS

Instead, we looked at the human defects of these people, and sometimes used their shortcomings as a basis of wholesale condemnation. We talked of intolerance, while we were intolerant ourselves. We missed the reality and the beauty of the forest because we were diverted by the ugliness of some its trees. We never gave the spiritual side of life a fair hearing.

In our personal stories you will find a wide variation in the way each teller approaches and conceives of the **Power** which is greater than himself. Whether we agree with a particular approach or conception seems to make little difference. Experience has taught us that these are matters about which, for our purpose, we need not be worried. They are questions for each individual to settle for himself.

On one proposition, however, these men and women are strikingly agreed. Every one of them has gained access to, and believe in, a **Power greater than himself**. This **Power** has in each case accomplished the miraculous, the humanly impossible. As a celebrated American statesman put it, "Let's look at the record."

Here are thousands of men and women, worldly indeed. They flatly declare 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. There has been a **revolutionary change** in their way of living and thinking. 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. This happened soon after they wholeheartedly met a few simple requirements. Once con-

You probably have never really explored living a spiritual life.

The belief system you choose doesn't seem to matter.

This is your path and your decision. Trust that God will lead you.

Many people in A.A. have used the **12 Steps** to discover a Power that does miracles for them.

These people had a Spiritual Awakening that radically changed their lives.

They found power, peace, happiness and direction soon after taking the **12 Steps**.

miracle – an amazing or wonderful occurrence; marvelous event; act of a divine agent.
revolutionary – markedly new; introducing radical change.

51

WE AGNOSTICS

fused and baffled by the seeming futility of existence, they show the underlying reasons why they were making heavy going of life. Leaving aside the drink question, they tell why living was so unsatisfactory. They show how the change came over them. When many hundreds of people are able to say that the consciousness of the **Presence of God** is today the most important fact of their lives, they present a powerful reason why one should have faith.

This world of ours has made more material progress in the last century than in all the millenniums which went before. Almost everyone knows the reason. Students of ancient history tell us that the intellect of men in those days was equal to the best of today. Yet in ancient times, material progress was painfully slow. The spirit of modern scientific inquiry, research and invention was almost unknown. In the realm of the material, men's minds were fettered by superstition, tradition, and all sort of fixed ideas. Some of the contemporaries of Columbus thought a round earth preposterous. Others came near putting Galileo to death for his astronomical heresies.

We asked ourselves this: Are not some of us just as biased and unreasonable about the **realm of the spirit** as were the ancients about the realm of the material? Even in the present century, American newspapers were afraid to print an account of the Wright brothers' first successful flight at Kittyhawk. Had not all efforts at flight failed before? Did not Professor Langley's flying machine go to the bottom of the Potomac River? Was it not true that the best mathematical minds had proved man could never fly? Had not people said God had reserved this privilege to the

This is not just about drinking.
This is about living!

When you are aware of the presence of God,
you are Spiritually Awakened.

In ancient times, mankind was ignorant
about the material technology we have
now. They would see it as magical.

Could you be as ignorant about the
spiritual as the ancients were about
the material?

consciousness – awareness; having knowledge of.
futility – uselessness as a consequence of having no practical result.
faith – complete confidence in a plan; express belief in a divine power.
contemporaries – belonging to the same time period.
Samuel Langley (1834-1906) – American physicist, inventor and pioneer of aviation. His two attempts at manned flight crashed into the Potomac river located along the eastern coast of the United States.

52

WE AGNOSTICS

birds? Only thirty years later the conquest of the air was almost an old story and airplane travel was in full swing.

But in most fields our generation has witnessed complete liberation in thinking. Show any longshoreman a Sunday supplement describing a proposal to explore the moon by means of a rocket and he will say, "I bet they do it maybe not so long either." Is not our age characterized by the ease with which we discard old ideas for new, by the complete readiness with which we throw away the theory or gadget which does not work for something new which does?

We had to ask ourselves why we shouldn't apply to our human problems this same readiness to change our point of view. We were having trouble with personal relationships, we couldn't control our emotional natures, we were a 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 was not a basic solution of these bedevilmets more important than whether we should see newsreels of lunar flight? Of course it was.

When we saw others solve their problems by a simple reliance upon the **NEXT PAGE** we had to stop doubting the power of God. Our ideas did not work. But the God idea did.

You easily discard old ideas about technology for new ones.

Why not try new Spiritual ideas? The 12 Steps offer you new ideas.

1.14 – Do The Work
Fill out the Unmanageability Inventory on the following pages.

trouble – a source of difficulty; an angry disturbance; an event causing distress or pain.

personal relationships – intimate dealings between people.

emotional nature – physiological state; feelings.

misery – state of ill-being due to affliction or misfortune; a feeling of intense unhappiness.

depression – mental state characterized by a pessimism, feeling of inadequacy and dependency.

make a living – financial means whereby one lives.

uselessness – having no beneficial use or incapable of functioning usefully.

fear – afraid or anxious about a possible situation or event.

unhappy – sadness, sorrow or discontent; feeling of distress.

☐ 1.14.2 – Can you control your emotional nature?				
<u>Emotion</u>	When I feel this emotion: How do I behave? What do I say and do?	Can I get over it without hurting myself or others?	Do I feel sorry for myself? Am I moody or silent?	Is my health affected?
Anger				
Fear				
Guilt				
Shame				
Excitement				
Jealousy				
Envy				
Greed				
Love				

☐ 1.14.4 – Do you suffer depression?	
How much of the week are you depressed?	
When you are depressed, can you get out of it?	
Do you withdraw or go into hiding?	
When you are depressed, do you fantasize about:	
Wishing you were dead?	
Wishing you were somebody else?	
Do you want to drink?	
List examples of your behavior when you are depressed:	

□ 1.14.5 – Are you making a living?

How are the major areas in your life not in balance?
 List examples of your experiences in these areas. Ask yourself *“How is my life going in this area? Is there balance?”*

Intimate Relationship or Marriage	
Other Relationships	
Getting Ahead	
Finances & Paying Bills	
Education & Learning	
Material Abundance	
Spiritual Life	
Physical Health	
Getting & Keeping Jobs	
Recreation & Having Fun	

☐ 1.14.6 – Do you feel useless?

Do you ask yourself “Why am I living anyway?”	
When you try to help people, do they take advantage of you?	
Do you feel like a victim or martyr?	

List examples from your experience of feeling useless:

Do you know who you are?	
---------------------------------	--

☐ 1.14.8 – Are you unhappy?	
When you are unhappy, how do you act?	
How do you manage being unhappy?	
List examples of what makes you unhappy and why:	

☐ 1.14.9 – Are you able to be of real help to others?	
When you try to help others, does it turn out the way you intend?	
Does your helping others turn out negatively?	
List examples of how helping others hasn't worked out for you:	

Step 1, part 2 (52)

52

WE AGNOSTICS

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PAGE 52 part 2

We had to ask ourselves why we shouldn't apply our human problems this same readiness to change our point of view. We were having trouble with personal relationships, we couldn't control our emotional natures, we were a 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 was not a basic solution of these bedevils more important than whether we should see newsreels of lunar flight? Of course it was.

When we saw others solve their problems by a simple reliance upon the **Spirit of the Universe**, we had to stop doubting the power of **God**. Our ideas did not work. But the **God** idea did.

The Wright brothers' almost childish faith that they could build a machine which would fly was the main-spring of their accomplishment. Without that, nothing could have happened. We agnostics and atheists were sticking to the idea that self-sufficiency would solve our problems. When others showed us that "God-suf-

Step 1 – We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – *that our lives had become unmanageable.*

1.15 – Do The Work
The Unmanageability Inventory you just filled out showed you how well your current thinking and ideas are working and how you are managing your own life. This work should allow you to honestly take the second part of **Step 1** now.
I admit that my life has become unmanageable.
Initial here: _____

You see others in A.A. have solved their problems using the **12 Steps**. Your ideas do not work. The **12 Steps** ideas do work!.

childish faith – simple innocent confidence; free from evil thoughts.
accomplishment – bring to full success; performed fully.
reliance – certainty based on past experience; state of relying on something.
self-sufficiency – personal independence; not requiring any outside aid, support, or interaction for survival.

53

WE AGNOSTICS

ficiency” worked with them, we began to feel like those who had insisted the Wrights would never fly.

Logic is great stuff. We like it. We still like it. It is not by chance we were given the power to reason, to examine the evidence of our senses, and to draw conclusions. That is one of man's magnificent attributes. We agnostically inclined would not feel satisfied with a proposal which does not lend itself to reasonable approach and interpretation. Hence we are at pains to tell why we think our present faith is reasonable, why we think it more sane and logical to believe than not to believe, why we say our former thinking was soft and mushy when we threw up our hands in doubt and said, "We don't know."

When we became alcoholics, crushed by a self-imposed crises we could not postpone or evade, we had to fearlessly face the proposition that either **God** is everything or else He is nothing. **God** either is or He isn't. What was our choice to be?

Arrived at this point, we were squarely confronted with the question of faith. We couldn't duck the issue. Some of us had already walked far over the **Bridge of Reason** toward the desired shore of faith. The outlines and the promise of the New Land had brought lustre to tired eyes and fresh courage to flagging spirits. Friendly hands had stretched out in welcome. We were grateful that **Reason** had brought us so far. But somehow, we couldn't quite step ashore. Perhaps we had been leaning too heavily on reason that last mile and we did not like to lose our support.

That was natural, but let us think a little more closely. Without knowing it, had we not been brought to where we stood by a certain kind of faith? For did

So far in this work, you have used reasoning to draw your own conclusions based on your own observations.

As an alcoholic in crisis, you must make a choice about faith – To believe or not to believe.

Reasoning has brought you close to deciding to believe.

But you don't want to give up reasoning.

reason - rational thought; draw conclusions based on observation.
conclusion - decision, opinion or judgment reached after consideration.
observations - detect, discover or determine; facts learned by observing.
self-imposed - voluntarily assumed or endured.
crisis - an unstable situation of extreme danger or difficulty.
lustre (luster) - a quality that outshines the usual.

WE AGNOSTICS

we not believe in our own reasoning? Did we not have confidence in our ability to think? What was that but a sort of faith? Yes, we had been faithful, abjectly faithful to the God of Reason. So, in one way or another, we discovered that faith had been involved all the time!

We found, too, that we had been worshippers. What a state of mental goose-flesh that used to bring on! Had we not variously worshipped people, sentiment, things, money, and ourselves? And then, with a better motive, had we not worshipfully beheld the sunset, the sea, or a flower? Who of us had not loved something or somebody? How much did these feelings, these loves, these worships, have to do with pure reason? Little or nothing, we saw at last. Were not these things the tissue out of which our lives were constructed? Did not these feelings, after all, determine the course of our existence? It was impossible to say we had no capacity for faith, or love, or worship. In one form or another we had been living by faith and little else.

Imagine life without faith! Were nothing left but pure reason, it wouldn't be life. But we believed in life – of course we did. We could not prove life in the sense that you can prove a straight line is the shortest distance between two points, yet, there it was. Could we still say the whole thing was nothing but a mass of electrons, created out of nothing, meaning nothing, whirling on to a destiny of nothingness? Or course we couldn't. The electrons themselves seemed more intelligent than that. At least, so the chemist said.

Hence, we saw that reason isn't everything. Neither is reason, as most of us use it, entirely dependable,

Reasoning is really just faith and belief in your own thinking.

Devotion to people, material stuff, money and to yourself is really worship.

Your admiration of nature and appreciation of beauty is also worship.

So you already have a talent for faith, love and worship.

Life without faith, love and worship would be boring and dull.

abjectly – desperately; unfortunate or miserable; hopelessly resigned manner.
faithful – loyal; steadfast in allegiance.
worship – love unquestioningly and uncritically; devotion.
capacity – a specified function; the power to learn and retain knowledge.

55

WE AGNOSTICS

thought it emanate from our best minds. What about people who proved that man could never fly?

Yet we had been seeing another kind of flight, a **spiritual liberation** from this world, people who rose above their problems. They said God made these things possible, and we only smiled. We had seen **spiritual release**, but liked to tell ourselves it wasn't true.

Actually we were fooling ourselves, for **deep down** in every man, woman, and child, is the fundamental idea of God. It may be obscured by calamity, by pomp, by worship of other things, but in some form or other it is there. For faith in a **Power greater than ourselves**, and **miraculous demonstrations** of that power in human lives, are facts as old as man himself.

We finally saw that faith in some kind of God was a part of our make-up, just as much as the feeling we have for a friend. 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**. In the last analysis it is only there that **He** may be found. It was so with us.

We can only clear the ground a bit. If our testimony helps sweep away prejudice, enables you to think honestly, encourages you to search diligently within yourself, then, if you wish, you can join us on the Broad Highway. **With this attitude you cannot fail.** the consciousness of your belief is sure to come to you.

In this book you will read the experience of a man who thought he was an atheist. His story is so interesting that some of it should be told now. His change of heart was dramatic, convincing, and moving.

You can see people like you in A.A. who have solved their problems with God.

Promise – Deep down inside you is the fundamental idea of God.

The idea of God may be hidden by trouble, dishonesty or love of material stuff, but it is still there inside you.

Faith in God is already part of you. All you have to do is fearlessly search for it.

helpful hint: You will find God deep within yourself.

Promise – You cannot fail! With a simple and honest attitude, you will succeed.

fundamental idea - essential fact or principle.
obscured - not clearly seen or expressed; unclear.
attitude - mental state involving beliefs, feelings and values.

56

WE AGNOSTICS

Our friend was a minister's son. He attended church school, where he became rebellious at what he thought an overdose of religious education. For years thereafter he was dogged by trouble and frustration. Business failure, insanity, fatal illness, suicide these calamities in his immediate family embittered and depressed him. Post-war disillusionment, ever more serious alcoholism, impending mental and physical collapse, brought him to the point to self-destruction.

One night, when confined in a hospital, he was approached by an alcoholic who had known a **spiritual experience**. Our friend's gorge rose as he bitterly cried out: "If there is a **God**, He certainly hasn't done anything for me!" But later, alone in his room, he asked himself this question: "Is it possible that all the religious people I have known are wrong?" While pondering the answer he felt as though he lived in hell. Then, like a thunderbolt, a great thought came. It crowded out all else:

*"Who are you to say there is no **God**?"*

This man recounts that he tumbled out of bed to his knees. In a few seconds he was overwhelmed by a conviction of the **Presence of God**. It poured over and through him with the certainty and majesty of a great tide at flood. The barriers he had built through the years were swept away. He stood in the **Presence of Infinite Power and Love**. He had stepped from bridge to shore. For the first time, he lived in conscious companionship with his **Creator**.

Thus was our friend's cornerstone fixed in place. No later vicissitude has shaken it. His alcoholic problem was taken away. That very night, years ago, it dis-

The Atheist's Story

The atheist rebelled against his religious upbringing.

He was an alcoholic. Over the years, things did not go well for him.

He was visited by an alcoholic who had a Spiritual Awakening.

The atheist rejected the idea of God. But later he wondered how everyone in religion could *all* be wrong.

Then he thought, "Who am I to say there is no God?"

The atheist began to awaken spiritually. His reasoning was leading him to faith.

Then his alcohol problem was removed.

gorge – strong emotion; a powerful feeling of grievance.
vicissitude – variation in circumstances or fortune in your life or development.

Step 2 (57)

57 WE AGNOSTICS

appeared. Save for a few brief moments of temptation the thought of drink has never returned; and at such times a great revulsion has risen up in him. Seemingly he could not drink even if he would. **God had restored his sanity.**

What is this but a miracle of healing? Yet its elements are simple. Circumstances made him willing to believe. He humbly offered himself to his **Maker** – then he knew.

Even so has **God** restored us all to our right minds. To this man, the revelation was sudden. Some of us grow into it more slowly. But He has come to all who have honestly sought Him.

When we drew near to **Him He** disclosed **Himself** to us!

God consciousness restored the atheist to sanity.

Then he took **Step 3** and gained direct knowledge of God. He was Spiritually Awakened!

Some Spiritual Awakenings are sudden. Others develop gradually and gently over time.

Promise – When you look for God, you will find God.

Step 2 – Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

2.0 – Do The Work

If you believe there is a power greater than *you* that can solve your problem, then you are ready to take **Step 2**. Sign your name in the space provided.

I, _____, believe that a Power greater than myself can restore me to sanity.

spiritual liberation / release – freedom.

sanity – normal or sound powers of mind.

calamity – trouble; great loss; misfortune; disaster; tragedy.

pomp – cheap, pretentious or vain display.

encourage – give hope or courage; inspire with confidence; promote.

diligent – care and perseverance in carrying out the steps.

HOW IT WORKS

58 HOW IT WORKS

Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program, usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves. There are such unfortunates. They are not at fault; they seem to have been born that way. They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty. Their chances are less than average. There are those, too, who suffer from grave emotional and mental disorders, but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest.

Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now. 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 take certain steps.

At some of these we balked. We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not. With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the very start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely.

Remember that we deal with alcohol-cunning, baf-

Promise – When you work the **12 Steps** carefully and completely, you will succeed.

Give yourself entirely to working the **12 Steps**.

Be truthful with yourself.

No matter what your condition, if you have the ability to see the truth, you can recover.

You have learned about the **Experience, Strength and Hope** of others who have recovered.

3.0 – Do The Work
 We have had a **Spiritual Awakening**. If you are ready to go to *any length* to have this, then you are ready to work the **12 Steps**. Sign your name in the space provided.

I, _____, am ready to go to any length to have a *Spiritual Awakening*.

When you work the **12 Steps**, be brave and thorough from the beginning.

Promise – The **12 Steps** will not work unless you totally *let go of your old thinking*.

thorough – painstakingly, careful and accurate; exhaustive; performed comprehensively and completely.
honest – truthful, open; not deceptive or fraudulent.

59 **HOW IT WORKS**

fling, powerful! Without help it is too much for us. But there is **One** who has all power that **One is God**. May you find Him now!

Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. we asked **His** protection and care with complete abandon.

Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery:

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.

Prayer – Reveal yourself to me now!

Prayer – Protect me and care for me as I set out to work these **12 Steps**.

Step 1 – Honesty – seeing the truth.

Step 2 – Hope – expecting promises.

Step 3 – Faith – belief and confidence.

Step 4 – Courage – without fear.

Step 5 – Integrity – complete, nothing left out.

Step 6 – Willingness – making a choice.

Step 7 – Humility – lack of self-pride.

Step 8 – Love – caring about the wellbeing of others.

Step 9 – Justice – repairing damage.

Step 10 – Perseverance – ongoing **12 Steps**.

Step 11 – Spiritual Awareness – Knowledge of God.

60

HOW IT WORKS

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.

Many of us exclaimed, "What an order! I can't go through with it." Do not be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is, that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.

Our description of the alcoholic, the chapter to the agnostic, and our personal adventures before and after make clear three pertinent ideas:

- (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.

Being convinced, *we were at Step Three*, which is that we decided to turn our will and our life over to God as we understood Him. Just what do we mean by that, and just what do we do?

The first requirement is that we be convinced that any life run on self-will can hardly be a success. On that basis we are almost always in collision with something or somebody, even though our motives are good. Most people try to live by self-propulsion. Each person is like an actor who wants to run the whole show; is forever trying to arrange the lights, the ballet, the scenery and the rest of the players in his own way. If

NEXT PAGE

Step 12 – Service – helping others – unconditional love.

Step 12 is your goal. There are three parts:

- 1. To have had a Spiritual Awakening.
- 2. To sponsor others. *Do the work with this in mind.*
- 3. To follow the **12 Steps** in every part of your life.

No one can do the **12 Steps** perfectly.

Just be willing to grow and make progress.

3.1 – Do The Work

Make sure you are *convinced* that you have taken **Step 1** and **Step 2** completely.

I am an alcoholic and I cannot manage my own life. There is no human power that can relieve me of my problem. I believe that God will relieve me of my problem as I work these 12 Steps.

Initial here: _____

- convinced** – very sure; having a strong belief or conviction.
- powerless** – lacking the strength and control to influence events.
- unmanageable** - unable to control; difficult to solve or alleviate.
- human power** – control or influence of yourself or other people.

60 HOW IT WORKS

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- (b) That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism.
- (c) That God could and would if He were sought.

Being convinced, *we were at Step Three*, which is that we decided to turn our will and our life over to **God as we understood Him**. Just what do we mean by that, and just what do we do?

The first requirement is that we be convinced that any life run on self-will can hardly be a success. On that basis we are almost always in collision with something or somebody, even though our motives are good. Most people try to live by self-propulsion. Each person is like an actor who wants to run the whole show; is forever trying to arrange the lights, the ballet, the scenery and the rest of the players in his own way. If

PAGE 60 part 2

If you are convinced that you have taken **Steps 1 and 2** then you are ready to start work on **Step 3**.

Step 3 is – Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

Steps 1 & 2 showed you that running your life on your own self-will is not working.

When you run your life on self-will you are always clashing with someone or something, even when your reasons are good.

The Controlling Actor – tries to run the entire show.

requirement – necessity or indispensable; essential; prerequisite; required in advance.

61

HOW IT WORKS

his arrangements would only stay put, if only people would do as he wished, the show would be great. Everybody, including himself, would be pleased. Life would be wonderful. In trying to make these arrangements our actor may sometimes be quite virtuous. He may be kind, considerate, patient, generous; even modest and self-sacrificing. On the other hand, he may be mean, egotistical, selfish and dishonest. But, as with most humans, he is more likely to have varied traits.

What usually happens? The show doesn't come off very well. He begins to think life doesn't treat him right. He decides to exert himself more. He becomes, on the next occasion, still more demanding or gracious, as the case may be. Still the play does not suit him. Admitting he may be somewhat at fault, he is sure that other people are more to blame. He becomes angry, indignant, self-pitying. What is his basic trouble? Is he not really a self-seeker even when trying to be kind? Is he not a victim of the delusion that he can wrest satisfaction and happiness out of this world if he only manages well? Is it not evident to all the rest of the players that these are the things he wants? And do not his actions make each of them wish to retaliate, snatching all they can get out of the show? Is he not, even in his best moments, a producer of confusion rather than harmony?

Our actor is self-centered — ego-centric, as people like to call it nowadays. He is like the retired business man who lolls in the Florida sunshine in the winter complaining of the sad state of the nation; the minister who sighs over the sins of the twentieth century; politicians and reformers who are sure all would be Utopia

If everyone would just cooperate with the actor, everything would be wonderful.

He may be kind, thoughtful and even humble, *if he is getting his own way.*

Or he may become hateful, conceited and dishonest.

In either case, the show usually does not go well. He thinks life is unfair.

He is sure that other people are the cause of his problems.

The actor suffers from the *illusion* that he can force happiness out of life.

His actions actually cause others to feel bad and react badly.

The actor is selfish and egotistical. He is unwilling to take responsibility for his own life.

self-centered – limited to or caring only about yourself and your own needs.
ego-centric – a self-centered person with little or no regard for others.

62

HOW IT WORKS

if the rest of the world would only behave; the outlaw safe cracker who thinks society has wronged him; and the alcoholic who has lost all and is locked up. **Whatever our protestations, are not most of us concerned with ourselves, our resentments, or our self-pity?**

Selfishness—self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles. Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking, and self-pity, we step on the toes of our fellows and they retaliate. Sometimes they hurt us, seemingly without provocation, but we invariably find that at some time in the past we have made decisions based on self which later placed us in a position to be hurt.

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 kill us! **God** makes that possible. And there often seems no way of entirely getting rid of self without His aid. Many of us had moral and philosophical convictions galore, but we could not live up to them even though we would have liked to. Neither could we reduce our self-centeredness much by wishing or trying on our own power. We had to have **God's** help.

This is the how and the why of it. First of all, we had to quit playing **God**. It didn't work. Next, we decided that hereafter in this drama of life, **God** was going to be our **Director**. He is the **Principal**; we are His agents. He is the **Father**, and we are His children. Most Good ideas are simple, and this concept was the keystone of the new and triumphant arch through which we passed to freedom.

Regardless of your own circumstances, you may be a lot like The Controlling Actor.

Selfishness and self-centeredness is the root of your problem. Your fears cause you to care only about your own needs and to sympathize only with your own suffering. You disregard the needs and suffering of others and they react.

Even when people hurt you and you think you have done nothing wrong, you will *always* find that you have placed yourself in the situation that hurt you.

Promise – You create all of your own troubles!

Your main problem is unrestrained self-will. You probably don't believe this. Read on!

As an alcoholic, you must get rid of selfishness or face death. There is no way of getting rid of selfishness without God. You must have God's help.

This is how. It's simple:
 1. Stop playing God.
 2. Let God direct your life.

invariably – always; constantly: without variation or change, in every case.

HOW IT WORKS

When we sincerely took such a position, all sorts of remarkable things followed. We had a new **Employer**. Being **all powerful**, He provided what we needed, if we kept close to Him and performed His work well. Established on such a footing we became less and less interested in ourselves, our own little plans and designs. More and more we became interested in seeing what we could contribute to life. As we felt new power flow in, as we enjoyed peace of mind, as we discovered we could face life successfully, as we became conscious of His presence, we began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter. We were reborn.

We were now at Step Three. Many of us said to our Maker, *as we understood Him*: "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!" We thought well before taking this step making sure we were ready; that we could at last abandon ourselves utterly to Him.

We found it very desirable to take this spiritual step with an understanding person, such as our wife, best friend, or spiritual adviser. But it is better to meet God alone than with one who might misunderstand. The wording was, of course, quite optional so long as we expressed the idea, voicing it without reservation. This was only a beginning, though if honestly and humbly made, an effect, sometimes a very great one, was felt at once.

Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning,

Promises – When you stop playing God and let God direct your life, amazing things will happen:

1. God will direct your life and give you what you need.
2. You will become less selfish and genuinely care for others.
3. You will be interested in making a positive contribution to life.
4. You will feel power flow in.
5. You will enjoy peace of mind.
6. You will face life successfully.
7. You will begin to Spiritually Awaken.
8. You will begin to lose your fear.
9. You will become a different person.

3.2 – Do The Work

Fill out the Understanding Step 3 form on the next page.

NEXT PAGE

promise – grounds for feeling hopeful about the future; expectations; prediction.

Working the 12 Steps By The Book
UNDERSTANDING STEP 3

Understanding Step 3 (63)

□ 3.2.1 – Explain your understanding of each part of Step 3.

<p>What does it mean to make a decision?</p>	
<p>What does it mean to give your will over to the care of God?</p>	
<p>What does it mean to give your life over to the care of God?</p>	
<p>What is your understanding of God?</p>	

Where do you use your Will?
 You choose the thoughts you think and what to put into your imagination. You choose the words you speak and inflect the meaning that you intend. You choose your behavior, appearance and demeanor.

What is your Life?
 Life is your relationship with yourself, others and God. Life is the circumstances and conditions that you find yourself in, including everything that happens to you. Life is everything you experience.

decision – making up your mind; decisiveness; resoluteness; firmness of purpose.

give – transfer possession to; convey or communicate; impart or transmit.

will – determine by choice; intention; fixed and persistent intent or purpose.

life – the experience of being alive; energy in action or expression.

care – attention and management implying responsibility for safety attending to someone; concern or interest.

HOW IT WORKS

When we sincerely took such a position, all sorts of remarkable things followed. We had a new **Employer**. Being **all powerful**, He provided what we needed, if we kept close to Him and performed His work well. Established on such a footing we became less and less interested in ourselves, our own place and our own life. More and more we became interested in seeing what we could contribute to life. As we felt new power flow in, as we enjoyed peace of mind, as we discovered we could face life successfully, as we became conscious of His presence, we began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter. We were reborn.

We were now at Step Three. Many of us said to our **Maker, as we understood Him: "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!"** We thought well before taking this step making sure we were ready; that we could at last abandon ourselves utterly to **Him**.

We found it very desirable to take this spiritual step with an understanding person, such as our wife, best friend, or spiritual adviser. But it is better to meet God alone than with one who might misunderstand. The wording was, of course, quite optional so long as we expressed the idea, voicing it without reservation. This was only a beginning, though if honestly and humbly made, an effect, sometimes a very great one, was produced.

Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning,

PAGE 63 part 2

NEXT PAGE

You are almost ready to take **Step 3**. First you need to understand the prayer.

- Prayer – The Step 3 prayer is divided into 7 parts:**
1. Offering yourself to God.
 2. Asking God for change.
 3. Asking God for direction.
 4. Asking God to help you be of service and free from bondage.
 5. Asking God to take away your problems so you can help others.
 6. Realizing that God's Power, Love and way of life are already yours.
 7. Asking to do God's will always.

Make sure you are completely ready to abandon yourself to God before you take **Step 3**.

It is beneficial to take **Step 3** with a witness present. *Use your sponsor*. But better to take **Step 3** alone than not at all.

□ 3.3 – Do The Work
Fill out the Step 3 Prayer Design form on the next page.

offer – volunteer; agree freely; make available or accessible, provide or furnish.

Working the 12 Steps By The Book
MY THIRD STEP PRAYER

If you prefer, just use the prayer from the A.A. book, but still write it out in the space provided.

My Third Step Prayer (63)

3.3.1 – Write your own Third Step Prayer.

Prayer parts (1-7)	Write your personal Third Step Prayer here:	Prayer from A.A. book
<p>1. Offer yourself to God</p>		<p>God, I offer myself to Thee</p>
<p>2. Ask God to change you and build you</p>		<p>to build with me</p>
<p>3. Ask God to give you guidance and direction</p>		<p>and do with me as Thou wilt.</p>
<p>4. Ask God to free you from bondage and help you be of service</p>		<p>Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will.</p>
<p>5. Ask God to take away your problems so you can help others</p>		<p>Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help</p>
<p>6. State that Power, Love and God's way of life are already yours</p>		<p>of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life.</p>
<p>7. Ask that you do God's will always</p>		<p>May I do Thy will always!</p>

HOW IT WORKS

When we sincerely took such a position, all sorts of remarkable things followed. We had a new **Employer**. Being **all powerful**, He provided what we needed, if we kept close to Him and performed His work well. Established on such a footing we became less and less interested in ourselves, our own little plans and designs. More and more became interested in seeing what we could contribute to His life. As we felt new power flow in, as we enjoyed peace of mind, as we discovered we could face life successfully, we became conscious of His presence, we began to overcome our fear of today, tomorrow or hereafter. We were reborn.

PAGE 63 part 3

We were now at Step Three. Many of us said to the Lord, *as we understood Him*: "God, I offer myself to Thee to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Deliver 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!" We thought well before taking this step making sure we were ready; that we could at last abandon ourselves utterly to Him.

We found it very desirable to take this spiritual step with an understanding person, such as our wife, best friend, or spiritual adviser. But it is better to meet **God** alone than with one who might misunderstand. The wording was, of course, quite optional so long as we expressed the idea, voicing it without reservation. **This was only a beginning, though if honestly and humbly made, an effect, sometimes a very great one, was felt at once.**

Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning,

□ 3.4 – Do The Work

Take **Step 3** humbly and without reservation along with your sponsor or someone you trust. Read your personal **Third Step Prayer** aloud and then sign your name in the space provided below.

I, _____, have made a decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand God.

Promise – After you honestly and humbly take **Step 3**, you will feel great.

Start Step 4 right away!

humbly – in a humble manner; "she humbly lowered to her knees and bowed her head as she prayed "
reservation – an unstated doubt that prevents you from accepting something wholeheartedly.

Step 4 (64)

64 HOW IT WORKS

which many of us had never attempted. Though our decision was vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face, and to be rid of, the things in ourselves which had been blocking us. Our liquor was but a symptom. So we had to get down to causes and conditions.

Therefore, we started upon a personal inventory. This was Step Four. A business which takes no regular inventory usually goes broke. Taking commercial inventory is a fact-finding and a fact-facing process. It is an effort to discover the truth about the stock-in-trade. One object is to disclose damaged or unsalable goods, to get rid of them promptly and without regret. If the owner of the business is to be successful, he cannot fool himself about values.

We did exactly the same thing with our lives. We took stock honestly. First, we searched out the flaws in our make-up which caused our failure. Being convinced that self, manifested in various ways, was what had defeated us, we considered its common manifestations.

Resentment is the "number one" offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stem all forms of spiritual disease, for we have been not only mentally and physically ill, we have been spiritually sick. When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically. In dealing with resentments, we set them on paper. We listed people, institutions or principle with who we were angry. We asked ourselves why we were angry. In most cases it was found that our self-esteem, our pocketbooks, our ambitions, our personal relationships

Promise – The power of **Step 3** can be wonderful, but it won't last unless you begin **Step 4**.

Alcoholism is a symptom of a deeper problem. You must find the source of this deeper problem. This is **Step 4**.

Step 4 – Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

An inventory is a process of discovering the truth about items held in stock and getting rid of anything useless.

You will inventory yourself and discover the truth about your thoughts and ideas.

Selfishness and self-centeredness is what has defeated you. So **Step 4** will look at some common forms of this problem.

Resentment is the most spiritually destructive form of selfishness and self-centeredness. You are physically, mentally and *spiritually* ill.

Promise – When you are spiritually healed, you also heal mentally and physically.

causes – events that provide the generative force that is the origin of something.

conditions – the prevailing context that influences the performance or the outcome of a process.

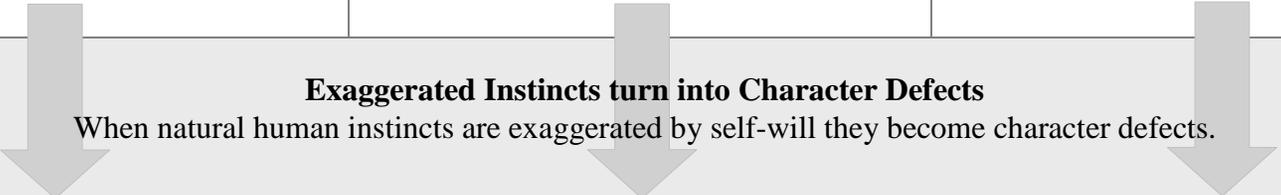
fact-finding – investigate, analyze, uncover the truth.

fact-facing - looking honestly at the truth.

NEXT PAGE

Manifestations of self as selfishness and self-centeredness are character defects. Consider what causes character defects.

Causes of Character Defects and Spiritual Illness

Natural Human Instincts These are perfectly natural components of your personality and character.		
Social	Security	Sexual / Intimacy
<p>Companionship – Wanting to be accepted and feeling a sense of belonging and friendship.</p> <p>Self-esteem – Liking yourself and thinking well of yourself.</p> <p>Status – Wanting recognition and a good reputation.</p> <p>Ambition – Wanting to be appreciated for your accomplishments.</p>	<p>Material – Feeling confident, safe and a sense of well-being in the material world.</p> <p>Emotional – Needing other people and love.</p> <p>Ambition – Wanting to succeed and to receive abundance.</p>	<p>Acceptance – Feeling acceptable to society, yourself and God.</p> <p>Truth – Wanting to be relaxed and honest.</p> <p>Ambition – Wanting intimacy, companionship and satisfaction.</p>
 <p style="text-align: center;">Exaggerated Instincts turn into Character Defects When natural human instincts are exaggerated by self-will they become character defects.</p>		
Resentment	Fear	Harm
<p>Companionship → Envy and jealousy.</p> <p>Self-esteem → Disapproval of yourself.</p> <p>Status → Feeling less than others.</p> <p>Ambition → Feeling useless.</p>	<p>Material → Feeling insecure and unsafe.</p> <p>Emotional → Being afraid of others and what they think of you.</p> <p>Ambition → Being afraid that you will fail.</p>	<p>Acceptance → Feeling unacceptable and different.</p> <p>Truth → Being anxious, closed and untruthful.</p> <p>Ambition → Feeling dissatisfied or victimized.</p>

Exaggerated natural human instincts turn into character defects.

64 HOW IT WORKS
 In dealing with resentments, we set them on paper. We listed people, institutions or principles with whom we were angry.

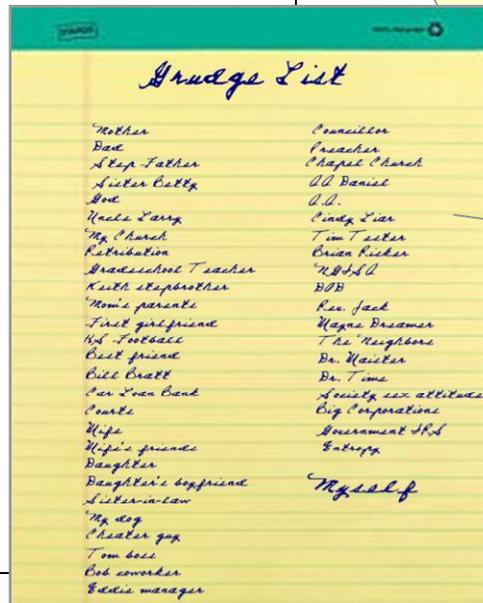
- Examples of people, institutions and principles**
- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p><u>People</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Mother / Father <input type="checkbox"/> Step Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Brothers, Sisters <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparents <input type="checkbox"/> Aunts, Uncles <input type="checkbox"/> Spouses <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers <input type="checkbox"/> School Friends <input type="checkbox"/> Acquaintances <input type="checkbox"/> Clergy <input type="checkbox"/> Coworkers <input type="checkbox"/> Employers <input type="checkbox"/> Officers <input type="checkbox"/> Military Friends <input type="checkbox"/> A.A. People <input type="checkbox"/> Girl/Boy Friends <input type="checkbox"/> Clients <input type="checkbox"/> Religious Leaders <input type="checkbox"/> In-laws <input type="checkbox"/> Pets <input type="checkbox"/> Church Friends <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbors <input type="checkbox"/> Instructors <input type="checkbox"/> Doctors <input type="checkbox"/> Yourself | <p><u>Institutions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> I.R.S. <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage <input type="checkbox"/> Religion <input type="checkbox"/> Law <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Corporations <input type="checkbox"/> Banks, Loans <input type="checkbox"/> A.A. <input type="checkbox"/> Church <input type="checkbox"/> Organizations <input type="checkbox"/> Societies <input type="checkbox"/> Political Parties <input type="checkbox"/> Medicine <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Schools <input type="checkbox"/> Colleges <input type="checkbox"/> Universities <input type="checkbox"/> Clubs | <p><u>Principles</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> God <input type="checkbox"/> Religious Traditions <input type="checkbox"/> Social Customs <input type="checkbox"/> Sin, Hell <input type="checkbox"/> Social Laws <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Laws <input type="checkbox"/> Religious Icons <input type="checkbox"/> Racial Differences <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientations |
|---|---|---|

4.1.1 – Do The Work

- 1. In your notepad write “**GRUDGE LIST**” at the top of a blank page.
- 2. On this page, list *everyone* and *everything* that you have resentful feelings toward. Think it through. Start from your earliest childhood memories and work your way forward though your *entire life*.

Resentful feelings include:

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| Anger | Disapproval |
| Bitterness | Indignation |
| Offended | Envy |
| Loathing | Dislike |
| Insult | Begrudge |
| Suspicion | Jealousy |
| Hate | Mistrust |



Your Grudge List should look something like this.

resentment – a negative emotion; displeasure stemming from belief that others have engaged in wrongdoing or mistreatment; indignation; a feeling of deep and bitter anger or ill-will.

We asked ourselves why we were angry.

more causes on next page

□ 4.1.2 – Do The Work

- 1. Start a new page in your notepad and write “**RESENTMENT INVENTORY**” at the top.
- 2. Divide the page into four columns as shown. Label the first column “**I’m resentful at**” and the second column “**The Cause**”.
- 3. For *every* name on your **Grudge List** perform the following steps:
 - a. Write *one* of the names from your Grudge List in the left-hand column.
 - b. In the second column list each of the causes of your resentment. Why are you upset? Letter each cause alphabetically (a-z). *Keep it simple.*
 - c. Write no more than three causes per page. If you have more than three causes, start a new page. The first page will have (a,b,c), second (d,e,f), third (g,h,i) and so on.

Repeat this process until you have *every* name from your grudge list crossed off and on your Resentment Inventory along with the causes.

If you think of new names to add to your Grudge List while you are doing this work, go ahead and add them.

Helpful Hint: You can make copies of the *Resentment Inventory Form* on the next page and use them instead of a notepad.

64-65

HOW IT WORKS

In most cases it was found that our self-esteem, our pocketbooks, our ambitions, our personal relationships (including sex) were hurt or threatened. So we were sore. We were "burned up."

On our grudge list we set opposite each name our injuries. Was it our self-esteem, our security, our ambitions, our personal, or sex relations, which had been interfered with?

□ 4.1.3 – Do The Work

What does this resentment affect? Perform the following steps:

- 1. Label the third column "Affects my".
- 2. Explain how every cause affects you in *each* of the following categories. Use the same letter as you did for the cause.

Self-esteem – A feeling of pride in yourself. How much you value yourself. What you think you are worth. Your overall evaluation or appraisal of yourself.

Security – Your financial situation. Feeling of being secure and free from danger or injury. Your freedom from anxiety or fear.

Ambitions – Your desire for personal achievement. Drive for success. Attaining your life goals.

Personal relations – Your connection to the people you have a relationship with.

Sex relations – Your intimate relationships.

- 3. If you experience fear in a category, indicate it by adding "(fear)" or "(afraid)" to your writing.

See the example form on the next page.

Resentment Inventory

<i>I'm resentful at:</i>	<i>The Cause</i>	<i>Affects my</i>
<i>Cindy</i>	<p><i>a. Talks me down behind my back</i></p> <p><i>b. acts like she is in charge</i></p> <p><i>c. Sleeps on the job!</i></p>	<p><i>a.</i></p> <p><i>Self-esteem - I feel embarrassed around the people she talks to (fear)</i></p> <p><i>Security - I am (afraid) she will influence my boss</i></p> <p><i>Ambitions - to be successful and liked (fear)</i></p> <p><i>Personal relations - I don't know how others truly see me (fear)</i></p> <p><i>b.</i></p> <p><i>Self-esteem - she looks down on me (fear)</i></p> <p><i>Security - I may not be as good as her (fear)</i></p> <p><i>Ambitions - to be looked up to (fear)</i></p> <p><i>Personal relations - she looks better than me to others (fear)</i></p> <p><i>c.</i></p> <p><i>Self-esteem - It was my training she slept in (fear)</i></p> <p><i>Security - her performance reflects on mine (fear)</i></p> <p><i>Ambitions - to have my class help her</i></p> <p><i>Personal relations - she embarrassed me in front of other coworkers (fear)</i></p>

more causes on next page-

Example – First three columns of Resentment Inventory

<i>I'm resentful at:</i>	<i>The Cause</i>	<i>Affects my:</i> Self-esteem Security Ambitions Personal relations (including sex)	<i>Where have I been:</i> Selfish Dishonest Self-seeking Frightened Where was I to blame?
Cindy	<p>a. talks me down behind my back.</p> <p>b. acts like she is in charge.</p> <p>c. sleeps on the job!</p>	<p>a. Self-esteem - I feel embarrassed around the people she talks to (fear). Security - I am (afraid) she will influence my boss. Ambitions - to be successful and liked (fear). Personal relations - I don't know how others truly see me (fear).</p> <p>b. Self-esteem - she looks down on me (fear). Security – I'm (afraid) I may not be as good as her. Ambitions - to be looked up to (fear). Personal relations - she looks better than me to others (fear).</p> <p>c. Self-esteem - It was my training class she slept in (fear). Security - her performance reflects on mine (fear). Ambitions – I wanted to help her learn the job. Personal relations - she embarrassed me in front of my coworkers (fear).</p>	

65

HOW IT WORKS

(including sex) were hurt or threatened. So we were sore. We were "burned up."

On our grudge list we set opposite each name our injuries. Was it our self-esteem, our security, our ambitions, our personal, or sex relations, which had been interfered with?

We were usually as definite as this example:

I'm resentful at:	The Cause	Affects my:
Mr. Brown	His attention to my wife. Told my wife of my mistress. Brown may get my job at the office.	Sex relations Self-esteem (fear) Sex relations Self-esteem (fear) Security Self-esteem (fear)
Mrs. Jones	She's a nut – she snubbed me. She committed her husband for drinking. He's my friend She's a gossip.	Personal relationship. Self-esteem (fear)
My employer	Unreasonable – Unjust — Overbearing — Threatens to fire me for my drinking and padding my expense account.	Self-esteem (fear) Security.
My wife	Misunderstands and nags. Likes Brown. Wants house put in her name.	Pride – Personal sex relations – Security (fear)

Each of your resentments should be filled out *at least* as completely as the example in the book.

In the work you just finished you went over your *entire life* and honestly looked at *all* of your resentments.

Promise – If you have not been thorough and honest, this step will not work.

Now you will consider the work you just completed carefully.

We went back through our lives. Nothing counted but thoroughness and honesty. When we were finished we considered it carefully. The first thing apparent

consider – think about with awareness; weigh; regard.

66

HOW IT WORKS

was that this world and its people were often quite wrong. To conclude that others were wrong was as far as most of us ever got. The usual outcome was that people continued to wrong us and we stayed sore. Sometimes it was remorse and then we were sore at ourselves. But the more we fought and tried to have our own way, the worse matters got. As in war, the victor only seemed to win. Our moments of triumph were short-lived.

It is plain that a life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness. To the precise extent that we permit these, do we squander the hours that might have been worth while. But with the alcoholic, whose hope is the maintenance and growth of a spiritual experience, this business of resentment is infinitely grave. We found that it is fatal. For when harboring such feeling 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.

If we were to live, we had to be free of anger. The grouch and the brainstorm were not for us. They may be the dubious luxury of normal men, but for alcoholics these things are poison.

We turned back to the list, for it held the key to the future. We were prepared to look at it from an entirely different angle. We began to see that the world and its people really dominated us. In that state, the wrong-doing of others had power to actually kill. How could we escape? We saw that these resentments must be mastered, but how? We could not wish them away any more than alcohol.

This was our course: We realized that the people who wronged us were perhaps spiritually sick.

It is obvious that people and society have mistreated you.

It is also obvious that you regret the mistakes you have made.

But the more you try to control your life the worse it gets. Your successes are fleeting.

Promise – If you continue to experience resentment, your life will be unhappy and ineffective.

Your only hope for life is a Spiritual Awakening. Resentment prevents a Spiritual Awakening.

You must be free of anger. Anger and resentment are poisonous to you.

conclude – decide by reasoning; reach a decision after deliberation.
remorse – feeling of regret or sadness for doing wrong; a feeling of deep regret.
futility – uselessness; having no practical result.
insanity – disorder of the mind; behaviors characterized by abnormal mental patterns.
poison – anything that harms or destroys; something that causes injury, illness or death.

NEXT PAGE

66-67

HOW IT WORKS

We turned back to the list, for it held the **key to the future**. We were prepared to look at it from an entirely different angle. We began to see that **the world and its people really dominated us**. In that state, the wrong-doing of others, fancied or real, had power to actually kill. How could we escape? We saw that these resentments must be mastered, but how? We could not wish them away any more than alcohol. This was our course: We realized that the people who wronged us were perhaps spiritually sick.

67

Though we did not like their symptoms and the way these disturbed us, they, like ourselves, were sick too. We asked God to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience that we would cheerfully grant a sick friend. When a person offended we said to ourselves, "This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him? **God** save me from being angry. Thy will be done."

We avoid retaliation or argument. We wouldn't treat sick people that way. If we do, we destroy our chance of being helpful. We cannot be helpful to all people, but at least **God** will show us how to take a kindly and tolerant view of each and every one.

Referring to our list again. Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened? Though a situation had not been entirely our fault, we tried to disregard the other person involved entirely. Where were we to blame? The inventory was ours, not the other man's. When we saw black and white. We admitted our wrongs honestly and were willing to set these matters straight.

NEXT PAGE

The work you just completed holds the secret to your future *if* you are willing to look at it in a different way.

Society and people have controlled your thinking.

Consider this. The people who mistreat you may be *spiritually ill* like you.

- Forth Step Prayer** – When someone upsets you:
1. Ask God for the willingness to respect them.
 2. Ask God to help you be compassionate.
 3. Ask God for patience.
 4. Recognize their spiritual illness.
 5. Ask God to show you how you can help.
 6. Ask God to direct your thinking.
 7. Ask God to control the outcome.

Promise – God will show you how to be kind and tolerant to everyone.

dominated – controlled; having power to defeat; looked down on.
tolerance – willingness to respect the beliefs and practices of others; allowing someone freedom of choice and behavior.
pity – feeling of sympathy for the sorrow, misfortunes or suffering of others.
patience – good-natured tolerance of someone's growth and development.
kindly – charitable; showing sympathy, understanding and generosity.

67

HOW IT WORKS

Referring to our list again. Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened? Though a situation had not been entirely our fault, we tried to disregard the other person involved entirely. Where were we to blame? The inventory was ours, not the other man's. When we saw our faults we listed them. We placed them before us in black and white. We admitted our wrongs honestly and were willing to set these matters straight.

Resentment Inventory

<i>I'm resentful at:</i>	<i>The Cause</i>	<i>Affects my</i>	<i>Where have I been:</i>
<i>Cindy</i>	<p>a. talks me down behind my back</p> <p>b. acts like she is in charge</p> <p>c. I keep on the job!</p>	<p>a.</p> <p><i>Self-esteem - I feel embarrassed around the people she talks to (fear)</i></p> <p><i>Security - I am (afraid) she will influence my boss</i></p> <p><i>Ambitions - To be successful and liked (fear)</i></p> <p><i>personal relations - I don't know how others truly see me (fear)</i></p> <p>b.</p> <p><i>Self-esteem - she looks down on me (fear)</i></p>	<p>a.</p> <p><i>Selfish - I need others to see me the way I want them to</i></p> <p><i>Dishonest - I try to make myself look better than I am</i></p> <p><i>Self-seeking - I try to make people believe I am better than I am</i></p> <p><i>Frightened - I'm afraid no one will like the real me</i></p> <p><i>Where was I to blame? I try to be superior to Cindy</i></p> <p>b.</p> <p><i>Selfish - I don't want anyone to look down on me</i></p> <p><i>Dishonest - I avoid the truth about my accomplishments</i></p> <p><i>Self-seeking - I try to look more important than I am</i></p> <p><i>Frightened - I'm not a good person</i></p> <p><i>Where was I to blame? I threaten others with my actions and make them angry</i></p> <p>c.</p> <p><i>Selfish - I need people to act the way I think they should</i></p> <p><i>Dishonest - I do things to make myself look good</i></p> <p><i>Self-seeking - I try to make people think I am righteous</i></p> <p><i>Frightened - I am afraid of the way people see me</i></p> <p><i>Where was I to blame? I did not really try to help her, I just wanted it to look like I did</i></p>

more causes on next page - coward (fear)

Forth Step Prayer –

For every resentment say:

God, help me show tolerance, sympathy, and patience to _____.
 Help me recognize *their* suffering. Show me how can I be helpful. Save me from being angry.

Thy will be done.

4.1.4 – Do The Work

What are your mistakes? Perform the following steps:

- 1. Label the fourth column “**Where have I been:**”.
- 2. Consider each resentment in the first column and say the *Fourth Step Prayer* for them. Now ignore the name in the first column entirely and look only at yourself.
- 3. For each letter with a resentment, explain how you have behaved in *each* of the following categories. Use the same letter as you did for “The Cause” and “Affects my”.

Selfish – How have you been concerned only with yourself to the exclusion of all others and regarded your well-being above all others?

Dishonest – How have you been deceptive, lied or been untrue to others or yourself?

Self-seeking – How have you taken advantage of life without regard for the consequences to others?

Frightened – How have you been afraid, anxious or apprehensive?

Where was I to blame? Where are you responsible? Be honest. What are your faults?

See the example form on the next page and the **Glossary of Blame** on the page after that.

Example – All four columns of Resentment Inventory

<i>I'm resentful at:</i>	<i>The Cause</i>	<i>Affects my:</i> Self-esteem Security Ambitions Personal relations Sex Relations	<i>Where have I been:</i> Selfish Dishonest Self-seeking Frightened Where was I to blame?
<p>Cindy</p>  <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: yellow; padding: 5px;"> <p>Ignore the other person and their wrongs. Only look for your own mistakes.</p> </div>	<p>a. talks me down behind my back.</p> <p>b. acts like she is the boss.</p> <p>c. Sleeps on the job!</p>	<p>a.</p> <p>Self-esteem - I feel embarrassed around the people she talks to (fear). Security - I am (afraid) she will influence my boss. Ambitions - to be successful and liked (fear). Personal relations - I don't know how others truly see me (fear).</p> <p>b.</p> <p>Self-esteem - she looks down on me (fear). Security - I'm (afraid) I may not be as good as her. Ambitions - to be looked up to (fear). Personal relations - she looks better than me to others (fear).</p> <p>c.</p> <p>Self-esteem - It was my training class she slept in (fear). Security - her performance reflects on mine (fear). Ambitions - I wanted to help her. Personal relations - she embarrassed me in front of my coworkers (fear).</p>	<p>a.</p> <p>Selfish - I need others to see me the way I want them to. Dishonest - I try to make myself look better than I am. Self-seeking - I try to make people believe I am better than I am. Frightened - I am (afraid) no one will like the real me. Where was I to blame? I try to be superior to people.</p> <p>b.</p> <p>Selfish - I don't want anyone to look down on me. Dishonest - I twist the truth about my accomplishments. Self-seeking - I try to look more important than I am. Frightened - I am (afraid) I am not a good person. Where was I to blame? I threaten others with my actions and make them angry.</p> <p>c.</p> <p>Selfish - I need people to act the way I think they should. Dishonest - I do things to make myself look good. Self-seeking - I try to make people think I am righteous. Frightened - I am (afraid) of the way people see me. Where was I to blame? I did not really try to help, I just wanted it to look like I did.</p>

Glossary of Blame

Some answers to the question “Where was I to blame?”

Glossary of Blame

Angry – Hostile feelings.

Arrogant – Feeling you are due respect.

Cheat – A fraud, swindle; to be dishonest or deceitful; sexually unfaithful.

Competitive – combative; to be in rivalry; in opposition to others.

Conceited – An exaggerated opinion of yourself.

Deceptive – Misleading or dishonest.

Dishonest – Not trustworthy.

Disorganized – Thrown into confusion.

Disrespectful – Not showing respect, honor or esteem for others.

Distrusting – Doubting others.

Egocentric – Only interested in yourself.

Envious – Desire for something that another has.

Fearful – Anxiety caused by real or possible danger, pain or threat.

Gluttonous – Unbalanced capacity for something (usually eating).

Grandiose – Pompous, showy, pretentious and self-important.

Harsh – Offensive to others’ feelings.

Hatred – Strong dislike or ill will.

Impatient – Irritated because of delay; restlessly eager.

Inconsiderate – Thoughtless; without consideration for others; not having regard for others and their feelings.

Indifferent – Unconcerned about others; feeling others are of no importance.

Insecure – Feeling anxiety; not feeling safe.

Insensitive – Not responsive to others’ needs.

Insincere – Deceptive or critical.

Intellectual Pride – Excessive opinion of yourself and your knowledge.

Intolerant – Unwilling to tolerate others’ race, beliefs or lifestyle.

Irresponsible – Avoiding obligation, duties and responsibilities.

Jealous – Resentfully suspicious of others.

Judgmental – Criticizing or judging others.

Lusting – Excessive sexual desire.

Neglectful – To ignore or disregard the needs of others; to leave undone; lack of proper care.

Omission – Failure to include; not telling the whole truth.

Possessive – To gain control over.

Prejudice – A preconceived notion; an opinion held while ignoring the facts; intolerance or hatred of other races or lifestyles.

Pride – Excessively high opinion of yourself; arrogance.

Procrastinate – Lazy; putting off your responsibilities.

Rude – Discourteous, rough and insensitive.

Sarcastic – expression of ridicule that wounds another.

Self-pitying – Focusing only on your own suffering and misfortune.

Self-righteous – Holding the opinion that you are better than others.

Self-centered – Concerned only with your own affairs.

Self-seeking – Seeking only to further your own interests.

Selfish – Overly concerned with yourself; having little concern for others.

Slothful – Laziness; reluctance to work or exert oneself.

Spiritual Pride – Excessively high opinion of your own knowledge of God.

Stealing – Take dishonestly; to have been a thief.

Stubborn – Refusing to yield; obstinate.

Suspicious – To believe in the guilt of another without facts.

Undependable – Unreliable for support or aid.

Undisciplined – Lacking self-control, and efficiency; disorderly conduct.

Unfaithful – Adulterous; lacking or breaking faith or loyalty.

Ungrateful – Not thankful or appreciative.

Unreliable – Not trustworthy or dependable.

Untrustworthy – Not worthy of trust; not reliable.

67-68

HOW IT WORKS

Referring to our list again. Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened? Though a situation had not been entirely Page 67 cont disregard the other person involved entirely. Where were we to blame? The inventory was ours, not the other man's. When we saw our faults we listed them. We placed them before us in black and white. We admitted our wrongs honestly and were willing to set these matters straight.

Notice that the word "fear" is bracketed alongside the difficulties with Mr. Brown, Mrs. Jones, the employer, and the wife. This short word somehow touches about every aspect of our lives. It was an evil and corroding thread; the fabric of our existence was shot through with it. It 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? Sometimes

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

We reviewed our fears thoroughly. We put them on paper, even though we had no resentment in connection with them. We asked ourselves why we had them. Wasn't it because self-reliance isn't? Self-reliance was good as far as it went, but it didn't go far enough. Some of us once had great self-confidence, but it didn't fully solve the fear problem, or any other. When it made us cocky, it was worse.

Page 67 cont

NEXT PAGE

Remember selfishness and self-centeredness is what has defeated you and that you are *spiritually ill*.

In addition to resentment, **fear** is also a spiritually destructive form of the problem of selfishness and self-centeredness.

Now you will look at your fears.

Fear touches every part of your life.

Fear sets up conditions in your life that you think are unjustified. Yet by just having fear, you cause the conditions yourself.

fear – afraid, anxious or apprehensive about a possible situation or event; to be frightened of; anticipation of some specific pain or danger; desire to flee or fight.
circumstances – conditions in life including everything that happens to you.
aspect – a characteristic; a distinct feature or element.
corroding – deterioration; disintegration; caustic; capable of destroying.
deserve – to be owed; due demerit, judgment or punishment.

68

HOW IT WORKS

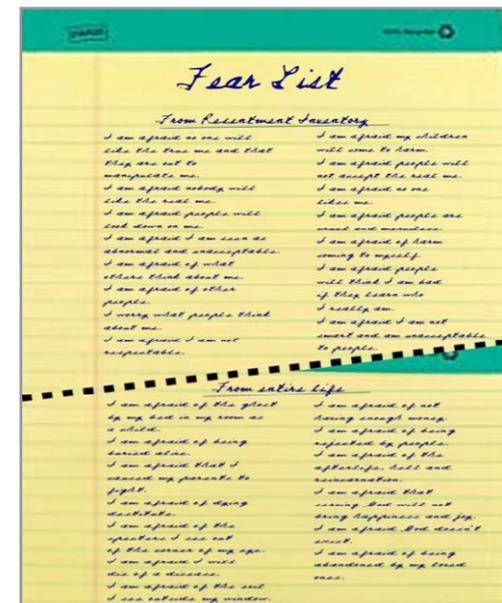
We reviewed our fears thoroughly. We put them on paper, even though we had no resentment in connection with them.

Types of fears — The fear of:

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abandonment | <input type="checkbox"/> Disease | <input type="checkbox"/> Invasion of boundaries | <input type="checkbox"/> Public speaking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acceptance | <input type="checkbox"/> Doing wrong | <input type="checkbox"/> Isolation | <input type="checkbox"/> Punishment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol | <input type="checkbox"/> Duty | <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Races |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Authority | <input type="checkbox"/> Exposure | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack | <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being bad, corrupt, evil, defective | <input type="checkbox"/> Failure | <input type="checkbox"/> Limitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Relationships |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being controlled by others | <input type="checkbox"/> Fighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Loneliness | <input type="checkbox"/> Responsibility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being deprived | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial problems | <input type="checkbox"/> Looking stupid | <input type="checkbox"/> Ridicule |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being foolish | <input type="checkbox"/> Fragmentation | <input type="checkbox"/> Loss | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-expression |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being harmed | <input type="checkbox"/> The future | <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of connection | <input type="checkbox"/> Selfishness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being incapable | <input type="checkbox"/> God | <input type="checkbox"/> Material loss | <input type="checkbox"/> Separation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being worthless | <input type="checkbox"/> Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Sex & Sexuality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being unloved | <input type="checkbox"/> Guidance | <input type="checkbox"/> Love | <input type="checkbox"/> Shyness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being useless | <input type="checkbox"/> Honesty | <input type="checkbox"/> Meaninglessness | <input type="checkbox"/> Stupid (being) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being myself | <input type="checkbox"/> Hurting others | <input type="checkbox"/> Myself | <input type="checkbox"/> Success |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Change | <input type="checkbox"/> Ignorance | <input type="checkbox"/> No identity | <input type="checkbox"/> Support |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Incarceration (captivity; being imprisoned) | <input type="checkbox"/> Old age | <input type="checkbox"/> The truth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict | <input type="checkbox"/> Incompetence | <input type="checkbox"/> Pain | <input type="checkbox"/> The unknown |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Death | <input type="checkbox"/> Injury | <input type="checkbox"/> People (shyness) | <input type="checkbox"/> Vulnerability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Declining health | <input type="checkbox"/> Insecurity | <input type="checkbox"/> Phobias | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Defeat | <input type="checkbox"/> Insignificance | <input type="checkbox"/> Possessiveness | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diminishment | <input type="checkbox"/> Intimacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Poverty | |

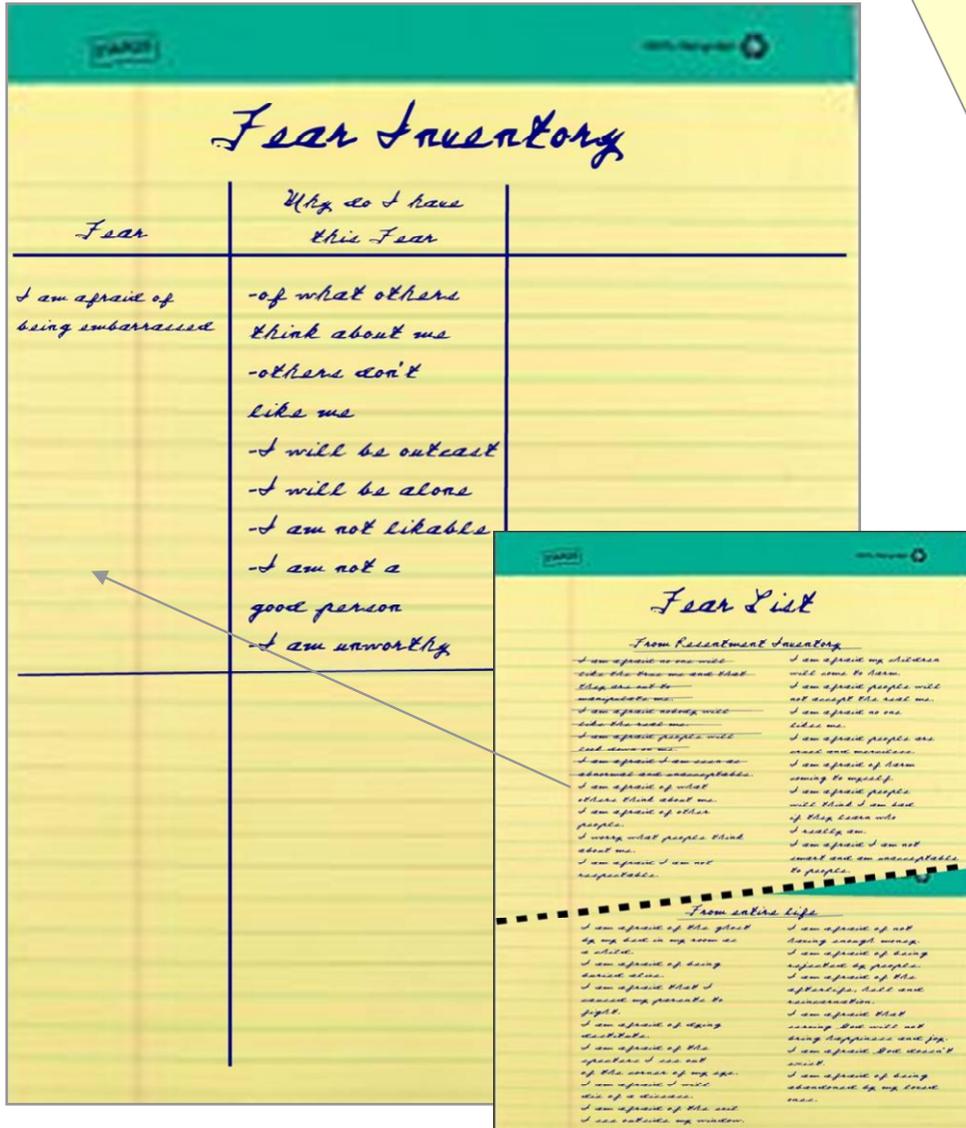
4.2.1 – Do The Work

- 1. In your notepad write “**FEAR LIST**” at the top of a blank page.
- 2. On your Fear List write *every* fear that you recognized when you wrote your Resentment Inventory. Use the **Frightened** question in column four and the places where you wrote (**fear**) and (**afraid**) to *find each and every fear*.
- 3. Add to your Fear List *every fear* that is not on your Resentment Inventory. Start from your earliest childhood memory and work your way forward though your *entire life*.
- 4. Don’t give up!



HOW IT WORKS

We asked ourselves why we had them.



4.2.2 – Do The Work

- 1. Start a new page in your notepad and write “**FEAR INVENTORY**” at the top.
- 2. Divide the page into three columns as shown. Label the first column “**Fear**” and the second column “**Why do I have this fear**”.
- 3. For every fear on your **Fear List** perform the following steps:
 - a. Write *one* of the fears from your Fear List in the left-hand column. Cross it off the list.
 - b. In the second column ask yourself why you have this fear. *What are you afraid of?* Below that, ask yourself why you have what you just wrote. Carefully consider each answer and continue to drill down like this until you reach the *root fear* or *self-delusion*.
 - c. Draw a line across the page then go to the next fear in your Fear List and repeat from (3.a).

Helpful Hint: You can make copies of the *Fear Inventory Form* on the next page and use them instead of a notepad.

Fear Inventory Form	
<i>Fear</i>	<i>Why do I have this fear?</i>

<i>Has self-reliance failed me?</i>	
<i>↓</i>	<i>God remove my fear and direct my attention to what you would have me be.</i>

68

HOW IT WORKS

Wasn't it because self-reliance failed us? Self-reliance was good as far as it went, but it didn't go far enough. Some of us once had great self-confidence, but it didn't fully solve the fear problem, or any other. When it made us cocky, it was worse.

4.2.3 – Do The Work

- 1. Make a small column on your Fear Inventory with just enough room for “Y” or “N”.
- 2. For every fear listed in the second column, ask yourself this question:

Has Self-Reliance failed me?

- 3. Write your answer in the third column. “Y” for yes or “N” for no. *Think about it.*

Fear Inventory

<i>Fear</i>	<i>Why do I have this Fear</i>	<i>Has Self-Reliance failed me?</i>
<i>I am afraid of being embarrassed</i>	<i>-of what others think about me</i>	<i>Y</i>
	<i>-others don't like me</i>	<i>Y</i>
	<i>-I will be outcast</i>	<i>Y</i>
	<i>-I will be alone</i>	<i>Y</i>
	<i>-I am not likable</i>	<i>Y</i>
	<i>-I am not a good person</i>	<i>Y</i>
	<i>-I am unworthy</i>	<i>Y</i>
	<i>I am afraid of being embarrassed</i>	<i>-of what others think about me</i>
<i>-others don't like me</i>		<i>Y</i>
<i>-I will be outcast</i>		<i>Y</i>
<i>-I will be alone</i>		<i>Y</i>
<i>-I am not likable</i>		<i>Y</i>
<i>-I am not a good person</i>		<i>Y</i>
<i>-I am unworthy</i>		<i>Y</i>

Self-Reliance – self directed: independent of any assistance, direction or aid.

Example – First three columns of Fear Inventory		
<i>Fear</i>	<i>Why do I have this fear?</i>	<i>Has self-reliance failed me?</i>
		↓
		<i>God remove my fear and direct my attention to what you would have me be.</i>
I am afraid of being embarrassed.	<i>I am afraid-</i>	
	- of what others think about me.	Y
	- that others don't like me.	Y
	- I will be outcast.	Y
	- I will be alone.	Y
	- I am not likable.	Y
	- I am not a good person.	Y
	- I am unworthy.	Y

68

HOW IT WORKS

We ask **Him** to remove our fear and direct our attention to what **He** would have us be. At once, we commence to outgrow fear.

□ 4.2.4 – Do The Work

- 1. For *each fear* in the first column of your Fear Inventory write a prayer with two parts:
 - a. Ask God to remove the fear in column one and each of the fears in column two.
 - b. Ask God to direct your attention to what you think God would want instead of these fears.
- 2. When you have finished writing a prayer, quietly and sincerely say it.

Promise – As soon as you ask God to remove a fear and direct your attention to a better way, you will begin to outgrow that fear.

Fear	Why do I have this Fear	Has Self-Reliance failed me?
I am afraid of being embarrassed	-of what others think about me -others don't like me -I will be outcast -I will be alone -I am not likable -I am not a good person -I am unworthy	2/ - God remove my fear of embarrassment, of what others think about me, of not being liked, of being an outcast and alone, of not being good and of being unworthy. 2/ - God direct my attention to being confident in myself, self-assured, friendly and kind, secure in the knowledge that You are always with me, likable, good natured and to knowing that I am worthy of love and freedom
I am afraid of being embarrassed	-of what others think about me -others don't like me -I will be outcast -I will be alone -I am not likable -I am not a good person -I am unworthy	2/ - God remove my fear of embarrassment, of what others think about me, of not being liked, of being an outcast and alone, of not being good and of being unworthy. 2/ - God direct my attention to being confident in myself, self-assured, friendly and kind, secure in the knowledge that You are always with me, likable, good natured and to knowing that I am worthy of love and freedom

See the example form on the next page and the **Glossary of Direction** on the page after that.

Example – All four columns of Fear Inventory		page <u>23</u>	
<i>Fear</i>	<i>Why do I have this fear?</i>	<i>Has self-reliance failed me?</i> ↓	<i>God remove my fear and direct my attention to what you would have me be.</i>
I am afraid of being embarrassed	<i>I am afraid-</i>		
	- of what others think about me	Y	God remove my fear of embarrassment, of what others think about me, of not being liked, of being an outcast and alone, of not being good and of being unworthy. God direct my attention to being confident in myself, self-assured, friendly and kind, secure in the knowledge that You are always with me, likable, good-natured and to knowing that I am worthy of love and freedom.
	- that others don't like me	Y	
	- I will be outcast	Y	
	- I will be alone	Y	
	- I am not likable	Y	
	- I am not a good person	Y	
- I am unworthy	Y		

Glossary of Direction

Examples of what God might direct

Glossary of Direction

Acceptance – tolerate and accept people and situations.

Altruistic – Unselfish interest in the welfare of others.

Assured – freedom from doubt; belief in yourself and your abilities.

Attentive – Regarding the needs of others; giving proper care.

Calm – Quiet; feeling friendly.

Compassionate – Forgiving, caring about the suffering and misfortune of others.

Complimentary – Expression that heals another.

Concerned – Concerned about others; a feeling that others are important.

Consciousness – An alert cognitive state in which you are aware of yourself and your situation

Considerate – Thoughtful; having consideration for others; regarding others and their feelings.

Dependable – Reliable for support or aid.

Diligent – Care and perseverance in carrying out the steps.

Disciplined – Self-controlled and efficient; orderly conduct.

Encouraged – Hope or courage; inspire with confidence; promote.

Energetic – Energy; ready to work.

Enthusiastic – Passionate and eager; having the presence of God within.

Fair – Reasonable, honest and just.

Faith – Complete confidence in a plan; express belief in a divine power.

Faithful – Authentic; genuine; true to life; having faith or loyalty; steadfast affection or allegiance.

Fearless – Confident, courageous.

Flexible – Yielding and compliant; capable of being changed.

Generous – Kind and charitable; willing to give and share; not petty in character and mind.

Gentle – Tender, kind and calm.

Good-will – grace; kindness and compassion.

Gracious – Polite and generous; characterized by kindness and warm courtesy; courteous.

Grateful – Thankful, appreciative, pleased, satisfied.

Happy – State of well-being; emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy.

Harmonious – Agreeable or pleasing; exhibiting equivalence.

Honest – Sincere and truthful; dependable; not disposed to cheat or defraud; not deceptive or fraudulent.

Honorable – Deserving respect; ethical.

Humble – Lack of false pride; unassuming and modest.

Inclusive – Including the whole truth.

Loving – Affectionate, devoted, tender; giving pleasure to others.

Miraculous – An amazing or wonderful occurrence; a marvelous event.

Moderate – Balanced, sensible and restrained.

Modest – Reserved and reasonable.

Nonjudgmental – Lenient with others; accommodating; hands-off.

Open-minded – Unbiased and tolerant; willing to consider new and different ideas or opinions.

Organized – Prepared and orderly.

Passive – Peaceable; cooperation with others.

Patient – Tolerant, serene, uncomplaining.

Peaceful – Absence of mental stress or anxiety; harmonious relations; freedom from dispute.

Polite – Courteous and sensitive; showing regard for others in manners, speech and behavior.

Rational – Lucid, sane and normal; state of having good sense and sound judgment.

Recovered – Freed from illness or injury; found after being lost.

Reliable – Trustworthy, consistent and dependable.

Reserved – Restrained desires.

Glossary of Direction *(continued)*

Examples of what God might direct

Resigned – Original, honest and faithful.

Respectful – Honorable; high regard for others.

Responsible – Meeting obligation, duties and responsibilities.

Sacred – Blessed by God.

Secure – Feeling safe; free from danger or risk; not likely to fail or give up.

Self-respecting – Knowing you are valuable; dignity; being worthy of esteem and respect..

Selfless – Concerned with the welfare and affairs of others.

Sensitive – Responsive to others' needs; able to feel or perceive the needs of others.

Sincere – Stable and honest; open and genuine; not deceitful; earnest.

Spiritual – Concerned with or affecting the spirit or soul.

Stable – Constant; enduring and free; quality of being steadfast.

Thorough – Careful and accurate; exhaustive; performed comprehensively and completely; painstakingly.

Tolerant – Open-minded, nonjudgmental; tolerant of others races, beliefs and lifestyles.

Transparent – Truthful and honest.

Trusting – Believing others are good; Innocent; not doubting others.

Trustworthy – Worthy of trust; reliable; taking responsibility for your conduct and obligations.

Useful – Being of service; quality of being of practical use.

Virtuous – Honorable and worthy; excellent.

Willing – Of your own free will; freely and spontaneously.

68-69

HOW IT WORKS

age. All men of faith have courage. They trust their God. We never apologize for God. Instead we let Him demonstrate, through what He does. We ask Him to remove our fear and direct our attention to what He would have us be. At once, we commence to outgrow fear.

Page 68 cont.

Now about sex. Many of us needed an overhauling there. But above all, we tried to be sensible on this question. It's so easy to get way off the track. Here we find human opinions running to extremes — absurd extremes, perhaps. One set of voices cry that sex is a lust of our lower nature, a base necessity of procrea-

69

tion. Then we have the voices who cry for sex and more sex; who bewail the institution of marriage; who think that most of the troubles of the race are traceable to sex causes. They think we do not have enough of it, or that it isn't the right kind. They see its significance everywhere. One school would allow man no flavor for his fare and the other would have us all on a straight pepper diet. We want to stay out of this controversy. We do not want to be the arbiter of anyone's sex conduct. We all have sex problems. We'd hardly be human if we didn't. What can we do about them?

We reviewed our own conduct over the years past. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate? Whom had we hurt? Did we unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness? Where were we in fault, what should we have done instead? We got this all down on paper and looked at it.

NEXT PAGE

Sex is the most intimate human relationship. You will now look at your relationships.

Remember that selfishness and self-centeredness is what has defeated you and that you have been *spiritually ill*.

The **12 Steps** will work for any lifestyle. This work is not about judging your relationships or your sex life.

controversy – dispute or debate, usually concerning a matter of opinion.
arbiter – someone with the power to settle matters.
procreation – biological process by which new organisms are produced.

69

HOW IT WORKS

Where had we been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate? Whom had we hurt? Did we unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness? Where were we at fault, what should we have done instead? We got this all down on paper and looked at it.

In this way we tried to shape a sane and sound ideal for our future sex life. We subjected each relation to this test — was it selfish or not?

Cindy

2. Where have I been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate?	I wanted her to be more than she could. I was threatened by her witless. I rarely considered her feelings and finally just gave up on her entirely.
3. Who did I hurt?	Cindy, myself
4. Did I unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness?	I aroused jealousy by not including her in team activities. I aroused suspicion because I was never completely open. I aroused bitterness because she thought I was out to get her.
5. Where was I fault?	I lagg and put her in a no-win situation. I gossiped.
6. What should I have done instead?	I should have done the homework and really evaluated her so I wouldn't put her in a no-win situation. I should have really helped her.
7. Was this relationship selfish?	Selfish

Relationships

Marlon	Carrie G	Chad T
Julian	Carole	Don B
Justin	David A	Frank F
Allyson	Jan M	Robert P
Kevin Long	Brandon	Sean P
David	Wife	Shirley P
Stephanie	Wife's grand	Ronald
Stephanie	Am	Ken Long
Stephanie	Stephanie	Michelle
Bob Jones	Carl Lee	Michelle G
Jackie Johnson	Il	Tony K
Jan S	Paul J	Michael F
Mike W	Williamson	James H
Steph Long	My dog	Alan B
Tom K	Sam	Caroline K
Patrick	Tony	George P
Mr. Callaway	Alan & Janet	Stephanie
William J	Tom B	Bob West
Hal S	Mark K	Don Lee
Mark B	Tom F	
Bob C	Richard K	
Baris	Alan B	Bob
George	Baris B	Michael
Ken Long	Michael	

4.3.2 – Do The Work

For each name on your **Relationship** list perform the following steps.

- 1. Write the name of the person at the top of a blank page and cross their name off the Relationship list.
- 2. Answer each of the following questions for this person:
 - a. Where have I been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate?
 - b. Who did I hurt?
 - c. Did I unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness?
 - d. Where was I fault?
 - e. What should I have done instead?
 - f. Was this relationship selfish?
- 3. Repeat this process for *each* name on your Relationship list, each on a new page.

Helpful Hint: You can make copies of the Relationship Inventory Form that follows and use them instead of a notepad.

Relationship Inventory Form

<p>My relationship with –</p>	
<p>Where have I been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate?</p>	
<p>Who did I hurt?</p>	
<p>Did I unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness?</p>	
<p>Where was I fault?</p>	
<p>What should I have done instead?</p>	
<p>Was this relationship selfish?</p>	
<p>God, mold my ideals and help me. Give me the guidance, sanity, and strength to do the right thing.</p>	

Prayer

69 HOW IT WORKS

We asked **God** to mold our ideals and help us to live up to them. We remembered always that our sex powers were **God-given** and therefore good, neither to be used lightly or selfishly nor to be despised and loathed.

Whatever our ideal turns out to be, we must be willing to grow toward it. We must be willing to make amends where we have done harm, provided that we do not bring about still more harm in so doing. In other words, we treat sex as we would any other problem. In meditation, we ask **God** what we should do about each specific matter. The right answer will come, if we want it.

70 HOW IT WORKS

We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the strength to do the right thing.

Promise

Prayer

Cindy

a. Where have I been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate?	I wanted her to be more than she could. I was threatened by her motives. I rarely considered her feelings and finally just gave up on her entirely.
b. Who did I hurt?	Cindy, myself
c. Did I unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness?	I aroused jealousy by not including her in team activities. I aroused suspicion because I was never completely open. I aroused bitterness because she thought I was out to get her.
d. Where was I fault?	I lapsed and put her in a no-win situation. I gossiped.
e. What should I have done instead?	I should have done the homework and really evaluated her so I wouldn't put her in a no-win situation. I should have really helped her.
f. Was this relationship selfish?	Selfish
God, mold my ideals and help me. Give me the guidance, sanity, and strength to do the right thing.	God, I will be energetic in similar situations in the future. I will do the homework and identify all the information, finally trusting You for guidance and strength. I will not let my fear of confrontation put others in no-win situations. God, give me the guidance and strength to be impeccable in my relationships at work.

4.3.4 – Do The Work

God will help you recreate your relationships. Perform the following steps on each relationship:

- 1. Think about and carefully consider what you have written. Meditate on the relationship.
- 2. Pray. Ask God to mold your ideals for this relationship. Ask God what you should do.
- 3. Write a two-part prayer for this relationship.
 - a. State your ultimate objectives for your own behavior in this relationship.
 - b. Ask God to help you live up to these objectives. Ask God to give you the guidance, sanity, and strength to do the right thing.

Repeat this process for *each* relationship.

See the example form on the next page and the Glossary of Ideals on the page after that.

meditation – careful contemplation of a subject.
ideals – something that one hopes to attain; the idea of something that is perfect.

Example – Completed Relationship Inventory Form		page <u>14</u>
My relationship with –	Cindy	
Where have I been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate?	I wanted her to solve my problems at work. I was threatened by her motives. I rarely considered her feelings and finally just gave up on her entirely. I just wanted to look good myself.	
Who did I hurt?	Cindy, myself, others like Cindy	
Did I unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness?	I aroused jealousy by not including her in group activities. I aroused suspicion because I was never completely open with her and tried to get her reprimanded by management. I aroused bitterness because she thought I was out to get her.	
Where was I fault?	I was selfish and lazy. I put her in a no-win situation. I gossiped about her. I only cared about myself.	
What should I have done instead?	I should have done the homework and really helped her so I wouldn't put her in a no-win situation. I should have been a team player. I shouldn't have worried what others thought about me and just tried to be a good employee and helpful coworker.	
Was this relationship selfish?	Selfish	
God, mold my ideals and help me. Give me the guidance, sanity, and strength to do the right thing.	God, I will be thoughtful and considerate in my relationships at work. I will do the homework and identify all the facts, finally trusting You for guidance and strength. I will not let my fear of confrontation put others in no-win situations. God, give me the guidance and strength to be loving and compassionate in all of my relationships at work.	

Glossary of Ideals

Examples of what your ideals for a relationship might be

Glossary of Ideals

Acceptance – tolerate and accept people and situations.

Altruistic – Unselfish interest in the welfare of others.

Assured – freedom from doubt; belief in yourself and your abilities.

Attentive – Regarding the needs of others; giving proper care.

Calm – Quiet; feeling friendly.

Compassionate – Forgiving, caring about the suffering and misfortune of others.

Complimentary – Expression that heals another.

Concerned – Concerned about others; a feeling that others are important.

Consciousness – An alert cognitive state in which you are aware of yourself and your situation

Considerate – Thoughtful; having consideration for others; regarding others and their feelings.

Dependable – Reliable for support or aid.

Diligent – Care and perseverance in carrying out the steps.

Disciplined – Self-controlled and efficient; orderly conduct.

Encouraged – Hope or courage; inspire with confidence; promote.

Energetic – Energy; ready to work.

Enthusiastic – Passionate and eager; having the presence of God within.

Fair – Reasonable, honest and just.

Faith – Complete confidence in a plan; express belief in a divine power.

Faithful – Authentic; genuine; true to life; having faith or loyalty; steadfast affection or allegiance.

Fearless – Confident, courageous.

Flexible – Yielding and compliant; capable of being changed.

Generous – Kind and charitable; willing to give and share; not petty in character and mind.

Gentle – Tender, kind and calm.

Good-will – grace; kindness and compassion.

Gracious – Polite and generous; characterized by kindness and warm courtesy; courteous.

Grateful – Thankful, appreciative, pleased, satisfied.

Happy – State of well-being; emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy.

Harmonious – Agreeable or pleasing; exhibiting equivalence.

Honest – Sincere and truthful; dependable; not disposed to cheat or defraud; not deceptive or fraudulent.

Honorable – Deserving respect; ethical.

Humble – Lack of false pride; unassuming and modest.

Inclusive – Including the whole truth.

Loving – Affectionate, devoted, tender; giving pleasure to others.

Miraculous – An amazing or wonderful occurrence; a marvelous event.

Moderate – Balanced, sensible and restrained.

Modest – Reserved and reasonable.

Nonjudgmental – Lenient with others; accommodating; hands-off.

Open-minded – Unbiased and tolerant; willing to consider new and different ideas or opinions.

Organized – Prepared and orderly.

Passive – Peaceable; cooperation with others.

Patient – Tolerant, serene, uncomplaining.

Peaceful – Absence of mental stress or anxiety; harmonious relations; freedom from dispute.

Polite – Courteous and sensitive; showing regard for others in manners, speech and behavior.

Rational – Lucid, sane and normal; state of having good sense and sound judgment.

Recovered – Freed from illness or injury; found after being lost.

Reliable – Trustworthy, consistent and dependable.

Reserved – Restrained desires.

Glossary of Ideals *(continued)*

Examples of what your ideals for a relationship might be

Resigned – Original, honest and faithful.

Respectful – Honorable; high regard for others.

Responsible – Meeting obligation, duties and responsibilities.

Sacred – Blessed by God.

Secure – Feeling safe; free from danger or risk; not likely to fail or give up.

Self-respecting – Knowing you are valuable; dignity; being worthy of esteem and respect..

Selfless – Concerned with the welfare and affairs of others.

Sensitive – Responsive to others' needs; able to feel or perceive the needs of others.

Sincere – Stable and honest; open and genuine; not deceitful; earnest.

Spiritual – Concerned with or affecting the spirit or soul.

Stable – Constant; enduring and free; quality of being steadfast.

Thorough – Careful and accurate; exhaustive; performed comprehensively and completely; painstakingly.

Tolerant – Open-minded, nonjudgmental; tolerant of others races, beliefs and lifestyles.

Transparent – Truthful and honest.

Trusting – Believing others are good; Innocent; not doubting others.

Trustworthy – Worthy of trust; reliable; taking responsibility for your conduct and obligations.

Useful – Being of service; quality of being of practical use.

Virtuous – Honorable and worthy; excellent.

Willing – Of your own free will; freely and spontaneously.

(Did you notice that this is the same as the Glossary of Direction?)

69-70

HOW IT WORKS

God alone can judge our sex situation. Counsel with persons is often desirable, but we let **God** be the final judge. We realize that some people are as fanatical about sex as others are loose. We avoid hysterical thinking or advice.

Suppose we fall short of the chosen ideal and stumble? Does this mean we are going to get drunk. Some people tell us so. But this is only a half-truth. It depends on us and on our motives. If we are sorry for what we have done, and have the honest desire to let **God** take us to better things, we believe we will be forgiven and will have learned our lesson. If we are not sorry, and our conduct continues to harm others, we are quite sure to drink. We are not theorizing. These are facts out of our experience.

To sum up about sex: We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the strength to do the right thing. If sex is very troublesome, we throw ourselves the harder into helping others. We think of their needs and work for them. This takes us out of ourselves. It quiets the imperious urge, when to yield would mean heartache.

If we have been thorough about our personal inventory, we have written down a lot. We have listed and analyzed our resentments. We have begun to comprehend their futility. We have commenced to see their terrible destructiveness. We have begun to learn tolerance, patience and good will toward all men, even our enemies, for we look on them as sick people. We have listed the people we have hurt by our conduct,

NEXT PAGE

No one can judge your sex life or your relationships but God.

If you fall short of your ideals, will you start drinking again?

You won't drink if your desire is to let God direct you to a better way of life.

Promise – If you are not sorry and you continue to harm others, you will drink again.

When you earnestly pray for the right ideal, the answer will come.

When all else fails, get out of yourself and go help someone! Work for them and think of their needs.

fanatical – excessive enthusiasm for and intense devotion to a cause or idea.
hysterical – excessive or uncontrollable emotion.
imperious – disdainful; unworthy.

70-71

HOW IT WORKS

helping others. We think of their needs and work for them. This takes **Page 70 cont.** quietens the impetuous urge, when to yield would mean heartache.

If we have been thorough about our personal inventory, we have written down a lot. We have listed and analyzed our resentments. We have begun to comprehend their futility and their fatality. We have commenced to see their terrible destructiveness. We have begun to learn tolerance, patience and good will toward all men, even our enemies, for we look on them as sick people. We have listed the people we have hurt by our conduct, and are willing to straighten out the past if we can.

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. If you have already made a decision, and an inventory of your grosser handicaps, you have made a good beginning. That being so you have swallowed and digested some big chunks of truth about yourself.

71

If you did the work in **Step 4** carefully, you have written a lot. Quite a lot!

You understand how your exaggerated natural instincts have been distorted into resentment and fear which cause harm to yourself and others. You see how useless, destructive and even deadly this thinking has been.

Promise – You have started to learn kindness and compassion for others, even those who have wronged you. You recognize the *Spiritual Illness* in others because you recognize it in yourself.

You made a list of people affected by your conduct. You are starting to understand how your thinking has affected them. Remember your **Step 3** decision. You are willing to make an amends.

Promise – God can remove all of your defects of character. Then you will be able to see God.

You have made a good *beginning*. Keep going!

futility – useless; having no practical use.
fatality – able to cause death or fatal disaster.
terrible – awful; causing fear or dread or terror; exceptionally bad.
destructiveness – causing damage that it cannot be repaired.
handicaps – incapable of functioning as a consequence of Spiritual Illness.

analyzed – examined carefully & methodically; broken down for consideration.
comprehend – understand; perceive; aware of.
good will – grace; kindness and compassion.

INTO ACTION

Step 5 (72)

72

INTO ACTION

Having made our personal inventory, what shall we do about it? We have been trying to get a new attitude, a new relationship with our **Creator**, and to discover the obstacles in our path. We have admitted certain defects; we have ascertained in a rough way what the trouble is; we have put our finger on the weak times in our personal inventory. Now these are about to be cast out. This requires action on our part, which, when completed, will mean that we have admitted to **God**, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our defects. This brings us to *the Fifth Step* in the program of recovery mentioned in the preceding chapter.

This is perhaps difficult — especially discussing our defects with another person. We think we have done well enough in admitting these things to ourselves. There is doubt about that. In actual practice, we usually find a solitary self-appraisal insufficient. Many of us thought it necessary to go much further. We will be more reconciled to discussing ourselves with another person when we see good reasons why we should do so. The best reason first: If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome drinking. Time after time newcomers have tried to keep to themselves certain facts about their lives. Trying to avoid this humbling experience, they have turned to easier methods. Almost

You have been trying to create a new relationship with God (**Step 3**) and have tried to discover what has been preventing this (**Step 4**).

You have learned how your thinking patterns have affected your relationship with God, yourself and others. You see these defects and admit you have them.

Promise – These defects are about to be completely eliminated.

This brings you to **Step 5**.

Admitting to God, to yourself, and to another person the exact nature of your wrongs.

Step 5 – Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

You may think admitting your defects to yourself is enough.

A private review is not enough.

Promise – If you skip **Step 5**, you will probably drink again..

solitary self-appraisal – measuring or evaluating yourself alone, without a companion.

insufficient – does not fulfill the need or requirement.

73

INTO ACTION

invariably they got drunk. Having persevered with the rest of the program, they wondered why they fell. We think the reason is that they never completed their house-cleaning. They took inventory all right, but hung on to some of the worst items in stock. They only *thought* they had lost their egoism and fear; they only *thought* they had humbled themselves. But 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.

More than most people, the alcoholic leads a double life. He is very much the actor. To the outer world he presents his stage character. This is the one he likes his fellows to see. He wants to enjoy a certain reputation, but knows in his heart he doesn't deserve it.

The inconsistency is made worse by the things he does on his sprees. Coming to his senses, he is revolted at certain episodes he vaguely remembers. These memories are a nightmare. He trembles to think someone might have observed him. As far as he can, he pushes these memories far inside himself. He hopes they will never see the light of day. He is under constant fear and tension, that makes for more drinking.

Psychologists are inclined to agree with us. We have spent thousands of dollars for examinations. We know but few instances where we have given these doctors a fair break. We have seldom told them the whole truth nor have we followed their advice. Unwilling to be honest with these sympathetic men, we were honest with no one else. Small wonder many in the medical profession have a low opinion of alcoholics and their chance for recovery!

We must be entirely honest with somebody if we

You must be humble and willing to discuss everything you found in **Step 4**. You must be fearless and honest and *leave nothing out*.

You are like the Controlling Actor you read about earlier and you don't want people to see what is really inside.

Trying to hide your defective thinking causes even more fear, stress and anxiety. And that leads to more drinking.

You probably have never even been totally honest with doctors or psychologists.

If you want to be happy, you *must* be entirely honest with somebody!

persevered – persistent; refusal to stop; diligent.

sympathetic – charitable; one who shows understanding and generosity.

74

INTO ACTION

expect to live long or happily in this world. Rightly and naturally, we think well before we choose the person or persons with whom to take this intimate and confidential step. Those of us belonging to a religious denomination which requires confession must, and of course, will want to go to the properly appointed authority whose duty it is to receive it. Though we have no religious connection, we may still do well to talk with someone ordained by an established religion. We often find such a person quick to see and understand our problem. Of course, we sometimes encounter people who do not understand alcoholics.

If we cannot or would rather not do this, we search our acquaintance for a close-mouthed, understanding friend. Perhaps our doctor or psychologist will be the person. It may be one of our own family, but we cannot disclose anything to our wives or our parents which will hurt them and make them unhappy. We have no right to save our own skin at another person's expense. Such parts of our story we tell to someone who will understand, yet be unaffected. The rule is we must be hard on ourself, but always considerate of others.

Notwithstanding the great necessity for discussing ourselves with someone, it may be one is so situated that there is no suitable person available. If that is so, this step may be postponed, only, however, if we hold ourselves in complete readiness to go through with it at the first opportunity. We say this because we are very anxious that we talk to the right person. It is important that he be able to keep a confidence; that he fully understand and approve what we are driving at;

You should carefully consider who will hear your **Fifth Step**. You might choose more than one person.

If your religion requires confession, use it.

Even if you are not religious, talking with a religious practitioner may be a good idea.

You can talk to your sponsor or an understanding friend as long as they agree not to discuss anything you tell them.

You can talk to your doctor or psychologist.

You can talk to a family member, but only if they will *not be affected* by anything you tell them.

You should always be considerate to whomever hears your **Fifth Step**.

You can postpone only until you find the right person. Then *you must go through with it right away*.

intimate – an established friendship or close acquaintance; promoting a warm or friendly and informal atmosphere.
confidential – entrusted with private information; in confidence or in secret.
ordained – invested with ministerial or priestly functions.
suitable – desirable; worthy of being chosen.

74-75 INTO ACTION

It is important that he be able to keep a confidence; that he fully understand and approve what we are driving at; that he will not try to change our plan. But we must not use this as a mere excuse to postpone.

75

Fifth Step Worksheet

The person who will hear my Fifth Step must:

1. Be available for several long meetings.
2. Keep my Fifth Step confidential.
3. Approve of me working the **12 Steps**.
4. Not try and change my plan to complete the **12 Steps**.

Name	Requirements met			
	1	2	3	4
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.0 – Do The Work

Choose who will hear your **Fifth Step**.

You need to find the *right person*. This person must be able to keep your talk confidential and must approve of your plan and not try to change it.

1. Use the Fifth Step Worksheet to help you choose who will hear your Fifth Step. Interview them and make sure they agree to *all four requirements* on the worksheet.
2. Write your choice in the space provided below:

My Fifth Step Listener

Contact Info: _____

important – crucial; vital to resolution.

keep confidence – trustworthy; give assurance so that there is freedom from any doubt.

fully understand – sufficiently know of and comprehend the 12 Steps.

approve – judge the 12 Steps to be right or commendable; think well of the 12 Steps.

75 INTO ACTION

When we decide who is to hear our story, we waste no time. We have a written inventory and we are prepared for a long talk. We explain to our partner what we are about to do and why we have to do it. He should realize that we are engaged upon a life-and-death errand. Most people approached in this way will be glad to help; they will be honored by our confidence.

We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past.

Promise – Your Fifth Step listener will be honored by your confidence in them.

Fifth Step Scheduler		
Schedule the time and place for each meeting with your Fifth Step Listener.		
	Date & Time	Location
<input type="checkbox"/>		

5.1 – Do The Work

Take **Step 5**. You have decided who will listen to your fifth step. Now you will read it to them aloud.

Complete this step *As Soon As Possible*.

Always *be considerate* to whoever is hearing your Fifth Step. Be on time or early to the meetings. Make them comfortable.

You must be complete. Read everything you have written. *Leave nothing out*.

- 1. At your first meeting, explain what you are about to do and why. Help them understand that this process is vitally important to you.
- 2. Read your entire *Resentment Inventory* aloud to your listener.
- 3. Read your entire *Fear Inventory* aloud to your listener.
- 4. Read your entire *Relationship Inventory* aloud to your listener.

75 INTO ACTION

that he will not try to change our plan. But we must not use this as a mere excuse to postpone.

When we decide who is to hear our story, we waste no time. We have a written inventory and we are prepared for a long talk. We should realize that we are engaged upon a life-and-death errand. Most people approached in this way will be glad to help; they will be honored by our confidence.

We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past. Once we have taken this step, withholding nothing, we are delighted. We can look the world in the eye. We can be alone at perfect peace and ease. Our fears fall from us. We begin to feel the nearness of our **Creator**. We may have had certain spiritual beliefs, but now we begin to have a **spiritual experience**. The feeling that the drink problem has disappeared will often come strongly. We feel we are on the Broad Highway, walking hand in hand with the **Spirit of the Universe**.

Returning home we find a place where we can be quiet for an hour, carefully reviewing what we have done. We thank **God** from the bottom of our heart that we know **Him** better. Taking this book down from our shelf we turn to the page which contains the twelve steps. Carefully reading the first five proposals we ask if we have omitted anything, for we are building an arch through which we shall walk a free man at last. Is our work solid so far? Are the stones properly in place? Have we skimmed on the cement put into the foundation? Have we tried to make mortar without sand?

Page 75 cont.

Fifth Step Promises –
After taking **Step 5** honestly and completely, you will be pleased.

1. You will see yourself as equal to others. No more and no less.
2. You will be at peace when you are alone.
3. Your fears will leave you.
4. You will feel close to God.
5. You will begin to Awaken Spiritually.
6. You will feel that your problem is solved.
7. You will experience God leading you.

Prayer – Appreciate the fact that you know God better. *Feel gratitude.*

□ 5.2 – Do The Work
Find a quiet place where you can be alone for an hour then fill out the Fifth Step Completion form on the following page.

Promise – This work will set you free!

Awaken Spiritually – wake up from a dream; see true reality; become concerned with your spirit.

Fifth Step Completion Form

5.2.1 – Fifth Step Completion Form
 Find a quiet place where you can be alone for an hour then fill out this form.

<p>Carefully think about the Steps you have taken. Briefly describe your thoughts and feelings.</p>	
<p>Write a thankful and grateful prayer for knowing God better.</p>	
<p>Review each of the first five steps and ask yourself if you have omitted anything.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 1. I admitted I am powerless over alcohol – that my life has become unmanageable. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. I came to believe that God could restore me to sanity. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. I made a decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God. <input type="checkbox"/> 4. I made a searching and fearless moral inventory of myself. <input type="checkbox"/> 5. I admitted to God, to myself, and to another human being the <i>exact nature</i> of my wrongs.</p>
<p>Has your work been genuine?</p>	
<p>Have you done the work correctly?</p>	
<p>Will your work serve as a foundation for the other steps?</p>	
<p>Have you been <i>completely honest</i>?</p>	
<p>If you are satisfied with your answers then...</p>	<p>Forgive Yourself ! and go to Step 6</p>

Step 6 (76)

76 INTO ACTION

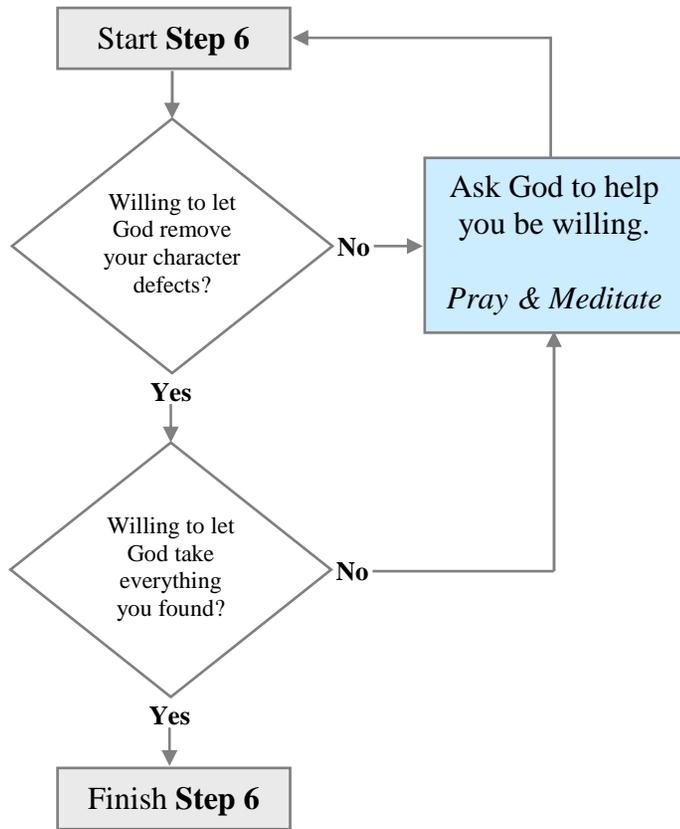
If we can answer to our satisfaction, we then look at Step Six. We have emphasized willingness as being indispensable. Are we now ready to let God remove from us all the things which we have admitted are objectionable? Can He now take them all, every one? If we still cling to something we will not let go, we ask God to help us be willing.

When ready, we say something like this: "My Cre-

You are now at **Step 6**.
Willingness is absolutely essential for all the steps that follow!

Step 6 – Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Prayer – Ask God to help you be willing.



6.0 – Do The Work
 Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Are you willing to let God remove the defective thinking that you exposed?
 Yes No

2. Are you willing to let God take *everything* that you discovered in your inventory?
 Yes No

If you still want to hold on to something, ask God to help you be willing to let it go.

willingness – freely making a choice; cheerful agreement.
indispensable – essential; absolutely necessary; vitally necessary.
objectionable – offensive; causing disapproval or defects.
every one – to the full and entire extent.

Step 7 (76)

76 INTO ACTION

cling to something we will not let go, we ask God to help us be willing.

When ready, we say something like this: "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." We have then completed Step Seven.

Now we need more action, without which we find that "Faith without works is dead." Let's look at Steps Eight and Nine. We have a list of all persons we have harmed and to whom we are willing to make amends. We made it when we took inventory. We subjected ourselves to a drastic self-appraisal. Now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past. We attempt to sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of our effort to live on our own will and let the show ourselves. If we haven't the will to do this, we ask until it comes. Remember it was agreed at the beginning we would go to any lengths for victory over alcohol.

Probably there are still some misgivings. As we look over the list of business acquaintances and friends we have hurt, we may feel diffident about going to some of them on a spiritual basis. Let us be reassured. To some people we need not, and probably should not emphasize the spiritual feature on our first approach.

Step 7 – Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

You are almost ready to take **Step 7**. First understand the Seventh Step prayer.

- Prayer** – The **Step 7** prayer is divided into 7 parts:
1. Speaking directly to God as you understand God.
 2. Expressing willingness to give all of your good character to God.
 3. Expressing willingness to give all of your bad character to God.
 4. Asking God to remove all of your character defects.
 5. Asking God to help you be of service to God and others.
 6. Asking God to give you Strength.
 7. Asking God to go with you and guide you.

□ 7.0 – Do The Work
Fill out the Step 7 Prayer Design form on the next page.

bidding – authoritative instruction to do something; request earnestly.
usefulness – quality of being of practical use.
amen (Hebrew) – meaning *so be it*; a declaration of affirmation.

NEXT PAGE

MY SEVENTH STEP PRAYER

My Seventh Step Prayer

If you prefer, just use the prayer from the A.A. book, but still write it out in the space provided.

<input type="checkbox"/> 7.0.1 – Write your own Seventh Step Prayer.		
1. Address God as you understand God		My Creator,
2. Express your willingness to give all your good character to God		I am now willing that you should have all of me good
3. Express your willingness to give all your bad character to God		and bad.
4. Ask God to remove <i>all</i> of your character defects		I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character
5. Ask God to help you be of service to God and others		which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows.
6. Ask God to give you Strength		Grant me strength,
7. Ask God to go with you and guide you		as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen.

If we can answer to our satisfaction, we then look at Step Six. We have emphasized willingness as being indispensable. Are we now ready to let God remove from us all the things which we have considered are objectionable? Can He now take them all, every one? If we still cling to something we will not let go, we ask God to help us be willing.

When ready, we say something like this: "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." **We have then completed Step Seven.**

Now we need more action, without which we cannot live. "Faith without works is dead." Let's look at Steps Eight and Nine. We have a list of all persons we have harmed and to whom we are willing to make amends. We made it when we took inventory. We subjected ourselves to a drastic self-appraisal. Now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past. We attempt to sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of our effort to live on self-will and run the show ourselves. If we haven't the will to do this, we ask until it comes. Remember it was agreed at the beginning we would go to any lengths for victory over alcohol.

Probably there are still some misgivings. As we look over the list of business acquaintances and friends we have hurt, we may feel diffident about going to some of them on a spiritual basis. Let us be reassured. To some people we need not, and probably should not emphasize the spiritual feature on our first approach.

Page 76 cont.

NEXT PAGE

□ 7.1 – Do The Work

Take **Step 7** humbly and without reservation along with your sponsor or someone you trust. Read your personal **Seventh Step Prayer** aloud and then sign your name in the space provided below.

I, _____, have humbly asked God to remove my shortcomings.

without reservation – wholeheartedly; no restrictions or doubts; complete acceptance.

completed – accomplished; successfully brought to an end.

76 INTO ACTION

If we can answer to our satisfaction, we then look at Step Six. We have emphasized willingness as being indispensable. Are we now ready to let God remove from us all the things which we have admitted are objectionable? Can He now take them all, every one? If we still cling to something we will not let go, we ask God to help us be willing. **Page 76 cont.**

When ready, we say something like this: "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." We have then completed Step Seven.

Now we need more action, without which we find that "Faith without works is dead." Let's look at Steps Eight and Nine. We have a list of all persons we have harmed and to whom we are willing to make amends. We made it when we took inventory. We subjected ourselves to a drastic self-appraisal. Now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past. We attempt to sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of our effort to live on self-will and run the show ourselves. If we haven't the will to do this, we ask until it comes. Remember it was agreed at the beginning we would go to any lengths for victory. **NEXT PAGE**

Probably there are still some misgivings. As we look over the list of business acquaintances and friends we have hurt, we may feel diffident about going to some of them on a spiritual basis. Let us be reassured. To some people we need not, and probably should not emphasize the spiritual feature on our first approach.

Step 8 – Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

Your work in the previous steps has already prepared you to take **Step 8**.

□ 8.0 – Do The Work
 Step 8 has two parts:

□ 1. Made a list of all persons we had harmed.
 In Step 4 you wrote a *Relationship Inventory*. It should contain everything you need. You looked at everyone you have harmed, what you did and what you should have done instead.

If your *Relationship Inventory* is missing anyone that you harmed, add them to it now (use the form on workbook page 122).

□ 2. Became willing to make amends to them all.
 In Step 6 you asked God to help you be willing.

Whenever you are not willing to make an amends, use Step 6 to help you become willing (workbook 136).

action – execute a decision; something done; carry through; put into effect; carry out the task.

Step 9 (76)

76 INTO ACTION

Now we need more action, without which we find that "Faith without works is dead." Let's look at Steps Eight and Nine. We have a list of all persons we have harmed and to whom we are willing to make amends. We made it when we took inventory. We subjected ourselves to a drastic self-appraisal. Now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past. We attempt to sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of our effort to live on self-will and run the show ourselves. If we haven't the will to do this, we ask until it comes. Remember it was agreed at the beginning we would go to any lengths for victory over alcohol.

Probably there are still some misgivings. As we look over the list of business acquaintances and friends we have hurt, we may feel diffident about going to some of them on a spiritual basis. Let us be reassured. To some people we need not, and probably should not emphasize the spiritual feature on our first approach.

Step 9 – Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

You are about to begin **Step 9**.
You will make direct amends to the people you have harmed wherever possible, except when it would harm them or someone else.

Whenever you lack the courage to go forward with the **Step 9**, use **Step 6**. Ask *God to help you be willing* until you are willing.

Keep in mind that you agreed to go to *any length* to overcome your problem.

You probably still have some doubts about your role in the harms done to some people. Remember you are working on **YOURSELF**, not on them.

9.0 – Do The Work
Do not start making amends until you understand how to do it correctly.

Read all of Step 9 first.

There are *guiding principles* that you should follow whenever you make an amends. The first one comes from **Step 8**:

Guideline #1 – Be willing to make amends.
Simply be *willing to do whatever it takes* to repair the harms you have done to others.

misgivings – doubts that prevent wholehearted commitment.
guiding principles – basic guidelines that can be used as a basis for conduct.
willing – making a choice; inclined toward; volunteer.

76-77 INTO ACTION

Probably there are still some misgivings. As we look over the list of business acquaintances and friends we have hurt, we may feel diffident about going to some of them on a **spiritual basis**. Let us be reassured. To some people we need not, and probably should not emphasize the **spiritual feature** on our first approach.

We might prejudice them. At the moment we are trying to put our lives in order. But this is not an end in itself. Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to **God** and the people about us. It is seldom wise to approach an individual, who still smarts from our injustice to him, and announce that we have gone religious. In the prize ring, this would be called leading with the chin. Why lay ourselves open to being branded fanatics or religious bores? We may kill a future opportunity to carry a beneficial message. 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.

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. The question of how to approach the man we hated will arise. It may be he has

77

Guideline #2 – Avoid creating prejudice.
 You may not feel comfortable talking about the *Spiritual Nature* of your work. This is fine. In some cases you should not even mention it. You do not want to prejudice anyone.

Promise – Doing this work helps you become unselfish.

Guideline #3 – Don't be a spiritual fanatic.
 Excessive enthusiasm can destroy your opportunity to really connect with people.

Promise – People will be impressed just by your sincere desire to make amends.

Guideline #4 – Demonstrate good will.
 People will be more receptive to your grace, kindness and compassion than to your spiritual opinions.

Guideline #5 – Be considerate and sensitive.
 When you *feel* comfortable talking about the *Spiritual Nature* of your work and it *feels* like the right thing to do, be considerate and sensitive.

diffident – showing reserve; not volunteering anything more than necessary; lacking self-confidence.
reassured – having confidence; freed from anxiety.
prejudice – forming opinion in advance; opinion, or judgment.
tact - consideration in dealing with others and avoiding giving offense.

fanatic – excessive enthusiasm for and intense devotion to a cause or idea.
impressed – favorably affected or influenced.
sincere desire – genuine and earnest wish.

77

INTO ACTION

Tact and common sense. The question of how to approach the man we hated will arise. It may be he has done us more harm than we have done him and, though we may have acquired a better attitude toward him, we are still not too keen about admitting our faults. Nevertheless, with a person we dislike, we take the bit in our teeth. It is harder to go to an enemy than to a friend, but we find it much more beneficial to us. We go to him in a helpful and forgiving spirit, confessing our former ill feeling and expressing our regret.

Under no condition do we criticize such a person or argue. Simply tell him that we will never get over drinking until we have done our utmost to straighten out the past. We are there to sweep off our side of the street, realizing that nothing worth while

Guideline #6 – Make amends to people you dislike.
Even if they have done more harm to you than you did to them.

Promise – It benefits you even more to make an amends to an enemy than to a friend.

Guideline #7 – Be friendly and kind.
Have a friendly and helpful attitude toward them.

Guideline #8 – Have a forgiving attitude.
Have an attitude of forgiveness and compassion.

Guideline #9 – Confess your faults.
Admit your mistakes. This includes admitting how you felt about them.

Guideline #10 – Say what you should have done.
Tell them what you wish you had done differently. Express your regret.

Guideline #11 – Never criticize or argue.
Never point out their faults or what they did wrong. Never contribute to an argument even if they start it.

Guideline #12 – Tell the truth about your problem.
Tell them why you are doing this. Tell them you can never recover until you make amends to them.

beneficial – encourage or enhancing well-being.
enemy – a hostile, antagonistic or unfriendly person.
helpful spirit – friendliness demonstrated by a kindly and helpful disposition.
forgiving spirit – unspoken attitude inclined to forgive and show mercy.
confessing – conceding or admitting.
ill feeling – hostile or unfriendly or emotion.
expressing regret – saying what you wish you had done differently.
criticize – find fault with; point out perceived flaws.
argue – dispute; strong disagreement; discussion of controversy.

78

INTO ACTION

can be accomplished until we do so, never trying to tell him what he should do. His faults are not discussed. We stick to our own. If our manner is calm, frank, and open, we will be gratified with the result.

In nine cases out of ten the unexpected happens. Sometimes the man we are calling upon admits his own fault, so feuds of years' standing melt away in an hour. Rarely do we fail to make satisfactory progress. Our former enemies sometimes praise what we are doing and wish us well. Occasionally, they will offer assistance. It should not matter, however, if someone does throw us out of his office. We have made our demonstration, done our part. It's water over the dam.

Guideline #13 – Never give advice.

Never tell them what you think they should do.

Guideline #14 – Never discuss their faults.

Never tell them what you think their faults are.
Only discuss your own faults.

Promise – When you are calm, direct and honest:

1. You will be pleased with the results.
2. Frequently you will be pleasantly surprised.
3. Often people admit their own faults.
4. Often old disputes are resolved and forgotten.
5. Often you will be praised for your efforts.
6. Sometimes people will offer to help you.
7. You will always make progress!

Guideline #15 – Their reaction does not matter.

Maintain a calm, direct and honest attitude no matter how people react to your amends.

Promise – When you *genuinely* make an amends, it is as if you never made a single mistake. Not only is the past over, it is as if it never existed. This is freedom!

manner – way of behaving or acting.

calm – quiet, still and steady; without agitation.

frank – direct manner of speech; without subtlety or evasion.

open – honest, truthful and sensible; not defended.

gratified – satisfied; pleasing to the mind or spirit; receiving what was desired.

demonstration – putting something into plain view; showing or presentation.

genuinely – sincerely and completely carried out.

78-79 INTO ACTION

Most alcoholics owe money. 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. Approached in this way, the most ruthless creditor will sometimes surprise us. Arranging the best deal we can we let these people know we are sorry. Our drinking has made us slow to pay. 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.

Perhaps we have committed a criminal offense which might land us in jail if it were known to the authorities. We may be short in our accounts and unable to make good. We have already admitted this in confidence to another person, but we are sure we would be imprisoned or lose our job if it were known. Maybe it's only a petty offense such as padding the expense account. Most of us have done that sort of thing.

Maybe we are divorced, and have remarried but haven't kept up the alimony to number one. She is indignant about it, and has a warrant out for our arrest. That's a common form of trouble too.

79

Guideline #16 – Pay back the money you owe.
Face your creditors with honesty about your problem and willingness to pay them back.

Guideline #17 – Work with creditors.
Discuss arrangements for making payments to your creditors. Come to terms.

Guideline #18 – Don't be afraid of debt.
Do not let the size of your debt frighten you. Just be willing to pay it back no matter how long it takes.

Promise – If you allow any fear to remain in your life, you are in danger of drinking again.

Guideline #19 – Face your crimes.
Be willing to settle criminal judgments against you.

Guideline #20 – Admit your cheating.
Be willing to resolve all of your wrongdoing no matter how petty.

Guideline #21 – Meet your obligations.
Keep your legal agreements. Do your duty.

creditor – person to whom money is owed or an obligation exists.
terms – conditions; statement of what is required as part of an agreement.
obligations – required to do or pay something; legal agreement.

79

INTO ACTION

Maybe we are divorced, and have remarried but haven't kept up the alimony to number one. She is indignant about it, and has a warrant out for our arrest. That's a common form of trouble too.

Although these reparations take innumerable forms, there are some general principles which we find **guiding**. 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, no matter what the personal consequences may be. We may lose our position or reputation or face jail, but we are willing. We have to be. We must not shrink at anything.

Usually, however, other people are involved. Therefore, we are not to be the hasty and foolish martyr who would needlessly sacrifice others to save himself from the alcoholic pit. A man we know had remarried. Because of resentment and drinking, he had not paid alimony to his first wife. She was furious. She went to court and got an order for his arrest. He had commenced our way of life, had secured a position, and was getting his head above water. It would have been impressive heroics if he had walked up to the Judge and said, "Here I am."

We thought he ought to be willing to do that if necessary, but if he were in jail he could provide nothing for either family. We suggested he write his first wife admitting his faults and asking forgiveness. He did, and also sent a small amount of money. He told her what he would try to do in the future. He said he was perfectly willing to go to jail if she insisted. Of course she did not, and the whole situation has only since been adjusted.

Guideline #22 – Plan each amends carefully.
Each amends is unique and should be carefully considered and planned using these guidelines.

Remember you agreed to go to *any length* to have a **Spiritual Awakening**.

Guideline #23 – Pray for strength and direction.
Ask God to give you strength and direction to do the right thing no matter what the consequences are to you. Let God direct each of your amends.

Guideline #24 – Be brave.
Do not be afraid to face anything no matter what. Be brave and willing.

Guideline #25 – Never hurt other people.
Think about how others might be affected by your amends. *Never do anything to cause more*

Guideline #26 – Don't get discouraged.
Trouble may come up even after you Spiritually Awaken. Don't lose hope. Keep working the **12 Steps**.

Guideline #27 – Pay what you can now.
When you owe money, pay what you can as part of your amends and tell them your plans for paying in the future.

guiding principles – basic guidelines that can be used as a basis for conduct.

personal consequences – the outcome of an event relative to an individual.

courageous - brave; able to face anything without fear.

80

INTO ACTION

Before taking drastic action which might implicate other people we secure their consent. If we have obtained permission, have consulted with others, asked God to help and the drastic step is indicated we must not shrink.

This brings to mind a story about one of our friends. While drinking, he accepted a sum of money from a bitterly-hated business rival, giving him no receipt for it. He subsequently denied having received the money and used the incident as a basis for discrediting the man. He thus used his own wrong-doing as a means of destroying the reputation of another. In fact, his rival was ruined.

He felt that he had done a wrong he could not possibly make right. If he opened that old affair, he was afraid it would destroy the reputation of his partner, disgrace his family and take away his means of livelihood. What right had he to involve those dependent upon him? How could he possibly make a public statement exonerating his rival?

After consulting with his wife and partner he came to the conclusion that it was better to take those risks than to stand before his Creator guilty of such ruinous slander. He saw that he had to place the outcome in God's hands or he would soon start drinking again, and all would be lost anyhow. He attended church for the first time in many years. After the sermon, he quietly got up and made an explanation. His action met widespread approval, and today he is one of the most trusted citizens of his town. This all happened years ago.

The chances are that we have domestic troubles. Perhaps we are mixed up with women in a fashion we

Guideline #28 – Ask permission.

When others will be affected by your honesty, get their permission *before* you make amends.

Guideline #29 – Use the wisdom of others.

Discuss your plans for amends with your sponsor, spiritual advisor or trusted friend.

Guideline #30 – Ask God to help.

Ask God to reveal the *perfect course of action* for each amends. Ask God to make it perfectly clear to you *what you must do*.

Guideline #31 – No mistake is too large.

You can make amends for even the worst mistakes.

Guideline #32 – You cannot predict the outcome.

You cannot truly predict what the results of your amends will be.

Guideline #33 – Give the outcome to God.

Trust whatever happens to God.

Promise – When you trust the outcome to God,

everything will work out in a way you never thought possible.

implicate – reveal an incriminating connection; impose or involve.

permission – approve of; formal authorization.

reputation – public opinion of a person.

approval – acceptance and blessing.

trusted citizen – member of the community that is worthy of trust and confidence.

The Slanderer's Story (80)

81 INTO ACTION

wouldn't care to have advertised. We doubt if, in this respect, alcoholics are fundamentally much worse than other people. But drinking does complicate sex relations in the home. After a few years with an alcoholic, a wife gets worn out, resentful and uncommunicative. How could she be anything else? The husband begins to feel lonely, sorry for himself. He commences to look around in the night clubs, or their equivalent, for something besides liquor. Perhaps he is having a secret and exciting affair with "the girl who understands." In fairness we must say that she may understand, but what are we going to do about a thing like that? A man so involved often feels very remorseful at times, especially if he is married to a loyal and courageous girl who has literally gone through hell for him.

Whatever the situation, we usually have to do something about it. If we are sure our wife does not know, should we tell her? Not always, we think. If she knows in a general way that we have been wild, should we tell her in detail? Undoubtedly we should admit our fault. She may insist on knowing all the particulars. She will want to know who the woman is and where she is. We feel we ought to say to her that we have no right to involve another person. We are sorry for what we have done and, God willing, it shall not be repeated. More than that we cannot do; we have no right to go further. Though there may be justifiable exceptions, and though we wish to lay down no rule of any sort, we have often found this the best course to take.

Our design for living is not a one-way street. It is as good for the wife as for the husband. If we can

Guideline #34 – Nothing is impossible.
The distress you have caused to those who love you may seem impossible to repair. *It is not.*

Guideline #35 – You owe those who love you.
The people who have continued to love you during your long anguish have endured more than you can imagine. You owe them more than just a simple apology.

Guideline #36 – Always do something.
There is never a situation where doing nothing will be enough. You must do something.

Guideline #37 – Do not involve others.
Unless you have permission, you have no right to involve other people in your amends. Your amends is strictly between you and the person receiving it.

Promise – The 12 Steps can help your loved ones recreate their own lives.

Al-Anon/Alateen – an international fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics who work together in order to solve their common problems.

82

INTO ACTION

forget, so can she. It is better, however, that one does not needlessly name a person upon whom she can vent jealousy.

Perhaps there are some cases where the utmost frankness is demanded. No outsider can appraise such an intimate situation. It may be that both will decide that the way of good sense and loving kindness is to let by-gones be by-gones. Each might pray about it, having the other one's happiness uppermost in mind. Keep it always in sight that we are dealing with that most terrible human emotion, jealousy. Good generalship may decide that the problem be attacked on the flank rather than risk a face-to-face combat.

If we have no such complication, there is plenty we should do at home. Sometimes we hear an alcoholic say that the only thing he needs to do is to keep sober. Certainly he must keep sober, for there will be no home if he doesn't. But he is yet a long way from making good to the wife or parents whom for years he has so shockingly treated. Passing all understanding is the patience mothers and wives have had with alcoholics. Had this not been so, many of us would have no homes today, would perhaps be dead.

The alcoholic is like a tornado roaring his way through the lives of others. Hearts are broken. Sweet relationships are dead. Affections have been uprooted. Selfish and inconsiderate habits have kept the home in turmoil. We feel a man is unthinking when he says that sobriety is enough. He is like the farmer who came up out of his cyclone cellar to find his home ruined. To his wife, he remarked, "Don't see anything the matter here, Ma. Ain't it grand the wind stopped blowin'?"

The Tornado Story (82)

Guideline #38 – No outsider can judge.

No one outside of an intimate relationship can judge what should be done to heal it.

Guideline #39 – Be loving and kind.

Approach your intimate amends with love and kindness and a willingness to let the past go forever.

Guideline #40 – Pray for each other.

Pray for each other's happiness. For maximum intimacy, take turns praying aloud to each other for each other's happiness.

Guideline #41 – Anonymous amends.

If direct contact with a person is unwise, consider making an amends without them knowing it came from you.

Guideline #42 – Something can always be done.

There are numerous ways you can make amends.

Guideline #43 – You must stay sober.

You cannot make amends without being sober.

Guideline #44 – Just staying sober is not enough.

You must do more than just stay sober.

generalship – leadership, ability and authority.

anonymous amends – reparation or a charitable act done for someone without their knowing the source.

83

INTO ACTION

Yes, there is a long period of reconstruction ahead. We must take the lead. A remorseful mumbling that we are sorry won't fill the bill at all. We ought to sit down with the family and frankly analyze the past as we now see it, being very careful not to criticize them. Their defects may be glaring, but the chances are that our own actions are partly responsible. So we clean house with the family, asking each morning in meditation that our **Creator** show us the way of patience, tolerance, kindness and love.

The **spiritual life** is not a theory. We have to live it. Unless one's family expresses a desire to live upon **spiritual principles** we think we ought not to urge them. We should not talk incessantly to them about spiritual matters. They will change in time. Our behavior will convince them more than our words. We must remember that ten or twenty years of drunkenness would make a skeptic out of anyone.

There may be some wrongs we can never fully right. We don't worry about them if we can honestly say to

Guideline #45 – Amends take time.
Some amends can take a long time. A living amends takes a lifetime.

Guideline #46 – You must take the lead.
Don't wait for others to make an amends to you.

Guideline #47 – Saying "I'm sorry" is not enough.
Remove the word "sorry" from your vocabulary.

Guideline #48 – The past is forgiven.
Once you do everything you can to make amends and begin living the 12 Steps every day, it is as if the past never existed for you.

Guideline #49 – You are responsible.
You are partially responsible for the character defects in others.

Guideline #50 – Pray each morning.
Every morning ask God to show you how to live your amends with *patience, tolerance, kindness and love*.

Guideline #51 – Live a spiritual life.
Living a spiritual life has been proven to solve all types of problems.

Guideline #52 – Don't try to convince others.
The desire to live a spiritual life must come from within. *You cannot create it in others.*

Promise – The people around you will change as a result of your own Spiritual Awakening. They will be convinced by your new behavior.

83

INTO ACTION

ber that ten or twenty years of drunkenness would make a skeptic out of anyone.

There may be some wrongs we can never fully right. We don't worry about them if we can honestly say to ourselves that we would right them if we could. Some people cannot be seen - we sent them an honest letter. And there may be a valid reason for postponement in some cases. But we don't delay if it can be avoided. We should be sensible, tactful, considerate and humble without being servile or scraping. As God's people we stand on our feet; we don't crawl before anyone.

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way

Guideline #53 – Do your best.

Some harms can never be repaired. If you honestly would make the amends if you could, then you have done your best.

Guideline #54 – Write people you cannot see.

Some people cannot be seen because they have died or are unreachable. Send them a letter, even if they are deceased.

Guideline #55 – Don't delay.

Make your amends as soon as you sensibly can.

Guideline #56 – Be sensible.

Be reasonable and practice sound judgment. Try to perceive other people's feelings.

Guideline #57 – Be tactful and considerate.

Think about what is appropriate and fitting. Be concerned with the rights and feelings of others.

Guideline #58 – Be humble.

Be modest and unassuming. Keep it simple. Don't make assumptions.

Guideline #59 – Don't be submissive.

Making amends does not make you a slave. Don't fawn over others or blindly submit to their wishes.

Guideline #60 – Be confident.

Promise – As one of God's people you can face anyone with confidence and freedom from fear or doubt.

The Ninth Step Promises (83-84)

83-84 INTO ACTION

without being servile or scraping. As God's people we stand on our feet; we don't crawl before anyone.

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the

word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us, sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them.

84

Promise – As you work **Step 9** carefully and thoroughly you will receive these wonderful gifts:

1. You will know a *new freedom* and a *new happiness*.
2. You will see the past clearly and without emotion.
3. You will experience serenity and peace.
4. You will recognize your value to others.
5. You will feel useful and your sorrow will fade away.
6. You will have an unselfish interest in the welfare of others.
7. Your character defects will leave you.
8. Your feelings and attitudes about life will change.
9. Fear will leave you.
10. You will intuitively know how to handle situations which once confused you.
11. You will suddenly realize that God is doing for you what you could not do for yourself.
12. These are not extravagant promises because you will experience them for yourself when you *do the work*.

painstaking – extreme care and great effort.

regret – sorrow or disappointment; sadness for a wrong done.

uselessness – having no practical use or beneficial value.

self-pity – self-indulgent feeling of sorrow over your own sufferings.

disappear – vanish; become invisible or unnoticeable.

insecurity – feeling vulnerable and insecure.

baffle – perplexed; bewildering; a mystery.

development – improve by learning, expanding, and refining.

amazed – overwhelming emotional impact.

new freedom – the power to think, speak and act without externally imposed restraints.

new happiness – state of well-being ranging from contentment to intense joy.

comprehend serenity – understand how it feels to be free from stress and negative emotions.

know peace – know the absence of mental stress and anxiety.

experience – undergo or live through.

benefit – aid or promote well-being.

intuitively – done with skill, but without special training or planning; instinctively.

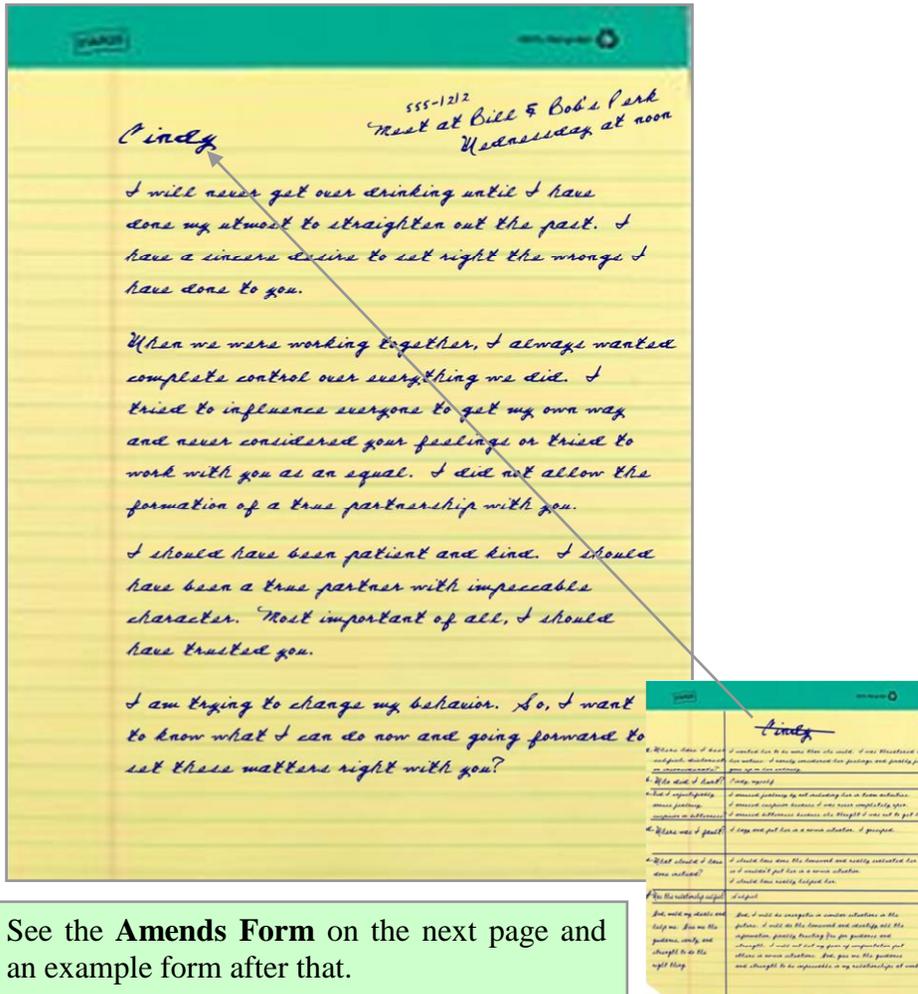
attitude – mental state involving beliefs, feelings and values.

outlook – how you interpret and respond to situations.

extravagant – over exaggerated.

INTO ACTION

They will always materialize if we work for them.



See the **Amends Form** on the next page and an example form after that.
Helpful Hint – make the hardest amends first!

Promise – Making your amends *sets you free!*

□ 9.1 – Do The Work

As you work the remaining Steps, start making amends immediately using these instructions.

On your *Relationship Inventory* you answered the question “Who did I hurt?” You will make an amends to everyone you listed.

□ 1. Choose a person (or organization) from your *Relationship Inventory* and reread your work about them carefully.

Familiarize yourself with:

- a. How you were selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate.
- b. Who you hurt.
- c. How you aroused jealousy, suspicion or bitterness.
- d. Where you were at fault.
- e. What you should have done instead.

□ 2. Say the prayer you wrote in your *Relationship Inventory*.

□ 3. Read all *60 Guiding Principles* (workbook 141-152).

□ 4. Start a new page in your notepad and write your amends:

- a. Write the name at the top of the page.
- b. State why you are doing this.
- c. State what you did wrong.
- d. State what you should have done instead.
- e. State your plans. Ask what you can do now.
- f. Schedule the meeting.

□ 5. Speak the amends to the person.

□ 6. Listen to their response! You have said your piece. Let them talk.

□ 7. Cross the name off of your *Relationship Inventory*.

a. Amends to –	Guiding Principles	
b. State why you are doing this.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be willing to make amends. 2. Avoid creating prejudice. 3. Don't be a spiritual fanatic. 4. Demonstrate good will. 5. Be considerate and sensitive. 6. Make amends to people you dislike. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 31. No mistake is too large. 32. You can't predict the outcome. 33. Give the outcome to God. 34. Nothing is impossible. 35. You owe those who love you. 36. Always do something.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Be friendly and kind. 8. Have a forgiving attitude. 9. Confess your faults. 10. Say what you should have done. 11. Never criticize or argue. 12. Tell the truth about your problem. 13. Never give advice. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 37. Do not involve others. 38. No outsider can judge. 39. Be loving and kind. 40. Pray for each other. 41. Anonymous amends. 42. Something can always be done. 43. You must stay sober.
c. State what you did wrong.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Never discuss their faults. 15. Their reaction does not matter. 16. Pay back the money you owe. 17. Work with creditors. 18. Don't be afraid of debt. 19. Face your crimes. 20. Admit your cheating. 21. Meet your obligations. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 44. Staying sober is not enough. 45. Amends take time. 46. You must take the lead. 47. Saying "Sorry" is not enough. 48. The past is forgiven. 49. You are responsible. 50. Pray each morning. 51. Live a spiritual life.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 22. Plan each amends carefully. 23. Pray for strength and direction. 24. Be brave. 25. Never hurt other people. 26. Don't get discouraged. 27. Pay what you can now. 28. Ask permission. 29. Use the wisdom of others. 30. Ask God to help. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 52. Don't try to convince others. 53. Do your best. 54. Write people you cannot see. 55. Don't delay. 56. Be sensible. 57. Be tactful and considerate. 58. Be humble. 59. Don't be submissive. 60. Be confident.
d. State what you should have done instead.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 22. Plan each amends carefully. 23. Pray for strength and direction. 24. Be brave. 25. Never hurt other people. 26. Don't get discouraged. 27. Pay what you can now. 28. Ask permission. 29. Use the wisdom of others. 30. Ask God to help. 	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 22. Plan each amends carefully. 23. Pray for strength and direction. 24. Be brave. 25. Never hurt other people. 26. Don't get discouraged. 27. Pay what you can now. 28. Ask permission. 29. Use the wisdom of others. 30. Ask God to help. 	
e. State your plans. Ask what you can do now.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 22. Plan each amends carefully. 23. Pray for strength and direction. 24. Be brave. 25. Never hurt other people. 26. Don't get discouraged. 27. Pay what you can now. 28. Ask permission. 29. Use the wisdom of others. 30. Ask God to help. 	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 22. Plan each amends carefully. 23. Pray for strength and direction. 24. Be brave. 25. Never hurt other people. 26. Don't get discouraged. 27. Pay what you can now. 28. Ask permission. 29. Use the wisdom of others. 30. Ask God to help. 	
f. Schedule the meeting.		
<p style="text-align: center;">When – _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Where – _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Contact info – _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">_____</p>		

Example – Completed Amends Form

a. Amends to –	Cindy	Guiding Principles	
b. State why you are doing this.			
I will never get over drinking until I have done my utmost to straighten out the past. I have a sincere desire to set right the wrongs I have done to you.		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be willing to make amends. 2. Avoid creating prejudice. 3. Don't be a spiritual fanatic. 4. Demonstrate good will. 5. Be considerate and sensitive. 6. Make amends to people you dislike. 7. Be friendly and kind. 8. Have a forgiving attitude. 9. Confess your faults. 10. Say what you should have done. 11. Never criticize or argue. 12. Tell the truth about your problem. 13. Never give advice. 14. Never discuss their faults. 15. Their reaction does not matter. 16. Pay back the money you owe. 17. Work with creditors. 18. Don't be afraid of debt. 19. Face your crimes. 20. Admit your cheating. 21. Meet your obligations. 22. Plan each amends carefully. 23. Pray for strength and direction. 24. Be brave. 25. Never hurt other people. 26. Don't get discouraged. 27. Pay what you can now. 28. Ask permission. 29. Use the wisdom of others. 30. Ask God to help. 	
c. State what you did wrong.		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 31. No mistake is too large. 32. You can't predict the outcome. 33. Give the outcome to God. 34. Nothing is impossible. 35. You owe those who love you. 36. Always do something. 37. Do not involve others. 38. No outsider can judge. 39. Be loving and kind. 40. Pray for each other. 41. Anonymous amends. 42. Something can always be done. 43. You must stay sober. 44. Staying sober is not enough. 45. Amends take time. 46. You must take the lead. 47. Saying "Sorry" is not enough. 48. The past is forgiven. 49. You are responsible. 50. Pray each morning. 51. Live a spiritual life. 52. Don't try to convince others. 53. Do your best. 54. Write people you cannot see. 55. Don't delay. 56. Be sensible. 57. Be tactful and considerate. 58. Be humble. 59. Don't be submissive. 60. Be confident. 	
When we were working together, I always wanted complete control over everything you did. I tried to influence everyone to get my own way and never considered your feelings or tried to work with you as an equal. I did not allow the formation of a true partnership between us.			
d. State what you should have done instead.			
I should have been patient and kind. I should have been a true partner with impeccable character. Most important of all, I should have trusted you.			
e. State your plans. Ask what you can do now.			
I am trying to change my behavior. So, I want to know what I can do now and, going forward, to set these matters right with you?			
f. Schedule the meeting.			
When – Noon Wednesday Where – Coffee Shop Contact info – 555-1212			

Step 10 (84)

84 INTO ACTION

Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us, sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them.

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 the **Spirit**. Our next function is to grow 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. When these crop up, we ask **God** at once to remove them. We discuss them with someone immediately and make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone. Then we resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help. Love and tolerance of others is our code.

And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone — even alcohol. For by this time sanity will have returned. We will seldom be interested in liquor. If

☐ 9.2 – Do The Work
Continue to make your amends until every name in your *Relationship Inventory* is crossed out. As you are doing this, *also do the work that follows*.

Step 10 – Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

Begin working **Step 10** all day, every day.

1. Take personal inventory like you did in **Steps 4 & 5**.
2. Use **Steps 6 & 7** to remove character defects.
3. Quickly resolve problems using **Steps 8 & 9**.

Promise – You are living a Spiritual Life now.

You will learn to live effectively. This learning will continue throughout your lifetime.

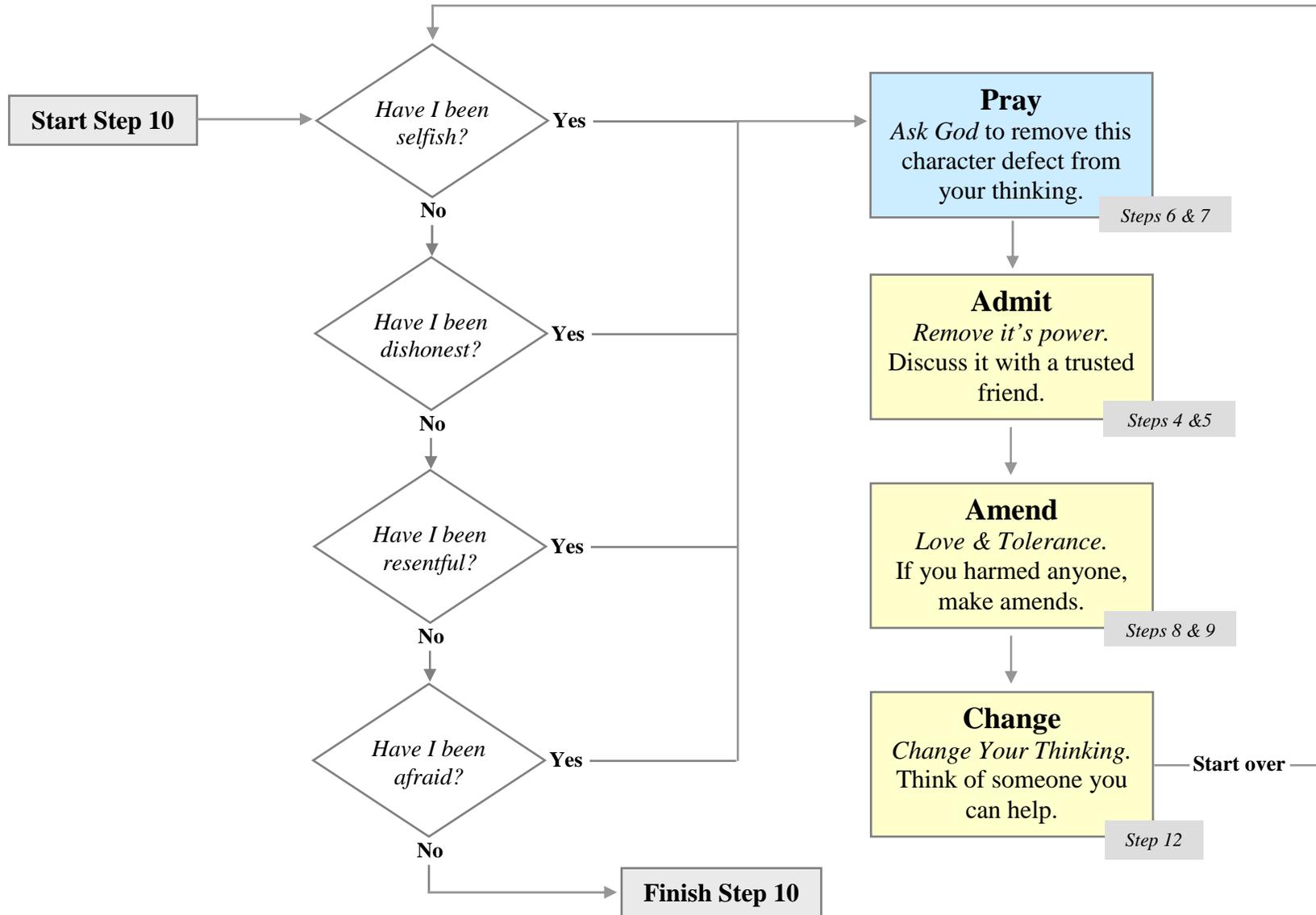
You *always* demonstrate **Love** and **Tolerance**.

☐ 10.0 – Do The Work
Start using **Tenth Step Thinking** all day, every day (*see the next page*).

Steps 1 – 9 worked your past. **Steps 10, 11 & 12** work your present. *Today*.

Love – strong positive emotions; regard, affection or devotion to others.
Tolerance – allowing others *freedom of choice* and behavior; respecting the beliefs or practices of others; *uncomplaining*.

Tenth Step Thinking



Tenth Step Promises (84-85)

84-85 INTO ACTION

And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone — even alcohol. 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 we will find that this has happened automatically. We will 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**.

It is easy to let up on the **spiritual program of action** and rest on our laurels. We are headed for trouble if we do, for alcohol is a subtle foe. We are not cured of alcoholism. What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our **spiritual condition**. 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 which 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.

85

Promise – Working **Step 10** keeps you in Fit Spiritual Condition. When you are in *Fit Spiritual Condition* you receive these miraculous gifts:

1. You no longer struggle with anyone or anything. You accept others as they are.
2. Your thinking is rational and balanced.
3. Problems will seldom trouble you but when they do, you deal with them quickly and without difficulty.
4. Your thinking process has changed automatically.
5. You have a new attitude toward problems and this attitude comes to you without any effort.
6. You don't avoid problems.
7. You experience freedom.
8. You feel safe and protected.
9. Your problems cease to exist.
10. You are not selfish or self-centered.
11. You are not afraid.
12. You react to life Spiritually. You live Spiritually.

10.1 – Do The Work

You are not free from the possibility of relapse. You must continue to *Do The Work* of **Steps 10, 11 & 12** each and every day. Keep going!

Prayer – Continually ask God how you can best serve and ask God to control the outcome.

Asking God for direction is using your will-power correctly. This is how to pray.

fit spiritual condition – living the 12 Steps.

spiritual program of action – the 12 Steps.

laurels – past successes living Spiritually.

subtle foe – an enemy or adversary that is elusive and difficult to detect.

not cured – not free from the possibility of relapse.

Step 11 (85)

85-86 INTO ACTION

serve Thee, Thy will (not mine) be done." These are thoughts which 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.

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.

Step Eleven suggests prayer and meditation. We shouldn't be shy on this matter of prayer. Better men

than we are using it constantly. It works, if we have the proper attitude and work at it. It would be easy to be vague about this matter. Yet, we believe we can make some definite and valuable suggestions.

When we retire at night, we constructively review our day. Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid? Do we owe an apology? Have we kept something to ourselves which should be discussed with another per-

Step 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.

You have learned that strength, inspiration and direction come to you from the infinite source of God.

Promise – If you have carefully worked the steps so far, you are beginning to feel the Power of God flowing through you and you are becoming aware of God's presence.

This is not enough. You *must* go further and work the remaining steps.

Step 11 suggests ways you can use *prayer and meditation* to improve your connection with God.

Don't be self-conscious about praying and meditating. Others are using it successfully. So should you.

Promise – Prayer and meditation are effective *Spiritual Tools*. Practice using them.

- strength** – being physically, mentally and spiritually powerful.
- inspiration** – guidance; arousal of the mind to creative thinking and work.
- direction** – guidance and management; providing advice for decisions or a course of action.
- all knowledge** – complete awareness and understanding of everything.
- all power** – complete ability, influence and authority over everything.

- God-conscious** – alert cognitive state in which you are aware of God.
- vital sixth sense** – absolutely necessary to grasp the inner nature of things intuitively; urgently needed insight.
- definite and valuable suggestions** – precise and clearly defined ideas; important proposals offered to assist with a task.

86

86

INTO ACTION

the proper attitude and work at it. It would be easy to be vague about this matter. Yet, we believe we can make some definite and valuable suggestions.

When we retire at night, we constructively review our day. Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid? Do we owe an apology? Have we kept something to ourselves which should be discussed with another person at once? Were we kind and loving toward all? What could we have done better? Were we thinking of ourselves most of the time? Or were we thinking of what we could do for others, of what we could pack into the stream of life? But we must be careful not to drift into worry, remorse or morbid reflection, for that would diminish our usefulness to others. After making our review we ask **God's** forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken.

On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask **God** to direct our thinking, espe-

Begin **Step 11** tonight, before you go to sleep.

□ 11.1 – Do The Work

Before you go to sleep **tonight** and every night from now on, use the *Eleventh Step Evening* instructions to:

1. Review your day.
2. Reflect on your conduct.
3. Pray – make contact with God.

Use the form on the next page to help you memorize this process.

retire at night – go to bed; go to sleep; withdraw for the evening.

constructively – in a productive and beneficial manner.

worry – concerned, anxious, troubled, or uneasy; afflicted with anxiety, uneasiness, trouble or grief.

remorse – sorrow; sadness about some wrong done or a disappointment; emotional expression of personal regret.

morbid reflection – consideration or contemplation in an unhealthy mental state.

diminish – reducing quality; decrease, belittle.

usefulness – being of service; the quality of being of practical or beneficial use.

forgiveness – the act of excusing a mistake or offense; absolve from payment.

corrective measures – actions taken as part of progress toward the goal of reaching a normal condition.

stream of life – the course of human events and activities; the dominant path of energy in action or expression; flow of freedom and abundance.

Eleventh Step – Evening

□ 11.1 – Eleventh Step – Evening	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have I been resentful? 2. Have I been selfish? 3. Have I been dishonest? 4. Have I been afraid? 5. Do I owe someone an apology? 6. Have I kept something to myself that I should discuss with another person at once? 	<p>Review</p> <p>If you answered Yes to any of the first 6 questions, use <i>Tenth Step Thinking</i> to change your thinking.</p> <p>(workbook 157)</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Was I kind and loving toward all? 8. What could I have done better? 9. Was I thinking of myself most of the time? 10. Was I thinking of what I could do for others? 11. Was I thinking of what I could contribute to life? 	<p>Reflect</p> <p>Carefully and honestly think about the answer to each of these questions, but do not drift into negative thinking.</p>
<p>Warning – Be careful not to drift into worry, regret or depression because it will lessen your effectiveness.</p>	
<p>Pray</p> <p>Ask God to forgive you and know that <u>you are forgiven</u>.</p> <p>Ask God for inspiration and know that <u>wisdom will come to you</u>.</p> <p>Sleep well in the knowledge that everything will work out perfectly.</p>	

86

INTO ACTION

diminish our usefulness to others. After making our review we ask **God's** forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken.

On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask **God** to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives. Under these conditions we can employ our mental faculties with assurance, for after all **God** gave us brains to use. Our thought-life will be placed on a much higher plane when our thinking is cleared of wrong motives.

In thinking about our day we may face indecision. We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask **God** for inspiration, an intuitive thought

Step 11 continues when you wake up in the morning.

Prayer – As soon as you wake up each day:

1. Ask God to guide your thoughts.
2. Ask God to help you accept today as it is.
3. Ask God to free you from fear and sorrow.
4. Ask God to help you be open and honest.
5. Ask God to help you be unselfish.
6. Ask God to help you think of others.
7. Ask God to help *you help others*.

Now think about your plans for the day and know that your thinking is effective.

Promise – When you condition your mind with **Step 11**, your thoughts become *inspired by God*.

divorced – separated; break association with; terminate.

self-pity – state of mind of one who has not accepted life and does not have the confidence or ability to cope with it.

dishonest – deceptive or fraudulent; disposed to cheat or deceive.

self-seeking – interested only in yourself; taking advantage of life without regard for the consequences to others.

motives – the reason for an action; gives purpose and direction to behavior.

conditions – circumstances that affect your welfare; influences toward an outcome.

direct – guidance and management; provide advice for decisions or a course of action.

employ – use; put into service; engage a natural function.

mental faculties – inherent cognitive or perceptual powers of the mind.

assurance – freedom from doubt; belief in yourself and your abilities.

thought-life – thinking; the process of using your mental energy for action and expression.

higher plane – more advanced level of spiritual consciousness.

86-87

INTO ACTION

for after all **God** gave us brains to use. Our thought-life will be placed on a much higher plane when our thinking is cleared of wrong motives.

In thinking about our day we may face indecision. We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask **God** for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle. We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while.

What used to be the hunch or the occasional inspiration gradually becomes a working part of the mind. Being still inexperienced and having just made conscious contact with **God**, it is not probable that we are going to be inspired at all times. We might pay for this presumption in all sorts of absurd actions and ideas. Nevertheless, we find that our thinking will, as time passes, be more and more on the plane of inspiration. We come to rely upon it.

We usually conclude the period of meditation with a prayer that we be shown all through the day what our next step is to be, that we be given whatever we need

87

As you think about your day, you may not be able to decide what to do. When this happens, use prayer and meditation.

Prayer – Ask God for Inspiration, Intuition and Insight. (See I³ below)

Meditate – Relax. Quiet your mind. Don't try to work it out for yourself. Let go.

Promise – You will be surprised how well *prayer and meditation works* after you practice it for a while. It will become a working part of your mind.

Do not expect to be inspired all the time. You are still learning.

You might make what *seem* to be mistakes.

Promise – You will find that your thinking has become inspired. You will begin to have faith that inspiration will come to you when you need it.

I³ = Inspiration x Intuition x Insight

inspiration – arousal of the mind to creativity; a product of your creative thinking.

intuition – ability to acquire knowledge without the use of reason; instinctive knowing.

insight – clear and deep perception of a situation; innate understanding of the inner nature of something.

thought – the process of using your mind to consider something carefully.

decision – the act of making up your mind about something; decisiveness.

occasional – occurring from time to time, once in a while, periodically.

gradually – proceeding in small stages.

presumption – a given; an assumption that is taken for granted.

absurd – inconsistent with reason or logic; seemingly irrational or meaningless.

rely – trust; have confidence and faith in.

87

INTO ACTION

Nevertheless, we find that our thinking will, as time passes, be more and more on the plane of inspiration. We come to rely upon it.

We usually conclude the period of meditation with a prayer that we be shown all through the day what our next step is to be, that we be given whatever we need to take care of such problems. We ask especially for freedom from self-will, and are careful to make no request for ourselves only. We may ask for ourselves, however, if others will be helped. We are careful never to pray for our own selfish ends. Many of us have wasted a lot of time doing that and it doesn't work. You can easily see why.

If circumstances warrant, we ask our wives or friends to join us in morning meditation. If we belong to a religious denomination which requires a definite morn-

Finish your morning prayer and meditation with another prayer.

- Prayer** – Final morning prayer:
1. Ask God to direct each step you take throughout the day.
 2. Ask God to give you whatever you need to overcome any difficulties.
 3. Ask God for freedom from self-will.
 4. Ask God for freedom from selfishness.
 5. Ask God to help *you help others*.

Be careful not to pray for your own selfish desires. It is a waste of time to pray only for yourself without concern for others.

Remember, selfishness and self-centeredness is what defeated you in the first place.

self-will – stubbornness; resolute adherence to your own ideas and desires.

prayer – *talking to God*; the act of communicating with God.
meditation – *listening to God*; quiet contemplation leading to deep and real knowledge.

87

INTO ACTION

to pray for our own selfish ends. Many of us have wasted a lot of time doing that and it doesn't work. You can easily see why.

If circumstances warrant, we ask our wives or friends to join us in morning meditation. If we belong to a religious denomination which requires a definite morning devotion, we attend to that also. If not members of religious bodies, we sometimes select and memorize a few set prayers which emphasize the principles we have been discussing. There are many helpful books also. Suggestions about these may be obtained from one's priest, minister, or rabbi. Be quick to see where religious people are right. Make use of what they offer.

As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer

If it is appropriate and they approve, invite your family and friends to join you in your morning prayer and meditation.

If you belong to a faith that requires a morning practice, do it as well.

If you are not a member of a particular faith, you can commit to memory prayers that emphasize the **12 Step** principles.

Explore your faith. Ask your spiritual teachers to suggest books and other spiritual programs.

Focus on what works for other spiritual people and make use of it for yourself. *Learn from them!*

□ 11.2 – Do The Work

When you wake up **tomorrow morning** and every morning from now on, follow the *Eleventh Step Morning* instructions that you just read.

Use the form on the next page to help you memorize this procedure and create your own *Spiritual Practice* for the mornings.

Helpful Hint: You can use your *Third Step Prayer* (workbook 93), your *Seventh Step Prayer* (workbook 138) and/or any of the other prayers in the A.A. book.

circumstances – conditions that accompany or influence an event or activity.

warrant – formal and explicit approval; allowed or consented to.

devotion – commitment to a religious or spiritual task.

religious denomination – a group of spiritual people having their own organization and distinctive faith.

emphasize – to stress; single out as important.

principles – basic generalizations that are accepted as true and can be used as a basis for reasoning or conduct.

priest, minister, or rabbi – a spiritual leader or teacher; a person who performs religious duties, ceremonies or worship.

Spiritual Practice – regularly repeated routine or activity concerned with the mind, spirit or soul.

Eleventh Step – Morning

11.2 – Eleventh Step – Morning

1. **Pray** – Ask God to direct your thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives.

- Ask God to guide your thoughts.
- Ask God to help you accept today as it is.
- Ask God to free you from fear and sorrow.
- Ask God to help you be open and honest.
- Ask God to help you be unselfish.
- Ask God to help you think of others.
- Ask God to help *you help others*.

2. **Think** – Consider your plans for the day. Believe in yourself and your ability to receive inspiration.

3. **Pray** – Ask God for Inspiration, Intuition and Insight.

4. **Meditate** – Relax. Quiet your mind. Listen for the wisdom of God.

5. **Practice** – Perform your own personal *Spiritual Practice*. Say your own personal prayers.

- Family and friends can join you.
- Practice your own faith and/or religion.
- Explore your own spiritual life. Read and learn.
- Say your own personal prayers.

6. **Pray** – Conclude your Prayer and Meditation.

- Ask God to direct each step you take throughout the day.
- Ask God to give you what you need to overcome any difficulties.
- Ask God for freedom from selfishness.
- Ask God to help *you help others*.
- Ask God for freedom from self-will.

7. **Release** – *Know* that your prayers have been answered. Be free from doubt.

Eleventh Step – Throughout the day

87-88 INTO ACTION

Suggestions about these may be obtained from one's priest, minister, or rabbi. Be quick to see where religious people are right. Make use of what they offer.

As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day "Thy will be done." We are then in much less danger of excitement, fear, anger, worry, self-pity, or foolish decisions. We become much more efficient. We do not tire so easily, for we are not burning up energy foolishly as we did when we were trying to arrange life to suit ourselves.

It works — it really does.

We alcoholics are undisciplined. So we let God discipline us in the simple way we have just outlined.

But this is not all. There is action and more action. "Faith without works is dead." The next chapter is entirely devoted to *Step Twelve*.

88

Meditation Moment – Whenever you feel troubled or uncertain, stop whatever you are thinking or doing for a few seconds. Relax.

Prayer – Ask God to direct your thinking and behavior.

Remember **Step 3** when you turned your will and your life over to the care of God.

Prayer – Say "Thy will be done."

You are learning to avoid the negative thinking which leads to bad decisions.

Promise – Doing **Step 11** will energize you.

Promise – Doing **Step 11** will change your life!

Let God teach you.

But, this is still not enough. You *must* continue with **Step 12**.

□ **11.3 – Do The Work**
Simple. All during the day, take a moment to clear your mind and ask God to direct your thinking and behavior. Say "Thy will be done."

pause – stop all activity and action temporarily.
agitated – troubled; disturbed or upset.
doubtful – uncertain or suspicious; unsettled.
constantly – without interruption; in every case; without variation or change.
remind – remember or prompt.

humbly – respectfully; modestly.
efficient – being effective without wasting time, effort or expense.
energy – source of usable power; life force.
discipline – training to improve strength and self-control.
outlined – defined; shown clearly and succinctly.

WORKING WITH OTHERS

Step 12 (89)

89 WORKING WITH OTHERS

Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail. This is our *twelfth suggestion*: Carry this message to other alcoholics! You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when other fail. Remember they are very ill.

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.

Perhaps you are not acquainted with any drinkers who want to recover. You can easily find some by asking a few doctors, ministers, priests or hospitals. They

Step 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.

The best way to prevent a return to your old behavior is to try and help others who have the same problems that you have overcome.

This chapter contains *suggestions* for how to go about helping others.

Suggestion #1 – Carry the message of the 12 Steps from the *Alcoholics Anonymous* book.

Suggestion #2 – You can help when no one else can.

Suggestion #3 – Guarantee them a trusting and confidential relationship.

Suggestion #4 – Realize that they are mentally, physically and *spiritually* sick.

Promise – When you work with others your life will have meaning. You will see them recover. You will see them help others. You will not be lonely and neither will they. You will create true companionship. You will gladly help even more people.

practical – concerned with actual use or practice.
experience – accumulation of knowledge and skill resulting from practicing and activity.
insure – make certain of something.
immunity – unaffected by something; not being susceptible.
intensive – high level of involvement.

suggestion – an idea, proposal or guideline.
secure – guarantee; make certain of.
confidence – a trustful and confidential relationship.

The Approach (89)

89-90 WORKING WITH OTHERS

Perhaps you are not acquainted with any drinkers who want to recover. You can easily find some by asking a few doctors, ministers, priests or hospitals. They will be only too glad to assist you. Don't start out as an evangelist or reformer. Unfortunately a lot of prejudice exists. You will be handicapped if you arouse it. Ministers and doctors are competent and you can learn much from them if you wish, but it happens that because of your own drinking experience you can be uniquely useful to other alcoholics. So cooperate; never criticize. To be helpful is our only aim.

90

When you discover a prospect for Alcoholics Anonymous, find out all you can about him. If he does not want to stop drinking, don't waste time trying to persuade him. You may spoil a later opportunity. This advice is given for his family also. They should be patient, realizing they are dealing with a sick person.

If there is any indication that he wants to stop, have a good talk with the person most interested in him — usually his wife. Get an idea of his behavior, his problems, his background, the seriousness of his condition, and his religious leanings. You need this information to put yourself in his place, to see how you would like him to approach you if the tables were turned.

Sometimes it is wise to wait till he goes on a binge. The family may object to this, but unless he is in a dangerous physical condition, it is better to risk it.

Suggestion #5 – You can find people that need your help by asking professionals. We also have frequent A.A. meetings so that newcomers can find you.

Suggestion #6 – Don't be a spiritual fanatic. People are often prejudiced. Excessive enthusiasm can destroy your opportunity to really help them.

Promise – You are uniquely qualified to help others who have the same problems that you have overcome.

Suggestion #7 – Always cooperate, never criticize. *Your only goal is to be helpful.*

Suggestion #8 – Listen to their story. Learn about them.

Suggestion #9 – If they don't want to stop indulging, don't try to convince them. But don't give up on them entirely. You may be able to help them later.

Suggestion #10 – Be patient. Remember they are *very sick people*.

Suggestion #11 – Learn enough about them to approach them with the 12 Steps the way you would want to be approached.

90-91 WORKING WITH OTHERS

and his religious leanings. You need this information to put yourself in his place, to see how you would like him to approach you if the tables were turned.

Sometimes it is wise to wait till he goes on a binge. The family may object to this, but unless he is in a dangerous physical condition, it is better to risk it. Don't deal with him when he is very drunk, unless he is ugly and the family needs your help. Wait for the end of the spree, or at least for a lucid interval. Then let his family or a friend ask him if he wants to quit for good and if he would go to any extreme to do so. If he says yes, then his attention should be drawn to you as a person who has recovered. You should be described to him as one of a fellowship who, as part of their own recovery, try to help others and who will be glad to talk to him if he cares to see you.

If he does not want to see you, never force yourself upon him. Neither should the family hysterically plead with him to do anything, nor should they tell him much about you. They should wait for the end of his next drinking bout. You might place this book where he can see it in the interval. Here no specific rule can be given. The family must decide these

things. But urge them not to be over-anxious, for that might spoil matters.

Usually the family should not try to tell your story. When possible, avoid meeting a man through his family. Approach through a doctor or an institution is a better bet. If your man needs hospitalization, he should have it, but not forcibly unless he is violent. Let the doctor, if he will, tell him he has something in the way of a solution.

Suggestion #12 – Sometimes it is best to approach them with the 12 Steps as they are getting over an indulgence.

Suggestion #13 – Don't approach them with the 12 Steps when they are intoxicated.

Suggestion #14 – Always be willing to help the family.

Suggestion #15 – Approach them with the 12 Steps when they are sober and mentally alert.

Suggestion #16 – Ask them if they are willing to go to any length to stop. If their answer is “yes”, tell them you will go to any length to help them. *(see suggestion #69)*

Suggestion #17 – Never force yourself on anyone.

Suggestion #18 – Give them a copy of the *Alcoholics Anonymous* book. *(see suggestion #61)*

Suggestion #19 – Every situation is unique. No rule can be given, only suggestions.

Suggestion #20 – Do not interfere with their family and their decisions.

Suggestion #21 – Advise the family to be calm and rational. Recommend a good 12 Step meeting like Al-Anon, Alateen, or an open A.A. meeting.

Suggestion #22 – Avoid being introduced to them through their family.

Suggestion #23 – If treatment is required, suggest it. But never insist on treatment unless they are violent.

91

91-92

WORKING WITH OTHERS

have it, but not forcibly unless he is violent. Let the doctor, if he will, tell him he has something in the way of a solution.

When your man is better, the doctor might suggest a visit from you. Though you have talked with the family, leave them out of the first discussion. Under these conditions your prospect will see he is under no pressure. He will feel he can deal with you without being nagged by his family. Call on him while he is still jittery. He may be more receptive when depressed.

See your man alone, if possible. At first engage in general conversation. After a while, turn the talk to some phase of drinking. Tell him enough about your drinking habits, symptoms, and experiences to encourage him to speak of himself. If he wishes to talk, let him do so. You will thus get a better idea of how you ought to proceed. If he is not communicative, give him a sketch or your drinking career up to the time you quit. But say nothing, for the moment, of how that was accomplished. If he is in a serious mood dwell on the troubles liquor has caused you, being careful not to moralize or lecture. If his mood is light, tell him humorous stories of your escapades. Get him to tell some of his.

When he sees you know all about the drinking game, commence to describe yourself as an alcoholic.

Tell him how baffled you were, how you finally learned that you were sick. Give him an account of the struggles you made to stop. Show him the mental twist which leads to the first drink of a spree. We suggest you do this as we have done it in the chapter on alcoholism. If he is alcoholic, he will understand you at once. He will match your mental inconsistencies with some of his own.

Suggestion #24 – Don't approach them with the 12 Steps as a representative of their family.

Suggestion #25 – Meet with them alone whenever possible.

Suggestion #26 – Start your first meeting with general conversation.

Suggestion #27 – Exchange stories. Show that you have experienced the same feelings and behavior as them.

Suggestion #28 – Actively listen to them. Concentrate on learning how you can help.

Suggestion #29 – Don't moralize or lecture.

Suggestion #30 – Tell them how frustrated you were to learn that your own condition is an illness.

Suggestion #31 – Reread "MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM" (Alcoholics Anonymous, page 30) and use the same approach to describe your own illness.

moralize – express judgement concerned with principles of right and wrong.
mental inconsistencies – illogical intellectual process.

92

WORKING WITH OTHERS

he is alcoholic, he will understand you at once. He will match you mental inconsistencies with some of his own.

If you are satisfied that he is a real alcoholic, begin to dwell on the hopeless feature of the malady. Show him, from your own experience, how the queer mental condition surrounding that first drink prevents normal functioning of the will power. Don't, at this stage, refer to this book, unless he has seen it and wishes to discuss it. And be careful not to brand him as an alcoholic. Let him draw his own conclusion. If he sticks to the idea that he can still control his drinking, tell him that possibly he can — if he is not too alcoholic. But insist that if he is severely afflicted, there may be little chance he can recover by himself.

Continue to speak of alcoholism as an illness, a fatal malady. Talk about the conditions of body and mind which accompany it. Keep his attention focused mainly on your personal experience. Explain that many are doomed who never realize their predicament. Doctors are rightly loath to tell alcoholic patients the whole story unless it will serve some good purpose. But you may talk to him about the hopelessness of alcoholism because you offer a solution. You will soon have your friend admitting he has many, if not all, of the traits of the alcoholic. If his own doctor is willing to tell him that he is alcoholic, so much the better. Even though your protégé may not have en-

Suggestion #32 – Explain how *will-power, self-knowledge* and fear failed to control your problem.

Suggestion #33 – Tell them about the subtle mental obsession that would always eventually overpower you.

Suggestion #34 – Do not identify them as hopeless. They should come to this realization on their own.

Suggestion #35 – Tell them that if their problem is severe enough, recovery may be impossible without help.

Suggestion #36 – Explain how the problem is a desperate condition that damages every part of life.

Suggestion #37 – Focus only on your own personal experiences, not the experiences of others.

Suggestion #38 – Explain that many people never realize how desperate their condition is.

Suggestion #39 – Stress that you have found a solution that has solved all of your problems.

fatal malady – desperate condition that impairs normal psychological and physiological function.
predicament – a situation from which extrication is difficult or impossible.
hopelessness – the despair you feel when you have abandoned all hope of comfort or success.
solution – a method for solving a problem.

93

WORKING WITH OTHERS

tirely admitted his condition, he has become very curious to know how you got well. Let him ask you that question, if he will. *Tell him exactly what happened to you.* Stress the spiritual feature freely. If the man be agnostic or atheist, make it emphatic that he does not have to agree with your conception of **God**. He can choose any conception he likes, provided it makes sense to him. *The main thing is that he be willing to believe in a Power greater than himself and that he live by spiritual principles.*

When dealing with such a person, you had better use everyday language to describe spiritual principles. There is no use arousing any prejudice he may have against certain theological terms and conceptions about which he may already be confused. Don't raise such issues, no matter what your own convictions are.

Your prospect may belong to a religious denomination. His religious education and training may be far superior to yours. In that case he is going to wonder how you can add anything to what he already knows. But he will be curious to learn why his own convictions have not worked and why yours seem to work so well. He may be an example of the truth that faith alone is insufficient. To be vital, faith must be accompanied by self sacrifice and unselfish, constructive action. Let him see that you are not there to instruct him in religion. Admit that he probably knows more about it than you do, but call to his attention the fact that however deep his faith and knowledge, he could not have applied it or he would not drink. Perhaps your story will help him see where he has failed to practice the very precepts he knows so well. We represent no

Suggestion #40 – Tell them *exactly* what happened to you. Do not exaggerate.

Suggestion #41 – Speak openly about the spiritual nature of the solution.

Suggestion #42 – Make it clear that they do not have to accept your beliefs about God. Whatever makes sense to them is enough.

Suggestion #43 – Tell them that the only thing necessary is a willingness to believe in and live by spiritual principles.

Suggestion #44 – Use everyday language to describe spiritual principles. Don't arouse prejudice by using your own particular spiritual terminology.

Suggestion #45 – Respect their beliefs. Admit that they may be more knowledgeable than you.

Suggestion #46 – Explain that your own belief had to be accompanied by unselfish and constructive action before it was effective.

Suggestion #47 – Help them see that they have not effectively applied their beliefs to their problem.

exactly – precisely; without approximation or embellishment.

faith – belief; complete confidence in; loyalty or allegiance to.

94

WORKING WITH OTHERS

particular faith or denomination. We are dealing only with general principles common to most denominations.

Outline the program of action, explaining how you made a self-appraisal, how you straightened out your past and why you are now endeavoring to be helpful to him. It is important for him to realize that your attempt to pass this on to him plays a vital part in your recovery. Actually, he may be helping you more than you are helping him. Make it plain he is under no obligation to you, that you hope only that he will try to help other alcoholics when he escapes his own difficulties. Suggest how important it is that he place the welfare of other people ahead of his own. Make it clear that he is not under pressure, that he needn't see you again if he doesn't want to. You should not be offended if he wants to call it off, for he has helped you more than you have helped him. If your talk has been sane, quiet and full of human understanding, you have perhaps made a friend. Maybe you have disturbed him about the question of alcoholism. This is all to the good. The more hopeless he feels, the better. He will be more likely to follow your suggestions.

Your candidate may give reasons why he need not follow all of the program. He may rebel at the thought of a drastic housecleaning which requires discussion

Suggestion #48 – Explain that the 12 Steps do not represent any particular faith or religion.

Suggestion #49 – Tell them how the 12 Steps are simply general principles that can be applied in any faith or religion.

Suggestion #50 – Tell them about your own experience working the 12 Steps.

Suggestion #51 – Explain that you are working Step 12 and that this plays an important role in your own recovery.

Suggestion #52 – Tell them you hope they will help others once they themselves recover.

Suggestion #53 – Explain how important it is that they think about the welfare of others.

Suggestion #54 – Don't pressure them or make them feel obligated.

Suggestion #55 – Don't be offended if they don't want your help with the 12 Steps.

Suggestion #56 – Be grateful for the help they have given you by allowing you to practice Step 12.

Suggestion #57 – Accept them as a friend.

vital – absolutely necessary.
offended – hurt or upset; cause to feel resentment or indignation.

94-95 WORKING WITH OTHERS

about the question of alcoholism. This is all to the good. The more hopeless he feels, the better. He will be more likely to follow your suggestions.

Your candidate may give reasons why he need not follow all of the program. He may rebel at the thought of a drastic housecleaning which requires discussion with other people. Do not contradict such views. Tell him you once felt as he does, but you doubt whether you would have made much progress had you not taken action. On your first visit tell him about the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. If he shows interest, lend him your copy of this book.

95

Unless your friend wants to talk further about himself, do not wear out your welcome. Give him a chance to think it over. If you do stay, let him steer the conversation in any direction he likes. Sometimes a new man is anxious to proceed at once, and you may be tempted to let him do so. This is sometimes a mistake. If he has trouble later, he is likely to say you rushed him. You will be most successful with alcoholics if you do not exhibit any passion for crusade or reform. Never talk down to an alcoholic from any moral or spiritual hilltop; simply lay out the kit of spiritual tools for his inspection. Show him how they worked with you. Offer him friendship and fellowship. Tell him that if he wants to get well you will do anything to help.

If he is not interested in your solution, if he expects you to act only as a banker for his financial difficulties or a nurse for his sprees, you may have to drop him

Suggestion #58 – Don't contradict their views and opinions.

Suggestion #59 – Explain how you felt about starting the 12 Steps.

Suggestion #60 – Tell them about *Alcoholics Anonymous*. Recommend *healthy* 12 Step based meetings.

Suggestion #61 – Give them a copy of the *Alcoholics Anonymous* book. (see suggestion #18)

Suggestion #62 – Don't keep them in long meetings. They need time to process what you tell them.

Suggestion #63 – Give them a chance to reflect on what you tell them in between meetings.

Suggestion #64 – Do not rush them through the 12 Steps or allow them to rush you.

Suggestion #65 – Don't act like a champion of social reform. Keep your interest in their personal welfare.

Suggestion #66 – Show them respect. *Never* talk down to them morally or spiritually or in any other way.

Suggestion #67 – Explain how the 12 Steps worked for you.

Suggestion #68 – Offer them *friendship* and *fellowship*.

Suggestion #69 – Tell them that if they want to get well, you will do anything you can to help. (see suggestion #16)

95 WORKING WITH OTHERS

his inspection. Show him how they worked with you. Offer him friendship and fellowship. Tell him that if he wants to get well you will do anything to help.

If he is not interested in your solution, if he expects you to act only as a banker for his financial difficulties or a nurse for his sprees, you may have to drop him until he changes his mind. This he may do after he gets hurts some more.

If he is sincerely interested and wants to see you again, ask him to read this book in the interval. After doing that, he must decide for himself whether he wants to go on. He should not be pushed or prodded by you, his wife, or his friends. If he is to find God, the desire must come from within.

If he thinks he can do the job in some other way, or prefers some other spiritual approach, encourage him to follow his own conscience. We have no monopoly on God; we merely have an approach that worked with us. But point out that we alcoholics have much in common and that you would like, in any case, to be friendly. Let it go at that.

Suggestion #70 – Don't continue to approach them with the 12 Steps if they are not interested.

Suggestion #71 – Don't continue to approach them with the 12 Steps if they just want money or financial assistance. *Don't enable them.*

Suggestion #72 – Don't continue to approach them with the 12 Steps if they just want you to comfort them after their indulgences. *Don't enable them.*

Suggestion #73 – If they are interested in working the 12 Steps, ask them to read the first 181 pages of the *Alcoholics Anonymous* book before your next meeting.

Suggestion #74 – After they read the *Alcoholics Anonymous* book, ask them to decide for themselves if they want to work the 12 Steps.

Suggestion #75 – Do not try to convince or persuade them. Let them make their own choice.

Suggestion #76 – If they are to find God, the desire must come from within themselves.

Suggestion #77 – If they think they have a better way to solve their problem, encourage them to pursue it.

Suggestion #78 – Point out that people with the same problems have a lot in common.

Suggestion #79 – Even if they do not want to work the 12 Steps, tell them you would like to be their friend and leave it at that.

96

WORKING WITH OTHERS

Do not be discouraged if your prospect does not respond at once. Search out another alcoholic and try again. You are sure to find someone desperate enough to accept with eagerness what you offer. We find it a waste of time to keep chasing a man who cannot or will not work with you. If you leave such a person alone, he may soon become convinced that he cannot recover by himself. To spend too much time on any one situation is to deny some other alcoholic an opportunity to live and be happy. One of our Fellowship failed entirely with his first half dozen prospects. He often says that if he had continued to work on them, he might have deprived many others, who have since recovered, of their chance.

Suppose now you are making your second visit to a man. He has read this volume and says he is prepared to go through with the Twelve Steps of the program of recovery. Having had the experience yourself, you can give him much practical advice. Let him know you are available if he wishes to make a decision and tell his story, but do not insist upon it if he prefers to consult someone else.

He may be broke and homeless. If he is, you might try to help him about getting a job, or give him a little financial assistance. But you should not deprive your family or creditors of money they should have. Perhaps you will want to take the man into your home for a few days. But be sure you use discretion. Be certain he will be welcomed by your family, and that he is not trying to impose upon you for money, connections, or shelter. Permit that and you only harm him. You will be making it possible for him to be insincere.

Suggestion #80 – Do not be discouraged if they don't respond. Find someone else to work with.

Suggestion #81 – Most people have to be desperate before they are willing to work the 12 Steps.

Suggestion #82 – Don't waste your time chasing someone who *can not* or *will not* work with you.

Suggestion #83 – By leaving an unwilling person alone, you may help convince them they need help.

Suggestion #84 – Do not spend too much time on an unwilling person. Others need and want the 12 Steps.

Suggestion #85 – Don't give up! One success is worth many failures because your success will also carry the message of the 12 Steps to even more sufferers.

Suggestion #86 – You can give them practical advice for working the 12 Steps because you worked them.

Suggestion #87 – Offer to help them with the 12 Steps but do not insist upon it. Allow them to choose whoever they want to help them.

Suggestion #88 – If they need help, give it to them. Provide what they need, but avoid giving them money.

Suggestion #89 – *Your family should always come first.* The happiness and security of your own family should always be your first consideration when helping others.

Suggestion #90 – They must rely on God, not you. Never let them use you or your family.

97

WORKING WITH OTHERS

You may be aiding in his destruction rather than his recovery.

Never avoid these responsibilities, but be sure you are doing the right thing if you assume them. Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery. A kindly act once in a while isn't enough. You have to act the Good Samaritan every day, if need be. It may mean the loss of many nights' sleep, great interference with your pleasures, interruptions to your business. It may mean sharing your money and your home, counseling frantic wives and relatives, innumerable trips to police courts, sanitariums, hospitals, jails and asylums. Your telephone may jangle at any time of the day or night. Your wife may sometimes say she is neglected. A drunk may smash the furniture in your home, or burn a mattress. You may have to fight with him if he is violent. Sometimes you will have to call a doctor and administer sedatives under his direction. Another time you may have to send for the police or an ambulance. Occasionally you will have to meet such conditions.

We seldom allow an alcoholic to live in our homes for long at a time. It is not good for him, and it sometimes creates serious complications in a family.

Though an alcoholic does not respond, there is no reason why you should neglect his family. You should continue to be friendly to them. The family should be offered your way of life. Should they accept and practice spiritual principles, there is a much better chance that the head of the family will recover. And even though he continues to drink, the family will find life more bearable.

For the type of alcoholic who is able and willing to

Suggestion #91 – Don't let yourself become their higher power. Their security must come from God.

Suggestion #92 – Have a *complete willingness* to help but take care not to make things worse.

Suggestion #93 – Helping others helps you!

Suggestion #94 – Be helpful everyday. Helping others every now and then will not help you.

Suggestion #95 – Helping others takes on many forms and is not always convenient for you.

Suggestion #96 – Do not allow them to interfere with your family life.

Suggestion #97 – Don't neglect their family. The 12 Steps can help them, too. Recommend a healthy 12 Step meeting like Al-Anon, Alateen, or open A.A. meetings.

Good Samaritan – a person who voluntarily offers help or sympathy in times of trouble.

98

97-98 WORKING WITH OTHERS

For the type of alcoholic who is able and willing to get well, little charity, in the ordinary sense of the word, is needed or wanted. The men who cry for money and shelter before conquering alcohol, are on the wrong track. Yet we do go to great extremes to provide each other with these very things, when such action is warranted. This may seem inconsistent, but we think it is not.

It is not the matter of giving that is in question, but when and how to give. That often makes the difference between failure and success. The minute we put our work on a service plane, the alcoholic commences to rely upon our assistance rather than upon God. He clamors for this or that, claiming he cannot master alcohol until his material needs are cared for. Nonsense. Some of us have taken very hard knocks to learn this truth: Job or no job — wife or no wife — we simply do not stop drinking so long as we place dependence upon other people ahead of dependence on God.

Burn the idea into the consciousness of every man that he can get well regardless of anyone. The only condition is that he trust in God and clean house.

Now, the domestic problem: There may be divorce, separation, or just strained relations. When your prospect has made such reparation as he can to his family,

Suggestion #98 – Those who are willing and able to work the 12 Steps will not need or want charity.

Suggestion #99 – The 12 Steps are the solution. Those who want their problems solved before they work the 12 Steps are mistaken.

Suggestion #100 – Do anything you can to help someone who is honestly working the 12 Steps.

Suggestion #101 – *Help, but do not enable.*

Suggestion #102 – They must rely on God for assistance, not you.

Suggestion #103 – Those who claim they cannot stop indulging until their problems are solved are wrong.

Suggestion #104 – They will not be able to stop indulging if they depend on money and people instead of God.

Suggestion #105 – They can recover no matter what their circumstances if they only trust God and take responsibility for working the 12 Steps.

TRUST GOD
CLEAN HOUSE
HELP OTHERS

98-99 WORKING WITH OTHERS

Burn the idea into the consciousness of every man that he can get well regardless of anyone. The only condition is that he trust in **God** and clean house.

Now, the domestic problem: There may be divorce, separation, or just strained relations. When your prospect has made such reparation as he can to his family, and has thoroughly explained to them the new principles by which he is living, he should proceed to put those principles into action at home. That is, if he is lucky enough to have a home. Though his family be at fault in many respects, he should not be concerned about that. He should concentrate on his own **spiritual demonstration**. Argument and fault-finding are to be avoided like the plague. In many homes this is a

99

difficult thing to do, but it must be done if any results are to be expected. If persisted in for a few months, the effect on a man's family is sure to be great. The most incompatible people discover they have a basis upon which they can meet. Little by little the family may see their own defects and admit them. These can then be discussed in an atmosphere of helpfulness and friendliness.

After they have seen tangible results, the family will perhaps want to go along. These things will come to pass naturally and in good time provided,

Suggestion #106 – They should use the 12 Steps to repair the damage they have caused to their personal life.

Suggestion #107 – They should live by the 12 Steps in their personal life.

Suggestion #108 – They should not be concerned with the faults of others.

Suggestion #109 – They should demonstrate God working through them.

Suggestion #110 – They should *never* argue or find fault with others.

Promise – If they keep practicing the 12 Steps in their personal life, healing will come for everyone involved.

Suggestion #111 – They should *always* be friendly and helpful to others.

concentrate – direct attention to; make central.
persist – be persistent; refuse to stop.
atmosphere – a particular environment or surrounding influence.

99-100 WORKING WITH OTHERS

may see their own defects and admit them. These can then be discussed in an atmosphere of helpfulness and friendliness.

After they have seen tangible results, the family will perhaps want to go along. These things will come to pass naturally and in good time provided, however, the alcoholic continues to demonstrate that he can be sober, considerate, and helpful, regardless of what anyone says or does. Of course, we all fall much below this standard many times. But we must try to repair the damage immediately lest we pay the penalty by a spree.

If there be divorce or separation, there should be no undue haste for the couple to get together. The man should be sure of his recovery. The wife should fully understand his new way of life. If their old relationship is to be resumed it must be on a better basis, since the former did not work. This means a new attitude and spirit all around. Sometimes it is to the best interests of all concerned that a couple remain apart. Obviously, no rule can be laid down. Let the alcoholic continue his program day by day. When the time for living together has come, it will be apparent to both parties.

Let no alcoholic say he cannot recover unless he has his family back. This just isn't so. In some cases the wife will never come back for one reason or another. Remind the prospect that his recovery is not dependent upon people. It is dependent upon his relationship with God. We have seen men get well whose families have not returned at all. We have seen others slip when the family came back too soon.

Suggestion #112 – They should allow the healing of their personal life to proceed naturally and not rush it.

Suggestion #113 – They should continue to stay sober and be kind and helpful no matter what anyone says or does.

Suggestion #114 – *When they make a mistake* they should practice Step 10 and make amends right away.

Promise – If they don't practice the 12 Steps, they may not stay sober.

Suggestion #115 – They should not rush into and try to force repairing their personal relationships.

Suggestion #116 – They should be sure of their own recovery before trying to repair personal relationships.

Suggestion #117 – Their beloved should completely understand their new way of life.

Suggestion #118 – Their personal relationships must be rebuilt on a completely new foundation.

Suggestion #119 – They should continue to live the 12 Steps every day and trust their relationships to God.

Promise – When the time is right, the *perfect* plan will be obvious to everyone concerned.

Suggestion #120 – There is no situation in their personal life that has to be fixed before they can recover.

Suggestion #121 – Remind them that they must *depend on God for recovery*, not on other people.

100 WORKING WITH OTHERS

with God. We have seen men get well whose families have not returned at all. We have seen others slip when the family came back too soon.

Both you and the new man must walk day by day in the path of spiritual progress. If you persist, remarkable things will happen. 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. Follow the dictates of a Higher Power and you will presently live in a new and wonderful world, no matter what your present circumstances!

When working with a man and his family, you should take care not to participate in their quarrels. You may spoil your chance of being helpful if you do. But urge upon a man's family that he has been a very sick person and should be treated accordingly. You should warn against arousing resentment or jealousy. You should point out that his defects of character are not going to disappear over night. Show them that he has entered upon a period of growth. Ask them to remember, when they are impatient, the blessed fact of his sobriety.

If you have been successful in solving your own domestic problems, tell the newcomer's family how that was accomplished. In this way you can set them on the right track without becoming critical of them. The story of how you and your wife settled your difficulties is worth any amount of criticism.

Assuming we are spiritually fit, we can do all sorts of things alcoholics are not supposed to do. People have said we must not go where liquor is served; we

Promise – When you and those you help work the 12 Steps every day and don't give up:

1. You will evolve spiritually.
2. Those you help will evolve spiritually.
3. Amazing things will happen.
4. God will give you blessings that are better than anything you can imagine.
5. You will live in a new and wonderful world.

Best of all, you receive these promises no matter what your current circumstances are.

Suggestion #122 – Do not get involved in arguments between them and their friends and family.

Suggestion #123 – Advise their friends and family to realize that their loved one has been very sick and to treat them accordingly.

Suggestion #124 – Warn their friends and family against arousing resentment or jealousy in their loved one.

Suggestion #125 – Advise their friends and family that their loved one is in a period of healing that will take time.

Suggestion #126 – Ask the friends and family to be patient and thankful for the blessing of sobriety.

Suggestion #127 – If you have solved your own domestic problems, share how you did it.

Suggestion #128 – Never be judgmental or critical. Just share the experience of how you solved your own problems.

Temptation (100)

101

100-101 WORKING WITH OTHERS

Assuming we are spiritually fit, we can do all sorts of things alcoholics are not supposed to do. People have said we must not go where liquor is served; we

must not have it in our homes; we must shun friends who drink; we must avoid moving pictures which show drinking scenes; we must not go into bars; our friends must hide their bottles if we go to their houses; we mustn't think or be reminded about alcohol at all. Our experience shows that this is not necessarily so.

We meet these conditions every day. An alcoholic who cannot meet them, still has an alcoholic mind; there is something the matter with his spiritual status. His only chance for sobriety would be some place like the Greenland Ice Cap, and even there an Eskimo might turn up with a bottle of scotch and ruin everything! Ask any woman who has sent her husband to distant places on the theory he would escape the alcohol problem.

In our belief any scheme of combating alcoholism which proposes to shield the sick man from temptation is doomed to failure. If the alcoholic tries to shield himself he may succeed for a time, but usually winds up with a bigger explosion than ever. We have tried these methods. These attempts to do the impossible have always failed.

So our rule is not to avoid a place where there is drinking, *if we have a legitimate reason for being there.* That includes bars, nightclubs, dances, receptions, weddings, even plain ordinary whoopee parties. To a person who has had experience with an alcoholic, this may seem like tempting Providence, but it isn't.

You will note that we made an important qualifica-

Promise – When you are working the 12 Steps, you can handle any situation or circumstances that you find yourself in.

Suggestion #129 – If you cannot handle your own situation or circumstances, then you are not actively working the 12 Steps.

Suggestion #130 – You cannot protect someone from temptation. It won't work. It always fails.

Suggestion #131 – If you have a good reason for being someplace, don't avoid it just because of temptation.

spiritual status – quality of one's trust in and reliance upon God.
temptation – the desire to have or do something that you know you should avoid; an act or situation that can set in motion a course of events; a behavioral trigger.

101-102 WORKING WITH OTHERS

You will note that we made an important qualification. Therefore, ask yourself on each occasion, "Have I any good social, business, or personal reason for going to this place? Or am I expecting to steal a little vicarious pleasure from the atmosphere of such places?" If you answer these questions satisfactorily, you need have no apprehension. Go or stay away, whichever seems best. But be sure you are on solid spiritual ground before you start and that your motive in going is thoroughly good. Do not think of what you will get out of the occasion. Think of what you can bring to it. But if you are shaky, you had better work with another alcoholic instead!

Why sit with a long face in places where there is drinking, sighing about the good old days. If it is a happy occasion, try to increase the pleasure of those there; if a business occasion, go and attend to your business enthusiastically. If you are with a person who wants to eat in a bar, by all means go along. Let your friends know they are not to change their habits on your account. At a proper time and place explain to all your friends why alcohol disagrees with you. If you do this thoroughly, few people will ask you to drink. While you were drinking, you were withdrawing from life little by little. Now you are getting back into the social life of this world. Don't start to withdraw again just because your friends drink liquor.

Your job now is to be at the place where you may be of maximum helpfulness to others, so never hesitate to go anywhere if you can be helpful. You should not hesitate to visit the most sordid spot on earth on such an errand. Keep on the firing line of life with these motives and God will keep you unharmed.

Suggestion #132 – Always check your motives before you expose yourself to temptation.

Suggestion #133 – If you feel you can't handle a temptation, don't expose yourself to it.

Suggestion #134 – Think what you can bring into life, not what you can get out of it. Approach A.A. meetings this way.

Suggestion #135 – Whenever you feel unstable, talk to another alcoholic immediately!

Suggestion #136 – Try to bring joy into the lives of the people around you.

Suggestion #137 – Live your life enthusiastically.

Suggestion #138 – Tell your friends they do not need to change their lifestyles to protect you from temptation.

Suggestion #139 – At an appropriate time, explain your problem to your friends. Few will ask you to indulge.

Suggestion #140 – Get into the community and connect with other people.

Suggestion #141 – Don't withdraw from people just to avoid temptation.

Suggestion #142 – Your job is to be as helpful as you can to the people around you.

Suggestion #143 – Never hesitate to go *anywhere* you can be helpful.

Promise – Stay on the frontline of helping others and God will protect you.



Your Attitude (102-103)

102-103 WORKING WITH OTHERS

Many of us keep liquor in our homes. We often need it to carry green recruits through a severe hangover. Some of us still serve it to our friends provided they are not alcoholic. But some of us think we should not serve liquor to anyone. We never argue this question. We feel that each family, in the light of their own circumstances, ought to decide for themselves.

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. Every new alcoholic looks for this spirit among us and is immensely relieved when he finds we are not witch burners. A spirit of intolerance might repel alcoholics whose lives could have been saved, had it not been for such stupidity. We would not even do the cause of temperate drinking any good, for not one drinker in a thousand likes to be told anything about alcohol by one who hates it.

Some day we hope that Alcoholics Anonymous will help the public to a better realization of the gravity of the alcoholic problem, but we shall be of little use if our attitude is one of bitterness or hostility. Drinkers will not stand for it.

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!

103

The Universal Suggestion –
Love God, Yourself and Others unconditionally!

enthusiastically – overflowing with eager enjoyment; with a feeling of excitement.

firing line – the most advanced and *responsible* group in an activity.

Suggestion #144 – Each family should decide for themselves if it is appropriate to keep alcohol in the home. Never argue this point.

Suggestion #145 – You should *be for the solution*, not against the problem. Just being against something is never helpful.

Suggestion #146 – It is foolish to be narrow-minded and intolerant of alcohol.

Suggestion #147 – You won't help anyone by hating anything.

Suggestion #148 – You can't help anyone understand the importance of the solution by being harsh, unpleasant or angry. People don't respond to this attitude.

Suggestion #149 – Your problems were created by your own thinking, not by alcohol or other people.

Suggestion #150 – *You must stop fighting anybody or anything* (even alcohol, and especially yourself).

unconditionally – not determined or influenced by anything, including the past; not subject to any conditions; not restricted by any doubt of any kind.

Working part 1 of Step 12

Working part 1 of Step 12

60 HOW IT WORKS

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.

□ 12.1 – Do The Work

If you have come this far and completed all of the work up to this point, **you have had a spiritual awakening**. Don't doubt it. You have!

Now **stay awake** by maintaining your spiritual awakening each and every day from now on.

□ 12.2 – Do The Work

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Remember the truths you uncovered in your <i>Unmanageability Inventory</i> (workbook 70). | Seek the truth about yourself. |
| 2. Nurture the seed of hope that you planted when you came to believe (workbook 83). | Expect the promises. |
| 3. Use your <i>Third Step Prayer</i> to strengthen your decision (workbook 93). | Have faith and confidence. |
| 4. Take responsibility for your thoughts and actions. | Have courage. Live without fear. |
| 5. Be honest, open and willing. Be a trusted friend to others. | Live in the light of truth. |
| 6. Ask God for the willingness to grow spiritually (workbook 136). | Be willing to change your thinking. |
| 7. Use the <i>Seventh Step Prayer</i> that you wrote (workbook 138). | Accept God's guidance. |
| 8. Care about the welfare of others. | Love others. |
| 9. Continue to make amends for your past thinking and actions (workbook 153). | Be fair and honorable. |
| 10. Use <i>Tenth Step Thinking</i> to evaluate your thoughts and actions (workbook 157). | Keep doing this work. Don't give up. |
| 11. Practice your personal <i>Eleventh Step</i> every day (workbook 161, 166 & 167). | Develop your relationship with God. |
| 12. Be of maximum service to God and the people around you. | Help others. |

Working part 2 of Step 12

Working part 2 of Step 12

60

HOW IT WORKS

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.

12.3 – Do The Work

Carry this message. Read the remainder of the Alcoholics Anonymous book thoroughly and carefully (A.A. pages 104 to 181).

As you read, follow the **directions**, say the **prayers**, expect the **promises**.

This workbook is only a beginning. The entire Alcoholics Anonymous book contains lots more important information that you still need to learn.

12.4 – Do The Work

Carry this message. Read two pages from the first 181 pages of the Alcoholics Anonymous book every day. You will read the entire book four times a year.

You will find something new and useful each time you read the Alcoholics Anonymous book.

12.5 – Do The Work

Carry this message. Whenever you try to help someone, reread all of the suggestions in **Working With Others** and use them (A.A. page 89, workbook 168-185).

Everything you need to know to help another alcoholic work the 12 Steps is in the Alcoholics Anonymous book.

Helpful Hint – Make copies of the worksheets on the following two pages and use them to help organize your work with others.

Cards for Newcomers

<p>TRUST GOD, CLEAN HOUSE, HELP OTHERS</p> <p>Your friend,</p>	<p><i>Call me before you drink.</i></p> <p>Your friend,</p>	<p>There is a Solution!</p> <p>Your friend,</p>	<p><i>I've been where you are and I know the way out.</i></p> <p>Your friend,</p>
<p>TRUST GOD, CLEAN HOUSE, HELP OTHERS</p> <p>Your friend,</p>	<p><i>Call me before you drink.</i></p> <p>Your friend,</p>	<p>There is a Solution!</p> <p>Your friend,</p>	<p><i>I've been where you are and I know the way out.</i></p> <p>Your friend,</p>
<p>TRUST GOD, CLEAN HOUSE, HELP OTHERS</p> <p>Your friend,</p>	<p><i>Call me before you drink.</i></p> <p>Your friend,</p>	<p>There is a Solution!</p> <p>Your friend,</p>	<p><i>I've been where you are and I know the way out.</i></p> <p>Your friend,</p>
<p>TRUST GOD, CLEAN HOUSE, HELP OTHERS</p> <p>Your friend,</p>	<p><i>Call me before you drink.</i></p> <p>Your friend,</p>	<p>There is a Solution!</p> <p>Your friend,</p>	<p><i>I've been where you are and I know the way out.</i></p> <p>Your friend,</p>
<p>TRUST GOD, CLEAN HOUSE, HELP OTHERS</p> <p>Your friend,</p>	<p><i>Call me before you drink.</i></p> <p>Your friend,</p>	<p>There is a Solution!</p> <p>Your friend,</p>	<p><i>I've been where you are and I know the way out.</i></p> <p>Your friend,</p>

Helpful Hint – Make cards to give to newcomers.

Working part 3 of Step 12

Working part 3 of Step 12

60

HOW IT WORKS

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.

Many of us exclaimed, "What an order! I can't go through with it." Do not be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is, that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.

□ 12.6 – Do The Work

Practice the **12 Steps** in every part of your life, in every relationship and in every situation that you encounter *without exception*.

Don't be discouraged. No one can do the **12 Steps** perfectly. Just keep trying.

You are not more righteous than anyone else just because you worked the **12 Steps**. You are simply willing to keep growing.

The **12 Steps** are a *design for living* and growing spiritually, not a way for becoming perfect.

□ 12.7 – Do The Work

Study the **Twelve Traditions** and the **Twelve Concepts** of A.A. Learn what the **Three Legacies** of A.A. are and how to apply them in your life.

Be open minded! Keep learning!



From now on your main purpose in life is to be of maximum service to God and the people around you.

"Hearts understand in ways minds cannot."

– Lois Wilson

Lois (Burnham) Wilson (1891-1988) - Co-founder of Al-Anon, a support group for the friends and family of alcoholics. Beloved of Alcoholics Anonymous co-founder Bill W.