

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

The aim of this interpretation is to give the working mechanics of Step Twelve. All reference is from a reliable source of information - the book "Alcoholics Anonymous".

The understanding and practice of this Step is simply arrived at by separate study of the tree divisions into which it falls.

#### First Division

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of those steps."

Since this is an interpretation of established A.A. concepts, it would be inconsistent to mince words over spiritual values or to withhold the fact that a spiritual awakening is an essential part of our recovery.

Provisionally for us, at least, six of the Twelve Steps are of a spiritual nature.

Knowing the fallacies of alcoholic thinking, it is inconceivable that we could recover from alcoholism without spiritual inspiration dependent upon some power greater than our own. We get this inspiration and come to know God by living the Twelve Steps.

Without the spiritual principles of the Twelve Steps there could be no A.A. Instead it would be a group of disgruntled alcoholics, temporarily on the wagon, living in a perpetual state of mental drunkenness.

Lacking the benefit of spiritual influences, the jungle law of resentful, alcoholic thinking would take over and drive each member back to the insanity of alcoholism. Our sobriety demands a personality change. We gain this in the form of a spiritual awakening from living the A.A. program.

Are we really spiritually awakened or is it chance, fear, self-will or alcoholic rationalization that keeps us sober? If by the latter, then what fills us with the enthusiasm and the desire "to carry the message to other alcoholics?" Can this worthy motive result from chance, fear or self-centeredness?

Who grants us the power to stop drinking and stay stopped - to help other alcoholics stop - to say nothing of our desire to help them? What gives them the power to acquire and pass on the miracle of sobriety. Is it possible that an alcoholic can arrest the physical allergy and the mental obsession of alcoholism by his own power? We think not. Medicine concurs. Alcoholics who try to disprove this theory end up drunk.

Obviously, there are but two answers to these questions. First: those who accept, and try to live, all of the Twelve Steps - seldom fail in A.A. Second: those who skip their spiritual principles - seldom succeed.

Evidently, we require spiritual aid to attain the mental stability conducive to the sobriety that we wish to enjoy.

A survey, in which several hundred A.A. members were interviewed, disclosed many interesting opinions concerning the relation of spiritual awakenings to their sobriety were contacted.

The following questions were casually put to each member. (Try these questions in a group meeting. They bring out excellent discussion.)

1. Did you have a spiritual awakening?
2. Was it vital to your recovery?
3. When did it take place?
4. Can you define it?

Of those interviewed, most agreed they had undergone a profound personality change for the better. Only two persons laid claim to revolutionary spiritual transformations.

Both groups conceded the importance of a personality change to their sobriety and saw the evidence of a spiritual awakening in their willingness to accept God's help as they faced the problems of sober living.

Few members could recall when this had taken place. Many times close associates had noticed it first. Some were unable to define their conscious contact with God, yet each one claimed enough to keep him sober.

Their experience started with surrender of their character defects to "God as They Understood Him" and grew as they relied upon Him instead of alcohol and self.

Opinions relative to spiritual awakenings, taken from members internationally, had common denominators of faith, surrender, humility, tolerance and love. They cannot be listed in any order of importance. Each was important to the one who gave it.

Here are some of their convictions. "It is my honest belief that I was spiritually awakened when:

1. "I realized that something had kept me away from that first drink. When my former skepticism about God left me and I took on more faith in A.A. - when I felt appreciation and humbly expressed it in prayer to 'God as I understood Him.'"
2. "Attending an A.A. meeting, I was greatly impressed by the talk of a six-month member who, obviously, wanted nothing short of contented sobriety. His willingness to come clean set me thinking. I had been sober for two years, but not happy about it. The next day, I took Step Five with an understanding clergyman. That was the start of my spiritual awakening."
3. "My intelligence made me realize there must be existent a power working within me, apart from my physical being, that had given me sobriety and peace of mind - both at the same time."
4. "I first became aware of the good things I had that deserved appreciation and felt concern enough for the needs of others to try and help them - when, I remained sober and regained confidence in myself again."
5. "I willingly accepted my own understanding of God, not the ideas of someone else, but my own understanding."
6. "I called A.A. for help and was treated with understanding, friendship and compassion by my sponsors."
7. "I fully admitted my helplessness as an alcoholic and know that it would take power outside of my own to save me from insanity or an alcoholic death. My awakening was progressive, to which each step contributed its part."
8. "At the end of my first month in A.A., I was seized with a tremendous compulsion to drink. Halfway into a bar, I asked God for help. It came immediately. I left the place without a drink, with a prayer of gratitude in my heart."
9. "After trying to live the spiritual principles of the Twelve Steps, I became convinced that I had done my first honest day's work and that I had really tried to make it a worthy day - it was then that I realized that I had not done it alone."
10. "After my decision in step Three, I started an inventory to find out what was separating me from the God of my childhood. The awakening must have started when I discovered my conscience - when I listened to it and used it as a deciding factor in judging between right and wrong."
11. "I could see the other fellow's viewpoint and make allowance for his shortcomings and admit my own, when I commenced to pray for his welfare, as well as my own."
12. "I started making amends. The first one was favorably received and brought me a wonderful sense of satisfaction and well-being. I suspected this was of spiritual origin. But when I was nearly thrown out of a man's office and did not blow my top on the next call, I knew that God's will - not mine - was guiding me."

The findings of his survey did not indicate that time was the essence of a spiritual awakening, nor did the speed with which it took place have any bearing upon its depth or quality.

Some members acquired it quickly. Others required weeks and months of A.A. effort and association before they were awakened to an inner feeling of God's presence.

But, regardless of the time or depth of these awakenings, they all occurred to alcoholics as they sensed their character defects and tried to turn them over to "God as they understood Him."

Were these experiences mere fantasies? Hardly! Sobriety and peace of mind came only with faith and dependence on God's will.

The newcomer is slow to recognize a spiritual awakening from his A.A. way of life. That is why our founders advised that, "Both you and the new man must walk day by day in the path of spiritual progress." (See chapter 7, paragraph 35, in the Big Book.)

Few new members sense the need or know the importance of A.A.'s spiritual program to the daily upkeep of their sobriety. Lost in the confusing maze of their alcoholic dilemma, they think only in terms of escaping the physical and mental agony of their drinking. The quality of their sobriety does not seem important in the beginning.

Entering A.A., it was hard to visualize a goal beyond that of wretched abstinence. Compulsive drinking had us in a bad spot. We could not live with alcohol, yet life seemed impossible without it. A.A. offered sobriety, but there were strings attached. It came in a spiritual package that some of us refused to accept.

This was not surprising as we had been in conflict with God's will for many years. Talking the older members, we were advised to stop taking ourselves too seriously and to acquaint ourselves with the program before we rewriting it.

They told us that personalities were not changed overnight and that we should be more open-minded and patient in working out the many details of our recovery.

Later, We learned that the Twelve Steps progressively helped us to gain this end. As we lived them regularly, they tore down the mental barriers of prejudice and self-will that we had set up between God and ourselves. Eventually this living brought about a spiritual awakening which opened our eyes and gave us an entirely new outlook on life's true values.

We should work toward this revitalizing experience and arrange our lives around it. To miss this help only gives greater power to the problems that already have us down.

Alcoholics, who serve themselves instead of God, invite all forms of trouble. They fall easy prey to mental or physical drunkenness - usually to both.

Occasionally members assume a sense of false security from sober periods, gained through group association, but without the aid of spiritual help.

We call this the free ride. It looks like the real thing but fails to stand up against adversity, resentment or the physical craving for alcohol.

Daily spiritual growth, prompted by a desperate need for help, is the most effective protection against these urges. God's help, plus group association, aid this necessary growth. They are the requisites of a successful A.A. life. They tend to make us content to live without alcohol.

This is an important point for the difference between contented and unhappy sobriety is often - that first drink.

It takes not mastermind to determine the source of power we draw upon in arresting our alcoholism. Evidence of a spiritual change in our lives can be detected in almost every thought and act.

What, but a spiritual awakening, could sublimate our fear, resentment and dishonesty? What else could curb out mental obsession and physical craving to drinking?

There should be no difficulty in recognizing the essence of a spiritual experience in the contented sobriety that we enjoy, in the responsibility we daily assume, in attitudes of forgiveness, in the amends we make, in willingness to admit our mistakes, in our unselfish interest in helping sick alcoholics and other persons who are less fortunate than ourselves.

The spiritual aspects of our lives become even more convincing when we discover that these things are done without thought of personal glory or hope of material gain.

But the outcome of spiritual living is never without reward. God declares His dividends - not in human coinage, but in the divine currency of serenity.

Excerpts from our "Southern Friend" in the A.A. book mention this serenity. They say, "God produces harmony in those who receive His Spirit and follow its dictates. Today when I become more harmonized within, I become more in tune with all of God's wonderful creation. There are periods of darkness, but the stars are shining, no matter how dark the night. There are disturbances, but I have learned that if I seek patience and open-mindedness, understanding comes. And with it direction by the spirit of God. The dawn comes and with it more understanding - and the joy of living that is not disturbed by circumstances or by people around me." (These excerpts are taken from pages 240 and 241 in the original edition of the Big Book. They do not appear in the second edition.)

The benefits of Twelve-Step living enlarge as we share them with others. We are wise to share them for we cannot suppress the spiritual gifts of A.A. and still maintain satisfying sobriety.

Each worthy thought put into practice brings us a step nearer to God. The Twelve Steps all lead in that direction. They are like stepping stones over which we slowly progress to greater awareness of His presence. They are the means by which we make a conscious contact with Him. They stand as spiritual bulwarks between us and lives of desperation and drunkenness. By their practice

we gain the priceless gem of contented sobriety. It is ours to hold as long as we willingly share it with other alcoholics who sincerely seek our help.

## Second Division

“We tried to carry this message to alcoholics.”

Trying to carry the message of A.A. to Alcoholics, who seek our help, seems like a mandate from a Higher Power to the members of our fellowship. It is the premise upon which A.A. was founded.

Rendering this service, we immunize ourselves against taking that first drink. We help restore faith in God and physical health to drinkers who have lost all hope of recovery from their alcoholic condition. This spiritual grant should not be ignored.

To us God has entrusted a special gift of healing for sick alcoholics which He has withheld from all other persons. This gift was not given to the educator, the doctor or the clergyman, but was granted to us so that we might justify our right to live sober, normal lives, by helping other alcoholics recover from their illness.

Assuming this responsibility of carrying the message, we do not consider it presumptuous to suggest general outline for sponsoring newcomers in A.A.

The following suggestions are based upon advice to be found in chapter seven of the book “Alcoholics Anonymous” and upon the experience of successful A.A. members who have followed that advice.

From their experience we have learned that a true concept of our Twelfth Step obligation must be a very broad one to cover the purpose for which it was intended.

For purpose of identification it should be helpful to distinguish between the daily acts of carrying the message and the more complex duties of sponsorship which the Big Book refers to as “Working with Others.” The latter concerns human life and happiness and is handled best by capable members.

Viewing the matter in this light, we can readily see that the member who sponsors carries the message, but that the member can carry the message with out actually sponsoring another alcoholic. In fact, much more time is spent on such A.A. activities than is spent on sponsorship.

This works out for the best interest of our fellowship. It gives everyone something to do, including the newcomer who may feel too inexperienced to be of any help.

There are many ways of carrying the message besides sponsorship. Some of these activities appear in the following list:

1. The most convincing message that we can carry to alcoholics is our own example of contented sobriety.
2. Making calls with older members who are sponsoring a new member.
3. The example of regular attendance at A.A. meetings. Visiting outside A.A. meetings when we are away from home.
4. Making hospital calls upon members.
5. Telephone calls to new members.
6. Friendly talks with persons after meetings, particularly with newcomers or those who are having trouble living the program.
7. By owning the book “Alcoholics Anonymous.” By encouraging other alcoholics to buy one and study it for A.A. understanding.
8. By lending our books or by passing out our literature to interested persons.
9. Assuming the duties and obligations that will help our fellowship.
10. Talking with relatives or associates of drinking alcoholics. By explaining to them that alcoholism is a disease and how we arrest it in A.A.
11. By telling the A.A. story to clergymen, doctors, judges, educators, employers or police officials if we know them well enough to further the A.A. cause, or to help out a fellow member.
12. By speaking before other groups or conducting meetings in our own group.
13. By making a reasonable pledge of our energy, time and money to the fellowship.
14. By our obvious belief that we have received help from a Higher Power.
15. By making A.A. our way of life.

## Sponsorship

“Working with other alcoholics”

Sponsorship represents the ultimate in A.A. giving. By this brotherly act, persons on reprieve from insanity or alcoholic death share their recovery with others who are willing to escape the same penalty. This act is not entirely charitable for to withhold help means to lose their own reprieve.

Sponsorship, The dynamic factor of A.A. growth, fills three definite requirements:

1. It helps us maintain contented sobriety.
2. It helps others arrest their alcoholism.
3. It kills complacency and progressively replenishes the ranks of our fellowship.

The principle of working with others is sound as it is founded upon the ageless axiom “give and you shall receive.”

Twelfth Step work integrates our personalities and aids spiritual development. We cannot act the daily role of good counselor, hiding our acts in anonymity, without finally becoming better persons for it.

Likewise, we gain many spiritual blessings as we give unselfishly of our time and experience to suffer alcoholics. These rewards are intangible but of inestimable worth as they bring use peace of mind, self-respect and sobriety.

The Big Book places real emphasis upon our need for carrying the message by saying “this is an experience that you must not miss.” Sponsoring fills our need for active service and helps us to keep sober.

Members who try to render this service are faced with perplexing question, how do we sponsor best? A.A. has no specific answer. Each one must plan his own method. As a result there is indecision and often conflicting views about proper procedure.

There are many procedures, both good and bad, between which we can discern the right course to pursue. Some sponsors are tolerant to a point of harmful indulgence. Some are evangelists. There are the “easy does it” type who are satisfied with merely getting their prospect to a meeting. Others are more exacting in their demands. They work only with real alcoholics and insist that their candidates give them full cooperation by trying to understand and practice the Twelve Steps of A.A.

This evident lack of set rules, or unified plan for working with others, would be most frustrating to a member who had never sponsored without a good source of “know-how” and practical experience to draw upon.

Fortunately, no member need be confused or ignorant about the mechanics of sponsorship if he will study the Big Book. It has all the answers. They can be found in the chapters “Working with Others,” “The Doctor’s Opinion,” “A Vision for You,” “There is a Solution,” “The Family Afterwards” and the thirty-six histories of recovered alcoholics under “Personal Stories.”

It is not difficult to establish a successful sponsorship procedure if we follow the suggestions given in these chapters. Our acceptance need not be on faith alone. We may safely draw upon the experience of our founders who offer the A.A. Fellowship as evidence that their plan works.

Borrowing freely from their advice and drawing heavily upon their experience, we present this sponsorship guide, hoping it will help those who work with alcoholics.

### The Sponsor

An honest interpretation of Step Twelve permits no altering of its principles. The simple wording of the step implies its intent. It identifies the persons with whom we work and then suggests a way of life to keep us capable of future sponsorship.

The first requisites of sponsorship are sobriety and a personality change based on some active concept of God’s will. We qualify for these by living the Twelve Steps. Next comes a knowledge of the A.A. program and the purpose of Step Twelve. This is accomplished by working with a special group of persons, namely: alcoholics.

Following this plan brings success with our prospects. Deviating from it, we invite failure and A.A. headaches. Some say we go on trial each time we sponsor. The life of the newcomer and the future of A.A. could easily depend upon the quality of our sobriety and the manner in which we share it with other alcoholics.

Working with others is always a serious matter for A.A. and the prospect. First, they look to us for counsel to help them overcome their drinking problems and then to the A.A. program for rehabilitation of their lives.

Younger members can prepare themselves for sponsoring by a close study of chapter seven and other related chapters in the Big Book. Short on “know-how,” they will have to offset their lack of experience with such knowledge and enthusiastic calls made with older members. This brings up an important phase of carrying the message which we will comment upon briefly.

### Double Sponsorship

The value of double sponsorship has been recognized by many groups. Some now make it their standard practice. Examples of its effectiveness started with A.A.'s inception.

Bill had little success with alcoholics until he and Dr. Bob started working with them together. The need for dual sponsorship is just as great today.

Among its advantages are such things as: preparedness, safety in numbers, efficiency, good presentation and better follow-up.

From the standpoint of preparedness, two members can plan and follow a better course of action than one. Paired up, we lessen the element of danger and provide work for a younger member. The prospect gets two views of A.A. Future follow-up is more complete.

An older member with a successful record of working with alcoholics never sponsors alone. He always calls in a younger person to help him and insists they both read chapter seven before making the call, the exception being emergency cases. The results have been helpful for the prospect and for the younger member who, in turn, makes this practice his own future sponsorship procedure.

Literally defined, a sponsor is one who willingly binds himself to answer for another's default. The A.A. interpretation differs in that we bind ourselves to help the newcomer answer for his own default by indoctrination to a new way of life.

Those of us who sponsor improve our pattern of procedure with each new experience. There are many things to learn about helping the alcoholic "who still suffers." Foremost among these is to know the quality of our own sobriety.

Contrariwise, even though well qualified ourselves, we cannot share A.A. with alcoholics who reject our help. It is pointless to try. We drop them for a while but leave the A.A. door open so that they may call later if they have a change of heart.

Considering this aspect of sponsorship, it would seem that prospective members must have definite qualifications to be eligible for our fellowship. Such is the case, but they are extremely limited. The alcoholic's "only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking." (See the second page of the "foreword" to the first edition of the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous." There are other minor qualifications for membership in special groups, but the main requirement is the same for all.

Another significant part of sponsorship, in which several members can carry the message, is that of starting new groups or working with weaker ones. We need this service which, in turn, strengthens us by giving our members a constructive outlet for their latent A.A. energies.

Although the benefits from working with others are shared mutually by the sponsor and the prospect (whether it be an individual or a group), we seldom think about ourselves when making a Twelfth Step call.

The newcomer is often told that helping him is vital to us, but actually his welfare, at the moment, is our greatest concern.

Herein lies a cardinal virtue of sponsorship. It is the momentary loss of self-centeredness. This attitude, engendered by a desire to share our recovery with other alcoholics, is a sign of healthy A.A. growth. As we share, we grow in A.A. stature and increase our chance for a happy, sober life.

Every A.A. member is a potential sponsor, and most members aspire to sponsor successfully. Our great ambition is to help alcoholics recover from their illness. Success often rewards our efforts, but we never get discouraged if the prospect fails to cooperate. Many calls must be made before we find an alcoholic desperate enough to accept A.A. Our duty is to find them. How is this done? Where can they be located?

### Locating Prospective Members

A successful harmonious plan for locating A.A. prospects, and for constructive future work with them, can be easily established by any progressive A.A. group. An explicit outline for such a plan is given in chapter seven of the Big Book. Members are wise who agree, in accord, to adopt it as an authoritative guide for sponsorship. Thus they work in unison, with each member having the same source of our founder's experience at his command.

There are many sources from which prospective members are acquired. Widespread A.A. publicity provides us contacts by telephone and written request. This important service has greatly enlarged our fellowship. Its value is well established, but members regress who depend upon it alone.

Every member must carry the message to develop A.A.'s growth and gain personal experience if we are to continue the source of referrals started by our founders.

How is this accomplished? Find your answer in the Big Book. Read paragraph three in the chapter, "Working with Others." It says, "perhaps you are not acquainted with any drinkers who want to recover. You can easily find some by asking a few doctors, minister, priest or hospitals. They will be only too glad to assist you."

Good public relations reward such effort and eventually start request for help by real alcoholics who need A.A. We gain the most from following these calls because we have had a part in their making.

By educating doctors, clergymen, judges, police officials and industrial personnel regarding the type of persons A.A. can help, we will avoid flooding our ranks with an unwieldy preponderance of non-alcoholics.

Inquiries from the families of alcoholics are often overlooked as a means of locating new prospects. Because the alcoholic wants no part of A.A. does not bar us from carrying the message to inquiring relatives.

Those who ask for it are entitled to an explanation of the disease alcoholism. We should tell them about the Twelve Steps and how the program will work for the sick member of their family if he will accept it.

They will find a means of enlightening him. Leave them some A.A. literature, and you will have planted a seed in their minds that may develop a good future prospect for A.A.

Other sources of prospective members for A.A. can be developed through the medium of newspapers, radio and television.

Tact and good judgment must be employed in the matter, however, as no publicity at all is far better than bad publicity which might harm A.A. or rob it of dignity and appeal. In all public relation contacts our principle of anonymity should be thoroughly understood. It is our obligation to see that it is respected.

All groups should consider their objectives and motives before releasing a publicity program.

We must protect our personal anonymity. Motives prompted by a desire to exalt A.A. or its members are wrong. Our aim is service. By the principle of attraction, we should help those who suffer from alcoholism find their way into A.A.

#### Qualifications of the Newcomer

Since the Big Book says that our "only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking," the casual sponsor is apt to overlook a preliminary requirement of the prospective member.

This qualification is identified in the second and third lines of Step Twelve. It states "We tried to carry this message to alcoholics." Such is the purpose of sponsorship. It is attained when we bring receptive alcoholics into A.A. and work with them and their families until they recover sufficiently to stand upon their own feet.

Demands upon the prospect are few - three in all, to be exact. They are definite, however, if he hopes to recover from alcoholism in A.A. It is imperative that the prospect:

1. Be an alcoholic.
2. Wants to quit drinking.
3. Calls A.A. for help.

Abhorrent as the word must be to an alcoholic, successful sponsors require these qualifications of a newcomer. Thus they conserve time and effort and avoid involving A.A. in embarrassing situations.

This is but the start of the prospect's requirements for once in A.A. he will have to make an all-out effort to live the program to achieve lasting sobriety and to develop his spiritual qualities for future sponsorship.

#### Helpful Hints For Sponsors

The following suggestions are from data found in chapter seven of the Big Book. We trust they will prove helpful as a supplementary guide for study of that chapter.

Certainly, the most impressive thing we have to offer the prospect is our example of a sober, happy and purposeful life.

Be mindful of the fact that the prospect is sick in body, mind and spirit and that we, alone can help him recover.

Alcoholics minimize their drinking when interviewed before relatives. See them privately if you can. The family can fill in additional facts later. To help him, we must know his type of drinking, habits, hobbies, religion, business, financial condition and what cooperation to expect from his family.

If he needs hospital care, help him get it by making the necessary arrangements.

We should tell our stories and get him to tell his. Avoiding evangelism, we explain how A.A. functions - how it worked for us and how it can work for him. Stress anonymity. Label alcoholism as a illness.

Leave A.A. literature if he is interested. Suggest that he call after reading it. If he believes himself to be alcoholic and wants to join our fellowship, have him read the Big Book. We should not push him into A.A. Let him ask for it.

The newcomer should know about the spiritual aspect of A.A., particularly, that it is not a religion but his own concept of "God as he understands Him."

When the attitude of the newcomer indicates willingness to join A.A. just to help his family, discourage the idea. Explain why it won't work. Point out that alcoholism is a fatal illness from which he must recover, that he is sick - not his family.

The alcoholic's family should not be ignored. Tell them why the A.A. program will become a part of the prospect's daily life. Invite their cooperation. It often makes the difference between success and failure.

Problems involving the lending of money, keeping alcoholics in our homes, divorce, spiritual development, family quarrels and shunning drinking places are explained in paragraphs 24-31-34-35-36-38-42, chapter seven, of the Big Book. It is we to study them in preparation for these contingencies.

Recognize the sick and lonely condition of the alcoholic. Be friendly, but don't baby him. Treat his case with reason. Although we may help him to a meeting at first, we should not make it a fixed habit. Emphasize his need for attendance. Portray the opportunity as a lifesaving privilege from which nothing should deter him.

Be worthy of the prospect's trust. Counsel him wisely. Advise him to buy the Big Book. See that he studies it for a better understanding of his new way of life.

Teach him the value of Twelve Step living and reliance upon God's help for recovery. He should not lean upon us too heavily or he may fail to develop enough A.A. strength to succeed with our program.

#### Advice to the Newcomer

For the best results, consider yourself a patient in A.A. for the arrestment of an incurable disease. Determine to get the utmost from your treatment. Go on the theory that A.A. can do without you, but that you cannot live without A.A. Avoid unreasonable demands upon you sponsor. Never get the idea that by slipping you let him down. You are the person that will suffer. God is the One you will let down.

Buy a Big Book and follow its advice. It is foolish to assume that you can recover from alcoholism without a book with contains the recovery instructions.

Abstain from weakening the A.A. program with Twelve Step substitutions, or you will water it down to a point of drunkenness.

Don't take A.A. lightly. It may be you last chance for sanity or sobriety. Your decision to live the A.A. program is important. Put nothing ahead of it. Approach it with honesty, humility, open-mindedness, willingness, and appreciation.

#### Third Division

"And to practice these principles in all our affairs." (See paragraph six, chapter five, in the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous.")

The Principles of the Twelve Steps sum up to a logical and livable way of life which will restore health, happiness and sobriety to sick, hopeless alcoholics.

Thousands of members who have recovered from alcoholism give living proof that the A.A. program works for those who apply it.

We work for daily recovery which is all that we expect. Experience has taught us that we cannot drink normally again.

Our heritage of sane living is denied us until we fully recognize and start treating our alcoholism as a physical, mental and spiritual illness.

Our heritage is restored when we:

5. Acknowledge our physical and mental illness and work for recovery.
6. Seek help from "God as we understand Him" to arrest our spiritual illness.
7. Study and isolate our defects of character with a view to correcting them.
8. Admit these defects of ourselves, to God and talk them over with another Person.
9. Rely upon the Twelve Steps to inspire us with worthy motives.
10. Concede the injury that our drinking addiction has inflicted upon others.
11. Ask God's forgiveness for these acts and make amends to the persons harmed.
12. Develop the habit of admitting our mistakes and correcting our character defects.
13. Cultivate better spiritual relations with God and try to execute His will.
14. Share the experience of our recovery with alcoholics who ask for help.
15. Continue living the A.A. life by practicing "these principles in all our affairs."

#### Question and Answers

For the convenience of members interested in further consideration of "Carrying the Message to Alcoholics," this suggested list of questions and answers from the second edition of the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous" may provide helpful information.

"Carrying the Message to Alcoholics," has general acceptance as good A.A. procedure. How was the "Message" carried to Bill the founder of our fellowship? (Answer) Page 8, last two pars. on through Page 9.

How important is sponsorship to recovery? Should we consider it a "Must?" (Answers) Page 89, par. 2. Page 14, last par. Page 15, par. 1. Page 97, lines 5-6-7. Page 102, line 7 & 8.

A.A. has helped reclaim the lives of countless alcoholics. Does this imply that every alcoholic who asks for help can recover? (Answers) Page, line 27. Page 163, last five lines.

From what source will our future membership come? How are we to find them? (Answers) Page 89, par 3. Page 155, lines 1-2-3-4-5-6. Page 162, lines 8-9-10-11. Page 163, 185, 302.

How essential are our examples of contented sobriety to the alcoholic seeking A.A. help? (Answers) Page 18, last 2 pars. Page 89, par. 1. Page 180, lines 17 through 23. Page 235, par. 1-2.

Some A.A. prospects toy with the idea of controlled drinking. Some are undecided if they are alcoholic. Does the Big Book offer a test for determining their conditions? (Answer) Page 31, last par. on to Page 32.

When - if ever - do we drop a prospective member? (Answer) Page 95, lines 16-17-18-19-20. Page 96, par. 1.

What is the requirement for membership in A.A.? (Answer) Page XIV, "Foreword."

Is our program for those other than alcoholics? (Answers) Page XIII, par. 1. "Foreword to the First Edition." Page 17, last par. Page 25, last par. Page 29, last par. Page 30, par. 2. Page 38, last par. Page 39, part 1. Page 60, par. 1. Page 92, pars. 1 and 2. Page 96, par. 1.

Do our stories have inducement value to prospective A.A. members? (Answers) Page 17, last par. Page 157, lines 15 to 29. Page 180, lines 5 to 23. Page 483, lines 4 to 12.

What is the first step of and alcoholic's recovery? (Answer) Page 30, par. 2.

Is hospitalization important to an alcoholic's recovery? (Answers) See "Doctor's Opinion," Page XXIV, last par. Page 91, lines 3 to 17. Page 133, lines 19 to 29.

When we find a prospect for A.A. what is the exact procedure for handling him? (Answer) Read pages 90 to 103 inclusive.

If we need information about a prospect's health, finance, religion, drinking habits, etc. - where do we get it? (Answer) Page 90, par. 1 & 2.

Do we always try to stop our prospect from drinking \_or is it sometimes best that he goes on another binge? (Answer) Page 90, par. 3.

Do we deal with alcoholics when they are very drunk or ugly? (Answer) Page 90, par. 3.

Do we ever force ourselves upon an alcoholic and insist that he stops drinking? (Answer) Page 90, last par.

Do we call upon a new man when he is still jittery and depressed? (Answer) Page 91, par. 2.

Do we see our man alone or talk to him in the presence of his family? (Answer) Page 91, par. 1 & 2.

When do we refer to alcoholism as a sickness - as fatal malady? (Answer) Page 91, last par. Page 92, lines 9 to 20.

If your prospect is an agnostic or atheist how do you discuss God with him? (Answer) Page 93, lines 4 to 10.

Is A.A. a religion? How do we explain this to a newcomer? (Answer) Page 93, last line, Page 94, lines 1 to 24.

Assume that you are working with a prospective member, when do you lend him a copy of the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous?" (Answer) Page 94, last par.

Assume that he seems over-anxious to join A.A. What action do we take? (Answer) Page 95, par 1.

Does A.A. recommend that we act as nurse and banker for the newcomer? (Answer) Page 97, last line. Page 98, lines 1 to 32.

Is the newcomer advised to read the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous" before coming into A.A.? (Answer) Page 95, lines 20 to 26.

When discouraged with alcoholics who will not respond to help, what do we do? (Answer) Page 96, par 1.

How discreetly do we handle the prospect who is homeless and broke? (Answer) Page 96, last par.

When, if ever, do we let alcoholics let alcoholics live in our homes? (Answer) Page 97, pars 1-2.

Separation is often encountered. What if a newcomer says he cannot recover without his family? (Answer) Page 99.

Should the sponsor help in family rows (a noisy disturbance or quarrel)? (Answer) Page 100, lines 14 to 30.

How do members meet circumstances requiring their presence where liquor is served? (Answer) Page 100, last par. Page 101-102.

What is organized religion's attitude toward A.A.? (Answer) Page 574.

What is medicine's view on A.A.? (Answer) Pages 571-572.

We often refer to spiritual awakenings and spiritual experiences in A.A. What do we mean by this? (Answer) Pages 569-570.

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