

**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.”

**Set aside prayer:** “God, please enable me to set aside everything I think I know for an open mind and a new experience. Help me become willing as the result of my spiritual awakening to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all my affairs.”

| Principle | Theme         | Action                      | Defect      | Result              |
|-----------|---------------|-----------------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| Service   | Joy of living | Helping others/right living | Selfishness | Spiritual awakening |

| Purpose  | Process  | Experience  | Result  | Promise  |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us | Be of service and carry the message. Say 1st, 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3rd steps. Say the 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 7th step prayer. Practice steps 10,11 & 12; List the specific instructions for helping others | The more we think of others, and the less often we think of ourselves, the more happy, joyous and free we become. | A meaning and purpose, inner peace, emotional sobriety. | Connection to self and others and sense of place and belonging in the world. |

Big Book: Chapter 7, Working with others.  
 From: Page 89, Thru: Page 103.  
 Appendix 2 (“Spiritual Experience”) AA BB pgs. 569-570  
 12&12: Step 12

**Prayer:** [Twelfth Step Prayer ]

Dear Higher Power, My spiritual awakening continues to unfold. The help I have received I shall pass on and give to others, both in and out of the Fellowship. For this opportunity I am grateful. I pray most humbly to continue walking day by day on the road of spiritual progress. I pray for the inner strength and wisdom to practice the principles of this way of life in all I do and say. I need You, my friends, and the Program every hour of every day. This is a better way to live.

**Principle:** Service: which provides an opportunity to get out of ourselves and think of others.

**Promises:**

When you and those you help work the 12 steps every day and don’t give up:

You will evolve spiritually; those you help will evolve spiritually, amazing things will happen; God will give you blessings that are better than anything you can imagine; you will live in a new and wonderful world. Best of all, you receive these promises no matter what your current circumstances are.

When you work with others, your life will have meaning. You will see them recover. You will see then help others. You will not be lonely and neither will they. You will create true companionship. You will gladly help even more people.

You are uniquely qualified to help others who have the same problems that you have overcome.

If you keep practicing the 12 steps in your life, healing will come for everyone involved.

### **Written Inventory:**

Using a dictionary, define the meaning of the words of 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." Then after each dictionary definition write your own definition in your own words. what you learn about the difference between what you thought it meant and the dictionary says it means?

**Process:** This STEP logically separates into 3 parts. Spiritual experience; carrying the message and practicing these principles.

### **1. The SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE.**

The terms "spiritual experience" and "spiritual awakening" used here and in the book ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, mean, upon careful reading, that the personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism has manifested itself among us in many forms.

Do NOT get the impression that these personality changes, or spiritual experiences, must be in the nature of sudden and spectacular upheavals. Happily for everyone, this conclusion is erroneous.

Among our rapidly 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.

The new man gradually 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 inner resource which they presently identify with their own conception of a Power greater than themselves.

Most emphatically we wish to say that any alcoholic capable of honestly facing his problem 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 spiritual side of the program. Willingness, Honesty and Open Mindedness are the Essentials of Recovery. But these are indispensable.

### **Questions:**

Have I had a “spiritual awakening” as a result of working these steps?

Can I describe how this “spiritual awakening” (*personality change*) came about?

How did it change me? For example: Have I undergone a profound alteration in my reaction to life?

Have I developed a new way of thinking, feeling and acting and connecting with others?

Has my awareness of God’s presence changed since I started to practice this program? Please describe.

## **2. CARRY THE MESSAGE TO OTHERS**

This means exactly what it says. Carry the message actively. Bring it to the man who needs it. We do it in many ways:

- a. By attending **every** meeting of our own group.
- b. By making calls when asked.
- c. By speaking at group meetings when asked.
- d. By supporting our group financially to make group meetings possible.
- e. By assisting at meetings when asked.
- f. By setting a good example of complete sobriety.
- g. By owning, and loaning to new men, our own copy of the Big A.A. Book.
- h. By encouraging those who find the way difficult.
- i. By serving as an officer or on group committees or special assignments when asked.
- j. By doing all of the foregoing cheerfully and willingly.
- k. We do any or all of the foregoing *at some sacrifice to ourselves* **with definite thought of developing unselfishness** in our own character.

### **Questions:**

What message am I trying to carry to those who are suffering from addiction or compulsive behaviors?

What are some different ways of carrying the message?

Which ones do I personally participate in?

What do I gain through service to others?

What inspires me to “carry the message” to others?

What are the step by step requirements for 12<sup>th</sup> step work?

What is my personal style of sponsorship?

How is it important for recovery for us to identify with each other and share our experience strength and hope?

What is the difference between attraction and promotion?

How is selfless service the antidote to my disease of selfishness and self-centeredness?

### 3. WE PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS.

This last part of the **Twelfth Step** is the real purpose that all of the twelve steps lead to - *a new way of life, a design for living*. It shows how to live rightly, think rightly and to achieve happiness. **How do we go about it?**

- a. We resolve to live our life *one day at a time* - - just twenty-four hours.
- b. We pray *each* day for guidance that day.
- c. We pray *each* night - - thanks for that day.
- d. We resolve to keep our heads and to forego any anger, no matter what situation arises.
- e. We are patient.
- f. We keep calm, relaxed.
- g. Now and most important: whatever *little* ordinary situations as well as *big* situations arise, we look at them calmly and fairly, with an open mind, then act on them in exact accordance with the simple true principles that A.A. has taught and will teach us.
- h. STEP TWELVE: A spiritual awakening is THE RESULT of working, DOING, and LIVING, ALL of the 12 Steps! Then you have this message to carry to others. There is no message unless you have done the first 9 Steps and are living the last three. You can't give what you don't have. You must practice these principles in ALL your affairs.

In other words, our **sobriety** is only a correction of our worst and most evident faults. Our living each day according to the principles of A.A. will also correct all of our other lesser faults and will gradually eliminate, one by one, all of the defects in our character that cause frictions, discontents, and unhappy rebellious moods that lead right back to our very chief fault of drinking.

Don't trudge the Happy Road to Recovery; Walk with your head high, knowing that through you, God will help others to RECOVER as you have. May God bless and be with you.

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**Questions:**

What is my understanding of the principles of the program?

How can I practice these principles in all my affairs?

Which principles would I like to improve upon?

Are practicing these principles important to my continued spiritual growth?

How have the spiritual principles of the program contributed to my spiritual awakening?

What does "understanding is the key to right principles and attitudes, and right action is the key to good living..." mean? to you?

Am I willing to continue to grow spiritually, seek conscious contact with the God of my understanding and be of service to others?

**Practical Application:**

We can ask ourselves the following questions:

- Am I doing the things that reflect a trust in God? For example, am I saying my Step 11 prayers and meditation? Am I living by right principle, or am I doing anything dishonest, wrong or selfish?
- Did I clean house thoroughly? Am I cleaning house daily now? Was my 4th step thorough? Am I doing daily written Step 10s? We are in trouble if we held back anything that should have gone into our Step 4 inventory. Similarly, if we hold back on a Step 9 amends that, other things being equal, we could do now, we can be in desperate trouble. Some hesitate to make a Step 9 amends using the justification that they have yet to become willing. When this is really a deliberate delaying tactic, the result can be deep unhappiness.
- Am I helping others? Do I have service commitments? Am I working with newcomers on a regular basis?
- Am I willing to carry the message to other addicts, and practice these principles in all my affairs?

**Conclusion:**

It is suggested that we read these Big Book Chapters below to conclude our Step Study:

Chapter 8, "To Wives" (BB-Pg. 104);

Chapter 9, "The Family Afterwards" (BB-Pg. 122);

Chapter 10, "To Employers" (BB-Pg. 136);

Chapter 11, "A Vision for You" (BB-Pg. 151).

These chapters are designed to teach us how to practice these principles in all our affairs. They contain spiritual truths which apply to all of us.

A reading of the last paragraph of "A Vision for You" on page 164, is a fitting way to complete our Big Book Step Study 'Process.'

"Abandon yourself to God as You Understand God... Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows... Clear away the wreckage of your past.... Give freely of what you find and join us.... We shall be with you in the 'Fellowship of the Spirit'... and you will surely meet some of us... as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.

May God Bless You And Keep You - Until Then".....

**References:** Please forgive any omissions!

AA Big Book

AA 12 & 12

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The Table Mate.