

Now we need more action, without which we find that “Faith without works is dead.” 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. [compulsive eating]*

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.

(Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 77, p. 83)

(Step 8: “Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.”)

Steps Eight and Nine are concerned with personal relations. First, we take a look backward and try to discover where we have been at fault; next we make a vigorous attempt to repair the damage we have done; and third, having thus cleaned away the debris of the past, we consider how, with our newfound knowledge of ourselves, we may develop the best possible relations with every human being we know.

We must not exaggerate our defects or theirs. A quiet, objective view will be our steadfast aim. It is the beginning of the end of isolation from our fellows and from God.

(Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p. 77, p. 82)

Step 9: “Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.”

After we have made the list of people we have harmed, have reflected carefully upon each instance, and have tried to possess ourselves of the right attitude in which to proceed, we will see that the making of direct amends divides those we should approach into several classes. There will be those who ought to be dealt with just as soon as we become reasonably confident that we can maintain our sobriety [abstinence]. There will be those to whom we can make only partial restitution, lest complete disclosures do them or others more harm than good. There will be other cases where action ought to be deferred, and still others in which by the very nature of the situation we shall never be able to make direct personal contact at all.

Do we lay the matter before our sponsor or spiritual adviser, earnestly asking God’s help and guidance—meanwhile resolving to do the right thing when it becomes clear, cost what it may? ...will require a complete willingness to make amends as fast and as far as may be possible in a given set of conditions. Above all, we should try to be absolutely sure that we are not delaying because we are afraid. For the readiness to take the full consequences of our past acts, and to take responsibility for the well-being of others at the same time, is the very spirit of Step Nine.

(Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p. 83, 86)

‘Amends’ To change for the better... improve... correction of faults... compensation for injury or loss (Webster Dictionary)

PROMISES

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.

(Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 83-84)

