



"BACK TO THE 40's"

TABLE OF CONTENTS

[BACK TO THE 40'S](#)

[INTRODUCTION](#)

[CLASS ONE](#)

[CLASS TWO](#)

[CLASS Three](#)

[CLASS FOUR](#)

[CLASS FIVE](#)

BACK TO THE 40'S

HOW ALCOHOLICS ANONONYMOUS WORKED IN THE 1940'S

**DURING THE FIRST DECADE AFTER THE PUBLICATION OF THE BIG BOOK -
THE RECOVERY RATE FROM ALCOHOLISM WITHIN THE FELLOWSHIP OF A.A. IN THE 1940'S WAS 75%.
A.A.'S PROGRAM, AS PRACTICED THEN, WAS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM THE PROGRAM THAT IS PRACTICED TODAY.
TO PRODUCE SUCH AN ASTOUNDING RECOVERY RATE, WHAT WAS DONE IN THE EARLY DAYS OF A.A.?**

DISCOVER THIS IN DEPTH LOOK AT:

TAKING THE 12 STEPS IN 5 - SESSIONS!

RIGHT OUT OF THE BIG BOOK OF

ALOHOLICS ANONYMOUS!

"To show other alcoholics precisely how we have recovered is the main purpose of this book"

Big Book Page – xiii

That's How it Was Done Back In The Early Days & It Worked!

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

Big Book Page – 59

SO, BRING YOUR BIG BOOK & YOUR ALCOHOLISM ONLY!

"The only requirement for membership is an honest desire to stop drinking."

Big Book page – 59

SPONSER & SPONSEE

FORMAT

LET'S STUDY THE BIG BOOK, NOT JUST READ IT

I first experienced this study in an open A.A. meeting. This is adapted from the format of an open A.A. meeting to one between a Sponsor and a Sponsee.

Anonymous



The Back to the 40's workbook is dedicated to the memory of Whiskey Bill. He is the guy who brought a photocopy to a print shop in Orting, Washington. He said "Here, print this and we'll buy it, and I want a hundred of them next week!"

The world lost a great man when Whiskey Bill died just 3 days before Christmas 2005. He was a proud friend of Bill W. He celebrated 42 years of sobriety on May 5, 2005. He is missed by all. He touched more lives than we will ever imagine with his generosity.

SIX
ORIGINAL STEPS
"INTERPRETATION"

ADMITTED HOPELESS
FOR GOD...

GOT HONEST WITH
SELF...

GOT HONEST WITH
ANOTHER...

MADE AMENDS...

HELPED OTHERS
WITHOUT DEMANDS...

PRAYED TO GOD
AS YOU UNDERSTAND
HIM...

1. ^{For God} Admitted hopeless
2. Got honest with self
3. Got honest with another
4. Made Amends
5. Helped other without demand
6. Prayed to God as you understand Him

Ever
 Bill W.
 Apr 1953
 Original 6a
 steps

CHARLES B. TOWNS HOSPITAL

NURSES

233 Central Park West
New York 21, N.Y.

page 65

NAME W. S. Williams

ADDRESS 182 Clinton St.

NEAREST RELATIVE

ADDRESS

PHONE

REFERRED BY

ADDRESS

PHONE

ACCOMPANIED BY

DIAGNOSIS

RELEASE PERIOD OF ADMISSION

ADMITTED

DATE 12.11.34

CONDITION

DISCHARGED

DATE 12.18.34

AMOUNT

DEPOSIT

REC'D FROM

DATE

RETURNED TO

DATE

FEE 12.5-00

TO

HOW PAID

DATE PAID

BY WHOM

TO WHOM

NURSES

Room 4-3220

Volume 21

AGE 38

Bill's final discharge slip from Towns Hospital in 1934.

INTRODUCTION

Sponsor I am a recovered alcoholic, contingent on the maintenance of my spiritual condition. Let's have a moment of silence, followed by the Serenity Prayer.

(Say the Serenity Prayer.)

Welcome to: **Back to the 40's...** How Alcoholics Anonymous worked in the 1940's. More than 60 years ago, after the publication of the Big Book, the recovery rate from alcoholism within the fellowship of AA – was 75%. AA's program, as practiced then, was quite different from the program that is practiced today. That is, the AA program is unchanged, but the way it is Practiced has changed. To produce such an astounding recovery rate, what was done in the early days of AA?

Well. This is what we are going to do. We are going to take an in – depth look at how Alcoholics Anonymous worked in the 1940's. Let's read the AA Preamble as it appeared in the first edition of the Big Book in 1939.

Sponsee **We are not an organization in the conventional 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.**

Sponsor These classes will last close to a one-hour time period. For this first class we will be doing a lot of jumping around in the Big Book. Pages out of the Big Book will be identified as we read through the workbook. As a result, we will not be reading directly out of the Big Book, but the pages will be referenced. We will be covering a lot of information and content.

Let's get started – **“CLASS IS IN SESSION”**

-CLASS ONE-

Sponsor I am a recovered Alcoholic, and that is contingent on the maintenance of my Spiritual Condition daily. I am not an expert nor am I an authority on the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. I am a recovered Alcoholic who loves to study the Big Book. Any commentary that is made throughout this study is just an opinion based upon the interpretation of the Big Book. We will not need to open our Big Books during this study, but you will know what pages we are reading from.

On page 164 of the Big Book it reads....

Sponsee Our book is meant to be suggestive only. We realize we know only a little. God will constantly disclose more to you and to us.

Sponsor Before we begin we'll need to address one more thing. There is always going to be controversy when it comes to this book and its message, for one reason or another. Some will say it needs to be rewritten, changed, or updated, and then there is the God issue...that it is written in the male gender and a whole lot of other controversial issues...It's as if we are saying: "The Big Book should be changed to meet our personal agendas."

On page XI the book tells us...

Sponsee "There exists a sentiment against any radical changes being made in it"

Sponsor The point is: Let's leave the book alone, and change our own attitudes toward the book and from that perspective learn the recovery program that produced a 75% success rate back in the 1940's. This is how the reading of this workbook will work.

We will also be reading from the 1944 pamphlet. While reading, if you have any questions, we can pause to write them down, in order to discuss them at the end of the class session.

Sponsee The Twelve Steps of Insanity (Circa 1945)

1. We admitted we were powerless over nothing—that we could manage our lives perfectly and those of anyone else who would allow us.
2. Came to believe there was no power greater than ourselves and the rest of the world was insane.
3. Made a decision to have our loved ones and friends turn their will and lives over to our care even though they couldn't understand us at all.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of everyone we knew.
5. Admitted to the world at large the exact nature of everyone else's wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to make others straighten up and do right.
7. Demanded others to either "shape up or ship out".
8. Made a list of all persons who had harmed us and became willing to go to any lengths to get even with them all
9. Got direct revenge on such people wherever possible except when to do so would cost us our own lives or at the very least a jail sentence.

10. Continued to take the inventory of others when they were wrong promptly and repeatedly told them about it.
11. Sought through bitching and nagging to improve our relations with others as we couldn't understand them at all, asking only that they knuckle under and do things our way.
12. Having had a complete physical, emotional and spiritual breakdown as the result of these steps, we tried to blame it on others and to get sympathy and pity in all our affairs.

THESE STEPS DESCRIBE THE PRACTICING ALCOHOLIC. CAN I IDENTIFY WITH THESE? DO THESE STEPS SOUND FAMILIAR? PERHAPS THESE 12 STEPS OF INSANITY ARE SO ACCURATE I COULD ADD MY NAME TO EACH AND EVERY ONE.

Sponsor We hear a lot of talk and ideas that "Alcoholism has changed over the years", "That things are different today", "AA needs to change with the times". The truth about statements like these is that the illness of alcoholism produces the exact same symptoms today that it has throughout the history of mankind. These 12 Steps of Insanity, if you're honest with yourself about them, give evidence beyond any doubt that there is an irrefutable connection between alcoholism in the 1940's and alcoholism today. It is precisely the same and if that is fact; then the same solution to alcoholism must hold true also. Let's take a look at this solution and how it was achieved so we can recover today.

Let's study that program which produced a 75% recovery rate. Let's reestablish that link with our AA past. It has been said that "whenever a civilization or society declines or perishes, there is always one condition present: THEY FORGOT WHERE THEY CAME FROM". Let's look at where the early AA's came from. In the 1940's most people that came in to AA went to Introduction Classes. That is what these 5 meetings are about: a basic study of the 12 steps of AA's program of recovery. To keep in step with the early AA's we will be referring to the pamphlet titled "Alcoholics Anonymous, an Interpretation of our 12 Steps", printed September 1944. This pamphlet and study is not conference approved. (There was no conference and no traditions back in our history when this pamphlet and the Big Book were published and were being used.) We will be taking the entire study of AA's 12 steps out of the book titled "Alcoholics Anonymous", first published April 1st, 1939.

Sponsee **Preface to the 1944 pamphlet:** The following pages contain the basic material for the discussion meeting for Alcoholics only. These meetings are held for the purpose of acquainting both old and new members with the 12 Steps on which our program is based. So that all Twelve Steps may be covered in a minimum of time to get the basis of our 12 suggested steps.

Sponsor Disclaimer to the 1944 pamphlet: The material contained herein is merely an outline of the program and is not intended to replace or supplant these 6 major items: Item A

Sponsee The careful reading and **re-reading** of the Big Book.

Sponsor Item B

Sponsee Regular attendance at weekly Group meetings.

Sponsor Item C

Sponsee Study of the program.

Sponsor Item D

Sponsee Daily practice of the program

Sponsor Item E

Sponsee Reading of sponsor approved, printed material on alcoholism

Sponsor Item F

Sponsee Informal discussion with other members.

Sponsor This is how it used to be back in the 1940's: First

Sponsee You were sponsored through the five classes. And completed the 12 Steps, right away, non-stop; out of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous – A.S.A.P.

Sponsor Second

Sponsee You became an active member of Alcoholics Anonymous. In other words, before you ever went to a “Regular AA meeting”; you had a sponsor and would have completed the program of recovery that is in the Big Book. You were a recovered alcoholic, contingent on the maintenance of your spiritual condition daily.....

Sponsor Third

Sponsee You sponsored newcomers through the classes, and did this a couple of times, carrying AA's message only; keeping it pure. The program that is written down in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous period...

Sponsor Fourth

Sponsee You taught the classes. That's why it worked. That's why so many people got sobriety and kept sobriety. There is no better way to learn and keep this program than to teach it.

Sponsor From the 1944 Pamphlet: **“Discussion Number 1-The Admission Phase”**

This meeting covers Step Number One – “We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable”. This instruction is not a short cut to AA. It is an introduction, a help, a brief course in the fundamentals. In order to determine whether or not a person has drifted from “social drinking” into pathological drinking, it is well to consider with guidance of a sponsor, three questions which each member may ask and answer for himself. WE MUST ANSWER ONCE AND FOR ALL, THESE **THREE** PUZZLING QUESTIONS: Number One...

Sponsee WHAT IS AN ALCOHOLIC?

Sponsor Number Two...

Sponsee WHO IS AN ALCOHOLIC?

Sponsor Number Three...

Sponsee AM I AN ALCOHOLIC?

Sponsor To get the right answer, the prospective member must start this course of instruction with --- THE
3 ESSENTIALS FOR RECOVERY. Number One...

Sponsee A WILLINGNESS TO LEARN. We must not have the attitude that "You've got to show me."

Sponsor Number Two...

Sponsee AN OPEN MIND. Forget any and all ideas or notions we already have. Set our opinions aside.

Sponsor Number Three...

Sponsee COMPLETE HONESTY. It is possible, though not at all probable, that we may fool somebody else.
But, we MUST be honest with ourselves, and it is a good time to start being honest with others.

Sponsor From the Big Book page XI, second paragraph, read what the Big Book has to say about the Big Book.

Sponsee Because this book has become the basic text for our society and has helped such large number of alcoholic men and women to recovery, there exists a sentiment against any radical changes being made in it. Therefore, the first portion of this volume, describing the AA recovery program.....

Sponsor Which is the chapter, "The Doctor's Opinion" and the first 103 pages...

Sponsee ...has been left untouched.

Sponsor The information in this book has helped large numbers of alcoholics to recovery. It is our text book, and this text book describes the AA recovery program. **On Page XIII, line 1**, the Forward to the first edition we read:

Sponsee **FOREWORD TO THE FIRST EDITION**

This is the forward as it appeared in the first printing of the first edition in 1939. **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 Precisely How We Have Recovered is the Main Purpose of This Book. For them, we hope these pages will prove so convincing that no further authentication will be necessary.**

Sponsor The book tells us; we can learn precisely how to recover from alcoholism in this book! The book is our teacher, this meeting is the classroom, and we are the students...**To Show other Alcoholics precisely how we have recovered is the Main Purpose of this Book.** The word precisely means: No Variation!! Now, there are a lot of interesting ideas about recovery from alcoholism floating around the rooms of AA – But, be forewarned, a lot of these interesting ideas are not in this book... Consider this; the early AA's pioneered this recovery program. They lived it first, worked out all the kinks, and then wrote it down in this book. The program in this book works precisely the way it is outlined. The only thing we can add to this proven recovery program is action. **LET'S TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT WHAT THE BOOK SAYS ABOUT THE BOOK ON Page 17, the last paragraph, chapter 2 "There is a Solution".**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor The book tells us what we can absolutely agree upon: That the AA program is in this book. Our concern is that a lot of people don't know this or don't hear about AA's program. This is why we are using this book, for it carries: the solution to alcoholism. Let's read about our illness and let's see if you can identify with this paragraph.

Sponsee An illness of this sort – and we have come to believe it is 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...

Sponsor Now, let's look at some of the consequences of our alcoholism. Here the book shows us eight points to reflect upon: Number One...

Sponsee ...an annihilation of all the things worthwhile in life.

Sponsor Number two...

Sponsee It engulfs all whose lives touch the Sufferers.

Sponsor Number three...

Sponsee It brings misunderstanding,

Sponsor Number four...

Sponsee fierce resentment,

Sponsor Number five...

Sponsee financial insecurity,

Sponsor Number six...

Sponsee disgusted friends and employers,

Sponsor Number seven...

Sponsee warped lives of blameless children,

Sponsor Number eight...

Sponsee sad wives and parents – anyone can increase the list.

Sponsor Can you identify or maybe add to the list??? Let's continue, next paragraph...

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

Sponsor So, the Big Book informs and comforts us. It's time for a "Pop Quiz".

We go to **page 44, line 4, Chapter 4, "We Agnostics"**.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Let's read this again but look at this in terms of "A Test of an alcoholic... Ask yourself these two questions... True or False? Number one...

Sponsee If when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely.

Sponsor Number two...

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor What we just read tells us what constitutes an alcoholic, and it also tells us what the solution is; a spiritual experience. We are going to read and study about the spiritual solution, because that is what is talked about throughout this whole book. We go to **Page 45, line 9**, to read about the problem.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor What is its main object??

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Moral, meaning truthful.

Sponsee And it means, of course, that we are going to talk about God.

Sponsor So you see, this book provides a spiritual solution to the illness of alcoholism. If lack of power is the problem, then we need to find the Power to overcome powerlessness. The book tells us exactly where this Power is to be found. **We go to page 55, second paragraph.**

Sponsee 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 demonstration 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 makeup, 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.

Sponsor To put this another way, in terms of the solution to our alcoholism we are looking for a Power greater than ourselves, and that Power is inside of us... In terms of the problem, the book tells us that we are blocked off from this Power. It tells us it may be obscured by calamity, by pomp, by worship of other things, first and foremost, Alcohol!!! It blocks us off from the Power. We are living on self-will by drinking alcohol. The whole idea is to get from self-will, the problem, to God's-will, the solution. Alcohol is blocking us. We will take care of that in Step One. The other things that are blocking us will be dealt with later on, so that we can break through the barrier of self-will, and find out what God's plan is for us. **We go to the Title Page...Found at the very front of the book.**

Sponsee **Alcoholics Anonymous**

**The Story of How Many Thousands of Men and Women
Have Recovered from Alcoholism**

Sponsor HAVE WHAT??

Sponsee Have RECOVERED from alcoholism!!!!

Sponsor This is a powerful statement but misunderstood. Notice the word recovered. It is not by mistake that it is mentioned. It is mentioned 23 times in this book

.
***Trivia:** The word **RECOVERING** is mentioned **two** times in the Big Book. It does not occur at all in the part of the text that has to do with the Recovery Program (**Page XXIII through Page 103**). Whereas the word **RECOVERED** is masterfully used twelve times within this part of the volume to describe the alcoholic who has completed the process of recovery and continues to persevere...to grow. Interesting fact – isn't it?

Sponsee Let's look at what the word recovered means, the book tells us that there are four ways of categorizing the alcoholic...

Sponsor Number one...

Sponsee "The REAL alcoholic"

Sponsor Number two...

Sponsee "The Dry alcoholic

Sponsor Number three...

Sponsee "The RECOVERING alcoholic"

Sponsor Number four...

Sponsee "The RECOVERED alcoholic"

Sponsor We **Go to Page 21, line 8**, to read about the REAL alcoholic. The book gives us three pieces of evidence, a test, if you will, of what qualifies an alcoholic.

Sponsee But what about the real alcoholic?

Sponsor Number one...

Sponsee He may start off as a moderate drinker;

Sponsor Number two...

Sponsee he may or may not become a continuous hard drinker;

Sponsor Number three...

Sponsee but at some stage of his drinking career he begins to lose all control of his liquor consumption, once he starts to drink.

Sponsor So the question is: What happens to the Real Alcoholic, after he takes the first drink? The answer...
The second drink!!..... And next here are eleven points to consider in the next paragraph on the same page...

Sponsee Here is a fellow who has been puzzling you,

Sponsor Number one...

Sponsee especially in his lack of control.

Sponsor Number two...

Sponsee He does absurd, incredible, tragic things while drinking.

Sponsor Number three...

Sponsee He is a real Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

Sponsor Number four...

Sponsee He is seldom mildly intoxicated. He is always more or less insanely drunk.
Sponsor Number five...

Sponsee His disposition while drinking resembles his normal nature but little.

Sponsor Number six...

Sponsee He may be one of the finest fellows in the world. Yet let him drink for a day, and he frequently becomes disgusting, and even dangerously anti-social.

Sponsor Number seven...

Sponsee He has a positive genius for getting tight at exactly the wrong moment, particularly when some important decision must be made or engagement kept.

Sponsor Number eight...

Sponsee He is often perfectly sensible and well-balanced concerning everything except liquor, but in that respect he is incredibly dishonest and selfish.

Sponsor Number nine...

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Number ten...

Sponsee He is the fellow who goes to bed so intoxicated he ought to sleep the clock around. Yet early next morning he searches madly for the bottle he misplaced the night before.

Sponsor Number eleven...

Sponsee 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 waste pipe.

Sponsor CAN ANYONE IDENTIFY?? This is the real alcoholic. Someone who does not have control over their drinking. A real Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. I'm sure we all know about this type of alcoholic. **We go to page 151**, last paragraph, to continue to explore the four categories, and the book tells us about the dry alcoholic. **"A Vision for You..."**

Sponsee Now and then a serious drinker, being dry at the moment says, "I don't miss it at all." Feel better. Work better. Having a better time. "As ex-problem drinkers, we smile at such a sally. We know our friend is like a boy whistling in the dark to keep up his spirits. He fools himself. Inwardly he would give anything to take half a dozen drinks and get away with them. He will presently try the old game again, for he isn't happy about his sobriety.

Sponsor Now, this means: If we are not working and living AA's program of recovery, that just happens to be precisely shown to us in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, then we are dry and we will

try the old game again. We are living with untreated alcoholism. Next, we will read about the recovering alcoholic. The word recovering is clearly defined. We go to **Page 122, line 1**. Chapter 9 the Family Afterword... This is where the word recovering is mentioned. (It is also mentioned in the note on page 104. These are the only two places in the whole Big Book where the word occurs...interesting isn't it?)

Sponsee Our women folk have suggested certain attitudes a wife may take with the husband who is recovering.

Sponsor We go to the last paragraph on this page, and one of these attitudes is: the stopping of drinking or...

Sponsee Cessation of drinking is but the first step away from a highly strained, abnormal condition.

Sponsor For the definition of the recovering alcoholic, **we go to Page 127, line 2**.

Sponsee (The alcoholic) ~ Though marvelously improved, is still convalescing. They should be thankful he is sober and able to be of this world once more. Let them praise his progress. Let them remember that his drinking wrought all kinds of damage that may take long to repair. If they sense these things, they will not take so seriously his periods of crankiness, depression, or apathy, which will disappear when there is tolerance, love and spiritual understanding.

Sponsor So, what we just read, **from page 122**, tells us there is more to the solution to our alcoholism than just stopping drinking. Just stopping, is only the first step away from the problem and only part of the first step to the solution. The definition reads: **(From page 127)** Recovering is marvelously improved, convalescing, sober, able progress, may take long to repair periods of crankiness, depression, or apathy. It also says these things will disappear when there is spiritual understanding. Now, let's read the definition of recovered. Let's take a very close look at what it means to be a recovered alcoholic. We go to the bottom of **Page 84, last paragraph**. There are eighteen points to consider. Number one...

Sponsee And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone – even alcohol.

Sponsor Number two...

Sponsee For by this time sanity will have returned.

Sponsor Number three...

Sponsee We will seldom be interested in liquor.

Sponsor Number four...

Sponsee If tempted, we recoil from it as from a hot flame.

Sponsor Number five...

Sponsee We react sanely and normally,

Sponsor Number six...

Sponsee and we will find that this happened automatically.

Sponsor Number seven...

Sponsee We will see that our new attitude toward liquor has been given us without any thought or effort on our part. It just comes! This is the miracle of it.

Sponsor Number eight...

Sponsee We are not fighting it, neither are we avoiding temptation.

Sponsor Number nine...

Sponsee We feel as though we had been placed in a position of neutrality – safe and protected.

Sponsor Number ten...

Sponsee We have not even sworn off.

Sponsor Number eleven...

Sponsee Instead, the problem has been removed.

Sponsor Number twelve...

Sponsee It does not exist for us.

Sponsor Number thirteen...

Sponsee We are neither cocky, nor are we afraid.

Sponsor Number fourteen...

Sponsee That's how we react so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition.

Sponsor Number fifteen...

Sponsee It is easy to let up on the spiritual program of action and rest on our laurels.

Sponsor Number sixteen...

Sponsee We are headed for trouble if we do, for alcohol is a subtle foe.

Sponsor Number seventeen...

Sponsee We are not cured of alcoholism.

Sponsor Number eighteen...

Sponsee What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition.

Sponsor Let us look at an analogy about the recovered alcoholic... Take the gunshot victim for example. He gets shot, goes through a period of recovery, survives the affliction, and is recovered from the gunshot. BUT, is not bullet proof!! Get the idea? Interesting, isn't it? This is the mind – set, attitudes and definition of the recovered alcoholic: sane, neutral, safe protected, and in fit spiritual condition. WE ARE NOT CURED of alcoholism. What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition. We have broken down the alcoholic into four categories, and the question is, WHICH CATEGORY DO YOU FIT IN?? Number one...

Sponsee "The Real alcoholic"

Sponsor Number two...

Sponsee "The Dry alcoholic"

Sponsor Number three...

Sponsee "The recovering alcoholic"

Sponsor Number four...

Sponsee "The Recovered alcoholic".

Sponsor **We go to the page marked Contents, V** found in the front of the book. We will be covering Steps 1 through Twelve in these classes which are found in the **Big Book, Pages XXII through 103**. This is AA's program of recovery from alcoholism, 11 pages are broken down into three main parts... The contents give an outline being:

THE DOCTOR'S OPINION (**Beginning on Page XXII**)

CHAPTER 1 – BILL'S STORY

These discuss the problem, lack of power and alcoholism.

CHAPTER 2 – THERE IS A SOLUTION

CHAPTER 3 – MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

CHAPTER 4 – WE AGNOSTICS

These discuss the solution: GOD – the Power to overcome powerlessness.

CHAPTER 5 – HOW IT WORKS

CHAPTER 6 – INTO ACTION

CHAPTER 7 – WORKING WITH OTHERS (**ending on page 103**)

These discuss AA's program. The Twelve Steps – or the action necessary to recover... how to find the Power, use it, and keep it. We go to **page XXVI, first paragraph**, to read what the Doctor's Opinion states about our alcoholism.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor The Doctor tells us, in terms of the physical aspect of our alcoholism, we have a physical allergy to alcohol and a physical craving as the direct result of consuming alcohol. So why do we drink? Let's see if anyone can identify with these eight symptoms. The last paragraph on this page tells us... Number one...

Sponsee Men and women drink essentially because they like the effect produced by alcohol.

Sponsor Number two...

Sponsee The sensation is so elusive that, while they admit it is injurious, they cannot after a time differentiate the true from the false.

Sponsor Number three...

Sponsee To them, their alcoholic life seems the only normal one.

Sponsor Number four...

Sponsee They are restless, irritable, discontented.

Sponsor Number five...

Sponsee Unless they can again experience the sense of ease and comfort which comes at once by taking a few drinks – drinks which they see others taking with impunity.

Sponsor Number six...

Sponsee 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,

Sponsor Number seven...

Sponsee emerging remorseful, with a firm resolution not to drink again.

Sponsor Number eight...

Sponsee This is repeated over and over,

Sponsor CAN YOU IDENTIFY?? Let's continue, in the same line... and the Doctor offers us a glimpse of the solution.

Sponsee and unless this person can experience an entire psychic change there is very little hope of his recovery.

Sponsor Consider this, there are many reasons for taking a drink, and many reasons for continuing to drink. One thing for sure, when it comes to alcoholics, we have one thing in common, WE ABSOLUTELY CANNOT START DRINKING WITHOUT DEVELOPING THE

PHENOMENON OF CRAVING. Now let's explore this phenomenon a little further. The last paragraph on this page reads:

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

Sponsor Next, the Doctor tells us about the classifications of the alcoholic. The classification of alcoholics seems most difficult, and in much detail is outside the scope of this book. The Doctor describes in brief, five types. Let's continue reading the 2nd paragraph on this same page. Number one...

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Number two...

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Number three...

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Number four...

Sponsee There is the manic-depressive type, who is, perhaps, the least understood by his friends, and about whom a whole chapter could be written.

Sponsor Number five...

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

Sponsor So, which TYPE ARE YOU?? Number one...

Sponsee The one who is always going on the wagon for keeps?

Sponsor Number two...

Sponsee The one who is unwilling to admit?

Sponsor Number three...

Sponsee The one who abstains for a while?

Sponsor Number four...

Sponsee The least understood type?

Sponsor Number five...

Sponsee The one who is entirely normal, but affected? The Doctor tells us in summary.

Sponsor In the last paragraph on this page the Doctor writes: 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.

Sponsee So, we cannot start drinking without developing the phenomenon of craving. We have an allergy to alcohol. But, that is not the whole story.

Sponsor Let's read about the mental component of our alcoholism on **page 30, line 1, chapter 3, More about Alcoholism.**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Not only are we unwilling to admit, that we are bodily and mentally different, vain, obsessive, abnormal, and illusional; we must be insane, because, we shouldn't be drinking alcohol but our minds tell us it is O.K. to drink. That is what kills so many alcoholics. The mental obsession that someday, somehow, some way, they will be able to drink normally, IT IS NEVER GOING TO HAPPEN!!

Sponsee The only relief we have to suggest is entire abstinence.

Sponsor Skipping down two lines we read, the general opinion seems to be that most alcoholics are doomed. These two medical opinions from the 1940's were true then and are true today!! So, we have established that as alcoholics we have a physical allergy, and a mental obsession and this illness leaves us doomed. Let's sum this up by looking at two points of major importance. Number one...

Sponsee THE FACT FOR ALCOHOLICS.

Sponsor Number two...

Sponsee THE MAIN PROBLEM FOR ALCOHOLICS.

Sponsor **Page 24, 1st paragraph. Chapter 2, "There is a Solution..."**

Sponsee 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 month ago. We are without defense against the first drink. WE ARE WITHOUT DEFENSE AGAINST THE FIRST DRINK.

Sponsor **We go back to page 23, five lines down**, to read about THE MAIN PROBLEM FOR US ALCOHOLICS.

Sponsee The main Problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind, rather than in his body.

Sponsor "Did you know that for most alcoholics, skid row is between our ears??!!

Sponsee **Trivia time...** Did you know that the word "I" is mentioned 7,214 times in this book! We are going to go through the steps and recover from this hopeless state of "I", and hopeless state of mind and body. In Bill's Story, Chapter 1, we briefly explore the problem, as well as the solution.

Sponsor In overview, Bill describes his recovery process. He was a low bottom drunk. He was hopeless. He had been to the hospital for detox three times. Prior to his final trip, in December 1934, he had not worked in years. His wife supported him. All he did was drink. Some of us might say, I never went down that far, or I was never that bad. When it comes to alcoholism this attitude of being unique can kill!! AA is not about comparing or competition. You can save those attitudes for the sports arena. The key here is similarities! Listen and identify, for it is the things that we have in common that will aid us on the road to recovery. Bill took the steps in Chapter One. Let's look carefully and we will see the essence of the Twelve Steps in Bill's personal recovery. **On page 8, line 8** Bills First Step...

Sponsee No words can tell of the loneliness and despair I found in the 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...

Sponsor **On page 12, fourth paragraph.** Bill's Second Step.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor On **Page 13**, Bill takes the rest of the steps with his sponsor, Ebby Thatcher, at Towns Hospital, New York, December of 1934. We will start with the second paragraph and continue through the rest of this page. Step Three...

Sponsee There I humbly offered myself to God, as I then 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.

Sponsor **Same line**, Step Four...

Sponsee I ruthlessly faced my sins

Sponsor Steps Six and Seven...

Sponsee and became willing to have my new-found Friend take them away, root and branch.

Sponsor **Next paragraph**, Step Five...

Sponsee I fully acquainted him with my problems and deficiencies.

Sponsor **Same line**, Step Eight...

Sponsee We made a list of people I had hurt or toward whom I felt resentment.

Sponsor **Same line**, Step Nine...

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor **Next paragraph**, Step Ten...

Sponsee I was to test my thinking by the new God-consciousness within.

Sponsor **Next line**, Step Eleven...

Sponsee I was to sit quietly when in doubt, asking only for direction and strength to meet my problems as He would have me.

Sponsor **Next paragraph**, Step Twelve...

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor **On Page 14, second paragraph**, Bill describes his spiritual experience.

Sponsee 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 known. 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.

Sponsor Let's look at this process in terms of timing. Bill checked into the Towns Hospital in New York, on December 11, 1934 and was discharged on December 18, 1934. This means he was detoxed, completed the steps with his sponsor, and had a spiritual awakening in seven days! Now there were no Twelve Steps at that time, there were six tenants of beliefs for the "Oxford Group" that our Twelve Steps for today are based upon. Found in the AA Archives in New York is a version of the twelve steps as recalled in 1953 in a hand-written note by Bill W. and

presumably for Father Ed Dowling. A copy of that note is found on page 3 of this booklet.

Sponsee The point is that Bill wrote the book. He wrote the book on how to take the steps and when to take the steps. Bill never drank again. This idea of taking a step a year, or don't bother with the steps your first year, or just do the steps whenever or however you want, and a whole lot of do it yourself methods and interesting ideas about the steps, *NONE OF THIS IS IN THE BOOK!!*. What is in this book is: precise directions, requirements, time lines and promises for each individual step. Let's follow these carefully so we can complete the process and bring about the psychic change sufficient enough to produce our recovery from alcoholism.

Sponsor Reading a summary from the 1944 pamphlet titled "**We Admit**" condenses everything we have studied up to this point and brings this study to two alternatives, and 12 points of resolve.

Sponsee "**We Admit**". If after carefully considering the foregoing, We ADMIT we are an alcoholic, we must realize that – Once a person becomes a pathological drinker, he can never again become a controlled drinker; and – from that point on, is limited to just two alternatives:

Sponsor Alternative Number One...

Sponsee TOTAL PERMANENT ABSTINENCE

Sponsor Alternative Number Two...

Sponsee CHRONIC ALCOHOLISM WITH ALL OF THE HANDICAPS AND PENALTIES IT IMPLIES. In other words – we have gone past the point where WE HAD A CHOICE. All we have left is a DECISION to make. We resolve to do something about it!!! And here we have the Twelve Points of Resolve:

Sponsor Number One...

Sponsee WE MUST CHANGE OUR WAY OF THINKING.

Sponsor Number Two...

Sponsee We must realize that each morning when we wake, we are potential drunkards for that day.

Sponsor Number Three...

Sponsee We resolve that we will practice AA for the 24 hours of that day.

Sponsor Number Four...

Sponsee We must study the other eleven Steps of the Program and practice all of the Spiritual Principles of the 12 steps in all our affairs.

Sponsor Number Five...

Sponsee Attend the regular Group Meeting each week without fail.

Sponsor Number Six...

Sponsee Firmly believe that by practicing AA faithfully each day, we will achieve sobriety.

Sponsor Number Seven...

Sponsee Believe that we can be free from alcohol as a problem.

Sponsor Number Eight...

Sponsee Contact another member before taking a drink – NOT AFTER. Tell him what bothers you – talk it over with him freely.

Sponsor Number Nine...

Sponsee Work the program for ourselves alone – not for our wife, children, friends, or for our job.

Sponsor Number Ten...

Sponsee Be absolutely honest and sincere.

Sponsor Number Eleven...

Sponsee Be fully open minded – no mental reservations.

Sponsor Number Twelve...

Sponsee Be fully willing to work the program. Nothing good in life comes without work.

Sponsor We go to **page 30, second paragraph**, “More about Alcoholism” to get to the heart of Step One. We are shown six requirements to Step One. Number One...

Sponsee We learned that we had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics. This is the first step in recovery.

Sponsor Number Two...

Sponsee The delusion that we are like other people, or presently may be, has to be smashed.

Sponsor Number Three...

Sponsee We alcoholics are men and women who have lost the ability to control our drinking.

Sponsor Number Four...

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Number Five...

Sponsee We are convinced to a man that alcoholics of our type are in the grip of a progressive illness.

Sponsor Number Six...

Sponsee Over any considerable period we get worse, never better.

Sponsor In the next paragraph on the same page, we study some conclusions about *Step One*. Number One...

Sponsee We are like men who have lost their legs; they never grow new ones.

Sponsor Number Two...

Sponsee Neither does there appear to be any kind of treatment which will make alcoholics of our kind like other men.

Sponsor Number Three...

Sponsee We have tried every imaginable remedy.

Sponsor Number Four...

Sponsee In some instances there has been brief recovery, followed by a still worse relapse.

Sponsor Number Five...

Sponsee Physicians who are familiar with alcoholism agree there is no such thing as making a normal drinker out of an alcoholic. Science one day may accomplish this, but hasn't done so yet.

Sponsor Number Six...

Sponsee Despite all we can say, many who are real alcoholics are not going to believe they are in that class.

Sponsor Number Seven...

Sponsee By every form of self-deception and experimentation, they will try to prove themselves exceptions to the rule, therefore nonalcoholic.

Sponsor Number Eight...

Sponsee 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!

Sponsor Do YOU fully concede? Have YOU learned YOUR lesson when it comes to alcohol? Have you achieved self-honesty? Have YOU finally admitted these six conclusions to yourself? Number One...

Sponsee "We learned that we had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics."

Sponsor Number Two...

Sponsee “That the delusion that we are like other people, or presently may be, has to be smashed.”

Sponsor Number Three...

Sponsee “Have lost the ability to control our drinking.”

Sponsor Number Four...

Sponsee “That no real alcoholic ever recovers control.”

Sponsor Number Five...

Sponsee “That alcoholics of our type are in the grip of a progressive illness.”

Sponsor Number Six...

Sponsee “Over any considerable period we get worse, never better.”

Sponsor If we can identify with these statements and honestly believe them to be the truth about ourselves and our lives, in other words, with the Spiritual principle of self-honesty, then, **THIS IS WHO WE ARE!!** Then the time line and requirements of Step One have been met. But, if you are not convinced of Step One, then let’s read from **Pages 31 and 32**. Beginning with the **last paragraph on page 31**, you can draw your own conclusions.

Sponsee 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 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.

Sponsor What we need to do right now is ask ourselves – **ARE WE READY TO TAKE STEP ONE?** It is decision making time! Yes or No. We have explored the requirements and time line for Step One and the directions read from **Page 59**, “We admitted that we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.”

Let’s Repeat Together Now:

I am powerless over alcohol and could not manage my own life.

That’s it!! That is Step One, right out of the Big Book. But we are promised something as the result of Step One. We go to **Page 58**, line one. This is the First Step Promise:

Sponsee **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.

Sponsor We are promised that rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path, and that many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest. On **page 59 line 5** we have the First Step prayer...

Sponsee We asked his protection and care with complete abandon.

Sponsor **In summary**, Step One is that we conclude and concede to our innermost selves that we are alcoholic, and that we are the problem and the road we took in life developed into a total mess. Step One is discovering who we are: An Alcoholic!! Step one is self-honesty.

Sponsee Now, nowhere in the Big Book does it tell us to stop drinking. If we are powerless, have met our match, have been overwhelmed, and alcohol is our master, then in no way, shape, or form can we drink alcohol successfully. Nor can we NOT drink alcohol successfully. We are powerless and beyond human aid on both sides of the fence!! To drink or not to drink is simply impossible for us. Remember alcoholism comes in people not in bottles!

Sponsor And that leaves us with an obvious suspicion, and a major question to be answered... If we cannot, and nothing human can, what's the solution to all of this? The solution is simple and easy: Take all the rest of the steps as soon as possible, immediately, nonstop, until they are completed. Do the best you can with what you have, no matter what your present circumstances.

Sponsee The most important thing is that we do not need to understand all of this 12 Step Stuff, nor do we need to feel good about ourselves and our life's situation in order to complete the 12 steps. We simply do not get sobriety or keep sobriety on what we think and/or feel about all of this AA stuff. We get sobriety and keep sobriety by ONE thing only:

==**ACTION**== its action through, with, and, in the 12 Steps with the guidance of a sponsor and the program that's in the Big Book.

Sponsor So, we get active first in the steps while attending meetings as a secondary priority, then as time passes, we will begin to feel better, think better, and live the good life, a life of spiritual understanding, growth, and effectiveness. So in summary: 1st...

Sponsee we imitate

Sponsor 2nd...

Sponsee we feel better

Sponsor 3rd...

Sponsee we think better

Sponsor 4th...

Sponsee we live better, and

Sponsor 5th...

Sponsee we repeat the process for the rest of our lifetime in Step 10, 11, & 12, THEN We Are Recovered Alcoholics, we receive the Gift of Sobriety, and keep this Sobriety.....**CONTINGENT ON THE MAINTENANCE OF OUR SPIRITUAL CONDITION DAILY!!**

Sponsor Nest class will be steps 2, 3, 4, and 5. Continued study is to read the Chapter – “**The Doctor’s Opinion**” and **pages 1 through 43**. Discuss them with your sponsor.

Serenity Prayer -- CLASS TWO

Sponsor **Eskimo Story:** A fellow is sitting talking to his sponsor about the second step. He tells his sponsor, "I just don't believe there is a God. I gave Him a chance to prove Himself to me. I just don't believe there is a God." His sponsor replies, "You gave Him a chance? Just what kind of a chance did you give Him?" The newcomer replies, "I was lost up in the snow fields of Alaska. I knew there was no way out, so I just looked up and said, "God, I don't believe you are really up there, but if you are, here's your chance. Save me!" The sponsor, looking rather incredulous says, "Well, then how can you say there is no God? You are here!" The newcomer replies, "Oh, come on! God didn't save me! Some Eskimo came along!"

Sponsee **A Letter to Ann Landers:** Dear Ann,

I'm a sailor in the U.S. Navy and I also have a cousin who belongs to Alcoholics Anonymous.

My Father has Epilepsy and my mother has Alzheimer's, so neither of them can work. They are totally dependent upon my two sisters who are prostitutes in Louisville, and the only reason they are is that my only brother is serving a life term for rape and murder, and he can't help with the folks.

I'm in love with a streetwalker who operates near our base. She knows nothing of my background, but says she loves me. We intend to get married as soon as she settles her bigamy case, which is now in court. When I get out of the Navy, we intend to move to Detroit and open up a small house.

Now my problem is this: In view of the fact that I intend to make this girl my wife, and bring her into the family, should I or should I not, tell her about my cousin in AA.

Sponsor And by the way, here's some food for thought... **The Big Book Doesn't Need to be Rewritten. It needs to be Re-Read!**

We are going to take our second trip back into AA's history. Back to the 40's when the recovery rate was 75%, to relive the days when people took the steps in five one-hour classes. This is the second class based on the pamphlet from September 1944. The primary objective was to present the 12 steps right out of the book titled "Alcoholics Anonymous", so that each new person would be sponsored to; and find the spiritual solution to; the illness of alcoholism. In review, this is what we discovered... **From page 45...**

Sponsee 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?

Sponsor We also established where the Power is: **From page 55...**

Sponsee We found the Great Reality deep within us. In the last analysis it is only there He may be found.

Sponsor So, the question that needs answered is; How do we find this Power? Step 2 tells us how.

Sponsee Step Number 2 – “Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity”

Sponsor Our drinking experience has shown two conclusions. Number 1.

Sponsee That as we strayed away from the normal SOCIAL side of life, our minds became confused and we strayed away from the normal MENTAL side of life.

Sponsor Number 2.

Sponsee An abnormal MENTAL condition is certainly not SANITY in the accepted sense of the word. We have acquired or developed a MENTAL DISEASE. Our study of AA shows that--

Sponsor Point A,

Sponsee In the MENTAL or tangible side of life we have lost touch with, or, ignored; or have forgotten the SPIRITUAL values that give us the dignity of Man as differentiated from the animal. We have fallen back upon the MATERIAL things of life and these have failed us. We have been groping in the dark.

Sponsor Point B.

Sponsee No HUMAN agency, no SCIENCE or ART has been able to solve the alcoholic problem, so we turn to the SPIRITUAL for guidance. Therefore, we “Came to believe that a Power – greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity”. And we must believe with a great **FAITH!!**

Sponsor **On page 25, last paragraph...** Chapter 2, “**There is a Solution**” the book gives us 2 alternatives.

Sponsee If you are as seriously alcoholic as we were, we believe that 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.

Sponsor One...

Sponsee was to go on to the bitter end, blotting out the consciousness of our intolerable situation as best we could;

Sponsor and the other...

Sponsee to accept spiritual help. This we did because we honestly wanted to, and were willing to make the effort...

Sponsor At this point in the recovery process all we need is a desire and some willingness. That is a willingness to reconsider our position about our lives... Let’s look at page 44... **Chapter 4, “We Agnostics”**.

Sponsee 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 of our original fellowships 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.

Sponsor We have a choice! Find a spiritual basis of life or else... We don't always find this choice acceptable, or it's hard to see, or we don't always want to follow this spiritual path. There is NO middle of the road solution. Now, let's take a look at this spiritual solution. From **page 46** in the Big Book...

Sponsee 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 affect 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. When, therefore, we speak to you of God, we mean your conception of God. This applies too, to other spiritual expressions which you find in the book.

Sponsor We don't have to know everything about this Power. We just have to believe or even be willing to believe in this power. There must be something instead of ourselves that can or will put us in a position to live life and enjoy it. Consider this; When it comes to using power to help us in our everyday living, most of us don't or can't fully comprehend the power of common household electrical lighting... but we don't sit around in the dark until we figure all out do we? Let us read from **Page 48**...

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Once we realized that all we had to look forward to was alcoholic destruction or the spiritual path, the path becomes a lot easier to take. Let's look at the reasons for taking this spiritual path. From **Page 50**...

Sponsee 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 whole heartedly met a few simple requirements.

Sponsor If we are not convinced yet, let's look at where we were. Let's look at an honest appraisal of our alcoholic lives. From **Page 52**...

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor This reads like the definition of a dry drunk. Let's continue on the same page.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor "Our ideas did not work. But the God idea did". Let's continue on **Page 53...**

Sponsee When we became alcoholics, crushed by a self-imposed crisis 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?

Sponsor Step 2, this is our choice. Now, notice the timeline for Step 2. "We could not postpone or evade." Notice the requirement for Step 2. "We had to fearlessly face the proposition that either God is everything or he is nothing. "God either is or he isn't." keep in mind, though, your own conception of God. We go back to **Page 47...**

Sponsee We need 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."

Sponsor Here we have the Second Step Promise.

Sponsee As soon as a man can say that he does believe, or is even 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.

Sponsor Here is Step 2. One short question to consider and then answer. Let's take Step Two together. As "precisely" shown to us, right out of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. This is *Step Two*: Yes or NO, do you believe or are you even willing to believe in a Power greater than yourself. Together let's say the following statement:

Yes, I do believe in a Power Greater than myself....

That's it. That is Step 2 for now. But remember the 2nd step promise.

Sponsee As soon as a man can say that he does believe, or is even willing to believe, we emphatically assure him that his is on his way. It has been repeatedly proven among us that upon this simple cornerstone a wonderfully effective spiritual structure can be built.

Sponsor Let us move on to Step 3—"Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as *we understood Him*." In the first step we learn that we had lost the power of CHOICE and had to make a DECISION.

Sponsee Let's consider these 4 points.

Sponsor Point number 1... What decision could we make better than to:

Sponsee **A**—Turn our very WILL over to GOD, realizing that our own use of our own will had resulted in trouble.

B—As in the Lord's Prayer you must believe and practice THY WILL BE DONE.

Sponsor Point number 2...

Sponsee God as we understand Him...

Sponsor Point number 3...

Sponsee RELIGION is a word we do not use in AA. We refer to a member's relation to GOD as SPIRITUAL. Religion is a FORM of worship—not the worship itself.

Sponsor Point number 4...

Sponsee If a man cannot believe in GOD, he can certainly believe in SOMETHING greater than himself. If he cannot believe in a power greater than himself, he is a rather hopeless egotist.

Sponsor **On page 60—Chapter 5, "How it works"** we learn about...

Sponsee Our description of the alcoholic,

Sponsor Which are the chapters, The Dr.'s Opinion and Bill's Story...

Sponsee The chapter, We Agnostic's

Sponsor Which is about step two

Sponsee Our own personal adventures before and after we came to AA make clear three pertinent ideas.

Sponsor Step One, A.

Sponsee That we were alcoholics and could not manage our own lives.

Sponsor The Spiritual principle of self-honesty. Step Two B.

Sponsee That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism.

Sponsor And Step Two, C

Sponsee that God could and would if He were sought.

Sponsor The Spiritual principle of Hope.

Sponsee Being convinced...

Sponsor Of what? The three pertinent ideas (a), (b), (c)...

Sponsee (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.

Sponsor The time line says we are now at step three. Step three reads:

Sponsee Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.

Sponsor The explanation of step three reads 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? Here we have a requirement on **page 60**.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor If we continue to read, we look at this person who lives by self-propulsion, the actor who wants to run the whole show... and reading further, this person is described at length; the self-centered person!! For an in-depth look at the problem, and an honest appraisal of what our position must be, if we want to continue on this spiritual path to recovery we go to **page 62** and here the book tells us that alcoholism comes in people not bottles!

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor So, we were professional victims!! Let's continue on, here the book tells us our problems occurred from the inside out.

Sponsee 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 kills 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.

Sponsor Continuing on **page 62** the book tells us of some more requirements for *Step Three*.

Sponsee This is the how and 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.

Sponsor Next we have one of the many promises that are in this book.

Sponsee Most good ideas are simple, and this concept was the keystone of the new and triumphant arch through which we passed to freedom.

Sponsor We continue reading on the top of **page 63**, more promises...

Sponsee 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 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.

Sponsor At the beginning of the next paragraph on **page 63**, we have a timeline to step three that reads...

Sponsee We are now at Step Three.

Sponsor Before we take Step Three, let's explore the precise instructions... Step Three is a major turning point on this road to recovery. So let's carefully examine Step Three on **page 63**. The time - line is:

Sponsee We thought well before taking this step making sure we were ready.

Sponsor The requirement says:

Sponsee that we could at last abandon ourselves utterly to Him.

Sponsor The directions read:

Sponsee We found it very desirable to take this spiritual step with an understanding person, such as our wife, best friend or spiritual adviser.

Sponsor Here we have a warning...

Sponsee But it is better to meet God alone than with one who might misunderstand.

Sponsor Let's continue with the directions.

Sponsee The wording was, of course, quite optional so long as we expressed the idea, voicing it without reservation.

Sponsor This is the Third Step Promise.

Sponsee This was only a beginning, though if honestly and humbly made, an effect sometimes a very great one, was felt at once.

Sponsor Let's take step three together, voicing it without reservation. The time line reads we were now at step three. Many of us said to our Maker, as we understood Him – the Third Step Prayer. Let's say this prayer together now:

Sponsor/Sponsee:

God If 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.

Sponsor That's it! That is Step Three. But, -- this was only a beginning, a turning point. All we have done so far is made three decisions. Between "me, myself, & I"... The fact is that these 3 decisions were based upon reflection, suspicion and surrender. These 3 conclusions took place in our minds. So, all we have done in these first 3 steps is ruined our drinking and set ourselves up for two realities: #1 Take the rest of the steps, #2 – live an alcoholic death. Let's summarize steps 1, 2, & 3... In Step One...

Sponsee We decided to get honest with ourselves and make admission to ourselves, based upon the ideas that we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives.

Sponsor In Step Two...

Sponsee We decided to believe there is some hope for ourselves, based upon the ideas that probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism, and that God could and would if He were sought.

Sponsor In Step Three (Being convinced of these pertinent ideas...)

Sponsee We decided to turn our will and our life over to God as we understood him... We do this based upon the idea of faith in the AA program.

Sponsor Try doing these three steps on getting a driver's license and see what happens. Step one:

Sponsee Admit you need a license...

Sponsor Step Two:

Sponsee Believe you can get one...

Sponsor Step three:

Sponsee Decide to get one...

Sponsor The result of these three steps... You'll still be taking the bus!! The first 3 steps are 25% of nothing. The point is, it takes immediate action, through the rest of the Steps to conquer alcoholism.

Sponsee Step 4 – "Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves." The intent and purpose of this step is plain. All alcoholics have a definite need for a good self-analysis – a sort of self-appraisal. Other people have certainly analyzed us, appraised us, criticized us and even judged us. It might be a good idea to judge ourselves, calmly and honestly.

Sponsor Let's consider these two reasons why we need an inventory. Reason number one...

Sponsee Either our faults, weaknesses, defects of character – are the cause of our drinking OR...

Sponsor Reason 2.

Sponsee Our drinking has weakened our character and let us drift into all kinds of wrong action, wrong attitudes, and wrong viewpoints. In either event we obviously need an inventory and the only kind of inventory to make is a good one. Moreover, the job is up to us. WE created or WE let develop all the anti-social actions that got US in the wrong. So WE have got to work it out. WE must make out a list of our faults and then WE must do something about.

Sponsor The inventory must be 4 things, 4 requirements ... Requirement number 1...

Sponsee It must be HONEST. Why waste time fooling ourselves with a phony list. We have fooled ourselves for years. We tried to fool others and now is a good time to look ourselves squarely in the eye.

Sponsor Requirement number 2...

Sponsee It must be searching. Why skip over a vital matter lightly and quickly. Our trouble is a grave mental disease, confused by screwy thinking. Therefore, we must SEARCH diligently and fearlessly to get at the TRUTH of what is wrong with us – just dig in and SEARCH.

Sponsor Requirement number 3...

Sponsee It must be FEARLESS. We must not be afraid we might find things in our heart, mind and soul that we will hate to discover. If we do find such things they may be the ROOT of our trouble.

Sponsor Requirement number 4...

Sponsee It must be a MORAL inventory. Some, in error, think the inventory is a lot of unpaid debts, plus a list of unmade apologies. Our trouble goes much deeper. We will find the root of our trouble lies in – Resentments – Fears – Inconsideration – Dishonesty – Selfishness – and many other things. Laziness is an important one. In other words we are making inventory of our character – our attitude towards others – our way of living. We are not preparing a financial statement. We will pay our bills all right, because we cannot even begin to practice AA without HONESTY.

Sponsor Let's begin reading the last paragraph on page 63. We have another timeline and requirement for Step 4.

Sponsee Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning which many of us had never attempted. Though our decision...

Sponsor Step Three

Sponsee ...was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect...

Sponsor Here we have a major time-line and an explanation to Step Four.

Sponsee Unless at once...**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...

Sponsor With the Spiritual principle of courage, here begins the directions for Step Four found on **page 63**.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor The common manifestations of self, or demonstrations of self, or evidence of self, or proof of self are:

Sponsee Resentment:

Sponsor Which is wrong judgment.

Sponsee Fear:

Sponsor Which is wrong believing.

Sponsee Harms done... Our own conduct over the years past...

Sponsor Which is wrong action. Let's continue...

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor This is the Fourth Step promise:

Sponsee When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically.

Sponsor This is how we recover from alcoholism: We find a God of our own understanding first: we do this through, with and in the steps, we solve the alcoholism problem first, at its highest point, then we work out all of our other problems physically, socially, sexually, financially etc... Here are the directions to resentments:

Sponsee In dealing with resentments, we set them on paper. We listed people, institutions or principles with whom we were angry. We asked ourselves why we were angry.

Sponsor Continuing on **page 65**, here are more directions to the resentments inventory.

Sponsee 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?

Sponsor And we have a requirement.

Sponsee We went back through our lives nothing counted but thoroughness and honesty.

Sponsor Let's continue on to **page 67**,

Sponsee 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 mans. When we saw our faults we listed them. We placed them before us in black and white.

Sponsor Some more requirements.

Sponsee We admitted our wrongs honestly and were willing to set these matters straight.

Sponsor On this same page we have another inventory. Notice the word **fear**.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Here are the directions for the Fear inventory.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Next we have directions for another inventory, our own conduct. There are many kinds of conduct: sex, financial, social, physical, mental, emotional, the list goes on and on. The book tells us what to do on **page 69** we read...

Sponsee 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 at fault, what should we have done instead? We got this all down on paper and looked at it.

Sponsor There is a lot of fear and pain associated with the Fourth Step inventory. Fear and pain did not get you drunk. You had to drink alcohol to get drunk. No alcohol, no drunk. No action, no drunk. No action on taking the steps, no recovery; no sobriety. That's how it is. That is what it takes, action. Not feelings... Back in the 40's people blasted through the steps, so the newcomer was just moving out of the problem and just getting a glimpse of the solution in Step Four. The newcomer was still living in all the pain of being alcoholic. The point is that there will be leftovers that we forget to list in Step 4. Don't beat yourself up wallowing in the past. You can deal with the leftovers later on in Step 10, while looking at them from the solution's point of view. Do the best you can but move forward into the solution. Don't stop until you are finished with the Fourth Step. Going back to **page 68** we read...

Sponsee For we are now on a different basis; the basis of trusting and relying upon God. We trust infinite God rather than our finite selves. We are in the world to play the role He assigns. Just to the extent that we do as we think He would have us, and humbly rely on Him, does He enable us to match calamity with serenity.

Sponsor If we have taken Steps 1, 2, & 3, we are on a different basis. Steps 1, 2, & 3 are in the past, they are finished, they are done... We use their spiritual principles: Self-honesty, hope & faith to muster enough courage to complete step 4... Self-honesty + hope + faith = courage, which just happens to be the fourth steps' spiritual principal... principles that we practice in all our affairs... We are looking at Step 4 from a different perspective. We can fill out these inventories without having to spend a lot of time worrying. Remember we trust infinite God rather than our finite selves. The directions, time lines, requirements and prayers are in the Big Book, **pages 63 through 71 for Step 4**. The forms provided are based upon the directions that are in the Big Book. Use God, your sponsor and the Big Book to complete the inventory process. It is quite simple to do, just follow the directions. Answer the questions and do one column at a time. The interesting thing is everything has already been figured out!!!! The inventory process, the forms you've been provided with, and the whole deal in the Big Book, does not need to have anything else added to it except action. It works PRESICELY THE WAY IT IS. The end result of this proven inventory process is: You will have analyzed truth about you; you will be armed with the facts, and will have the components you need to complete the rest of the steps. Now let's read what the book tells us in summary to the 4th step inventory on **page 70**.

Sponsee 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,

Sponsor Which is Step Three.

Sponsee and an inventory of your grosser handicaps,

Sponsor Which is Step Four.

Sponsee you have made a good beginning. That being so you have swallowed and digested some big chunks of truth about yourself.

Sponsor By writing this Fourth Step inventory, the things that have been blocking us are in the process of being removed. We are not going to take Step Four at this time. We will though be taking a "mock" 4th step in the next class... We suggest that you examine these inventories for discussion with your sponsor. Then take Step 4 with your sponsor's guidance and the directions from the Big Book after taking a "mock" 4th step in the next class. Since we are going to take steps 4 & 5 over the next few weeks, let's look at Step 5 before we get into the Big Book.

Sponsee Step NO. 5... "Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."

Sponsor Let's look at these 6 points. Point number 1.

Sponsee There is nothing new in this step. There are many sound reasons for "talking over our troubles out loud with others".

Sponsor Point number 2.

Sponsee The Catholic already has this medium readily available to him in the Confessional. But – the Catholic is at a disadvantage if he thinks his familiarity with confession permits him to think his part of AA is thereby automatically taken care of. He must, in confession, seriously consider his problems in relation to his alcoholic thinking.

Sponsor Point number 3.

Sponsee The non-Catholic has the way open to work this step by going to his minister, his doctor, or his friend.

Sponsor Point number 4.

Sponsee Under this step it is not even necessary to go to a priest or minister. Any understanding human being, friend, or stranger will serve the purpose.

Sponsor Point number 5.

Sponsee The purpose and intent of this step is so plain and definite that it needs little explanation. The point is that we **MUST DO EXACTLY** what the Fifth Step says, sooner or later. We must not be in a rush to get this step off our chest. Consider it carefully and calmly. Then get about it and do it.

Sponsor Point number 6.

Sponsee "Wrongs" do not necessarily mean "crime". It can well be wrong thinking – selfishness – false pride – egotism – or any one of a hundred such negative faults.

Sponsor On **page 72** we have a warning that says we may not overcome drinking if we skip this vital step.

Sponsee 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 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 housecleaning. 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 their entire life story.

Sponsor On **page 74** are some options on who is to hear our story. Also a requirement that is a warning.

Sponsee We think well before we choose the person or persons with whom to take this intimate and confidential step... go to the properly appointed authority... talk with someone ordained... a closed mouth understanding friend... Doctor or psychologist... one of our own family... such parts of our story we tell to someone who will understand, yet be unaffected.

Sponsor We have a major requirement.

Sponsee The rule is we must be hard on ourselves, but always considerate of others.

Sponsor The timeline says:

Sponsee it may be one is so situated that there is no suitable person available. If that is so, this step may be postponed...

Sponsor Requirement.

Sponsee only, however, if we hold ourselves in complete readiness to go through with it at the first opportunity.

Sponsor More requirements.

Sponsee It is important that he be able to keep a confidence; that he fully understand and approve what we are driving at...

Sponsor On **page 75** another timeline.

Sponsee When we decide who is to hear our story, we waste no time.

Sponsor Here we have some directions.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor More directions.

Sponsee We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past.

Sponsor Let's explore the timeline requirements and directions for after we complete Step Five.

Sponsee Returning home we find a place where we can be quiet for an hour, carefully reviewing what we have done.

Sponsor Here we have the 5th Step Prayer.

Sponsee We thank God from the bottom of our heart that we know Him better.

Sponsor Let's continue studying.

Sponsee Taking this book down from our shelf, we turn to the page which contains the Twelve Steps, -- carefully reading the first five proposals...

Sponsor Meaning to **reread and study the book, pages XXIII to page 75**. Let's continue with the next line.

Sponsee ...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?

Sponsor Step five leaves us with the spiritual principle of integrity... Let's review our progress so far, by looking at the spiritual equation of steps 1 thorough 5. Self-honesty (step 1), + Hope (step 2), + Faith (step 3), + Courage (step 4), = Integrity (step 5). In summary, the directions are very clear on why, when, and how to take step 5, as are the timelines and requirements. This is what happens as the result of taking step 5, the 5th Step Promises.

Sponsee Once we have taken this step, withholding nothing, **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.

Sponsor This ends the 2nd class. Next class will cover a "mock" 4th Step, and move on to Steps 6, 7, 8 & 9. Read **pages 44 through 75** by the next class.

Serenity Prayer -- CLASS Three (4th Step)

Sponsor Before we get into steps 6, 7, 8, & 9, the restitution phase, we are going to study and take a “mock” 4th Step... a trial run of the 4th step. The 4th step is simple, all we are doing in this step is: Answering some questions, writing the answers down in an inventory fashion, reading some information from the Big Book, reaching a few conclusions, saying a few prayers, reconsidering our own personal positions on resentments, fears and our conduct over the years past, saving this inventory for future use, and doing this with the guidance of a sponsor following the directions from the Big Book..

Sponsee The 4th Step is not the 5th step... it is not a psychological exam or a graded test... It is not an endeavor to beat yourself up by wallowing in the past... or a step that requires a lot of time... it is not a perfect – in – every way... a self-destructive venture, a pity party, nor is it an autobiography, a novel of your whole life’s story... The 4th step is a fact-finding, spiritual search for the truth. That’s all, nothing more, nothing less.

Sponsor let’s break this step down to an understandable basic layout; #1...

Sponsee **Read the Big Book pg. 63, last paragraph up to and including pg. 71.**

Sponsor #2...

Sponsee Make copies of each of the inventory work sheets...

Sponsor #3...

Sponsee Answer the questions in an inventory fashion, vertically, one column at a time, following the instructions on the work sheets, in accordance with the directions from the Big Book, until completed...

Sponsor #4...

Sponsee You are finished with the 4th step... Save it... Move on to the 5th step...

Sponsor Let’s look at the inventory Work Sheets and take a “mock” 4th step. Start with the sheet titled; **“Resentments”**. Look at column #1, read the first statement.

Sponsee In dealing with resentments, we set them down on paper. WE listed people, institutions, or principles with whom we were angry.

Sponsor We will need to find out what people, institutions, or principles mean... In a brief and simple way let’s look at these three components that are used throughout the 4th step:

***People:** Any human being...etc.

***Institutions:** Any Establishment, Organization, Facility, Practice, System, Corporation... etc...

***Principles:** Any fundamental, original, ultimate, natural, essential, Spiritual; Truth, law,

theory, doctrine, rule, method, motivation force, upon which others are based... You have been supplied with information pertaining to these definitions and also, some lists of helpful terms... These sheets will help you in taking the 4th step.

Sponsee In looking at column #1, can you think of a person with whom you were angry? If so, write that name in the block... So all you do at this point in the process is to go back through your life and think of “all” the People who made you resentful and put one name to each block... Then, when you run out of blocks in column #1, you start a new sheet and continue to fill it out. Repeat this until you are finished finding people in your past or present... Using column #1 only.

Sponsor Then we move on to “Institutions”... We do exactly the same process that we just covered... Go back through your life and look for “Institutions” with whom you were angry... Put this information in column #1 also... And finally for column #1, we do the same thing for “Principles”.

Sponsee If this was a real 4th step, we would have a stack of inventory work sheets for resentments, with column #1 filled to the max with names of people, titles of institutions, and terms of principles... Keep in mind that we are going to have left overs that we forget to list. We will take care of them later on in step 10... So don’t wallow around wasting time...

Sponsor Before we go any further, we need to explain this inventory process, one column at a time, vertically. No matter how intelligent or mentally coordinated we are, people simply do a more thorough, searching, less confusing, honest job when they keep it simple... The Big Book tells us on **page 23** “The main problem centers in his mind, rather than his body.” And if this is true, then we had better keep an open mind and try to follow some directions... Let’s move on;

Sponsee Column #2, as in column #1, is to be completed in the same manner... In an inventory fashion, vertically, one column – at – a – time... In looking at column #2, can you think of the reason why you were angry, at the items in column #1, go back through your life and answer this question... a block at a time. Now, in column #3, the only thing we do differently is place a check mark in the appropriate block... Keep in mind that not every person, Institution, or Principle will relate to all of the injuries across the board.

Sponsor Let’s continue to move forward into the solution... at the bottom left portion of this page we are directed to #4 which reads:

4. We went back through our lives. Nothing counted but thoroughness and honesty. When we were finished we considered it carefully.

Remember that it’s progress, not perfection... and participate, don’t anticipate... Next we read from the **Big Book page 65**... which is found on the next inventory work sheet. “Resentments” page 2... What we are about to study is the precise – information that we need to consider carefully:

Sponsee The problem is explained in the Big Book pages 65 – 66 – 67...

The first thing apparent 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.

Sponsor **(Warning) - But the more we fought and tried to have our own way, the worse matters got.**

Sponsee As in war, the victor only seemed to win. Our moments of triumph were short-lived. It is plain that all life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness.

Sponsor **(Warning) – To the precise extent that we permit these, do we squander the hours that might have been worthwhile.**

Sponsee But with the alcoholic, whose hope is the maintenance and growth of a spiritual experience, this business of...

Sponsor **(Warning) – resentment is infinitely grave. We found that it is fatal.**

Sponsee For when harboring such feelings we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the Spirit. The insanity of alcohol returns and we drink again.

Sponsor **(Warning) – And with us, to drink is to die.**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor **The solution is given... We must accept and change our attitudes and rely on God...**

Sponsee We turned back to the list, for it held the key to the future. We were prepared to look for it from an entirely different angle. We began...

Sponsor **Remember: "RESENTMENT IS WRONG JUDGMENT".**

Sponsee to see that the world and its people really dominated us. In that state, the wrongdoing 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.

Sponsor **The action we must take and not take...**

Sponsee This was our course: We realized that the people who wronged us were perhaps spiritually sick. Though we did not like their symptoms and the way these disturbed us, they like ourselves, were sick too.

Sponsor **(Pray--)**

Sponsee 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,

Sponsor **(Pray--)**

Sponsee "This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him: God save me from being angry. Thy will be done".

Sponsor **(Warning)**

Sponsee 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 other and everyone.

Sponsor **THE BOTTOM LINE IS:**

Sponsee Resentment is the "number one" offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else. From it stems all forms of spiritual disease, for we have been not only mentally and physically ill, we have been spiritually sick.

Sponsor **The 4th step promise:** When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out mentally and physically.

Sponsee Resentment is wrong judgment or wrong judging on our part... consider this; 95% of what put us here, never happened... and if it did happen to us, it doesn't matter. What really matters is what we do with it or about it while it is happening to us... and after it happens to us. What did we do? We got angry and resentful and stayed that way! Now in the next portion of the process, we will explore the exact nature of our wrongs. This takes place in columns #4 & 5.

Sponsor **Going to page 3 (of the handouts), it reads "Resentments Inventory". Big Book page 67...** By using the information from columns #1, 2, 3, on page 1 we continue to move forward into the solution by answering in **Column #4:** *Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened?*

Sponsee In other words, after considering the information from columns 1, 2, & 3 and looking at this through the conclusion we have drawn, by reading the pages from the Big Book, we should now have a different perspective... a clear understanding... and are armed with the facts about our position. We should now agree with the following:

Sponsor Somewhere along the way in life, we as alcoholics, became warped. The things that were instinctual, natural and good to us got perverted somehow. We went through life with wrong judgments, wrong believing and wrong actions. If people, Institutions, or Principles did not satisfy us: please us; meet our conditions; our expectations; our agenda threatened us, intimidated, and or hurt us, we punished them or acted out the role of the victim. We were afraid to appear that we had anything wrong with us, that we had any problems. We would find a good reason for why we were right or why people, institutions, or principles were wrong. Because we'd rather not be wrong, it's that simple.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor After answering column #4 in an Inventory Fashion... when finished move onto **Column #5:** Where were we to blame? **Our** wrongs, **Our** faults, **Our** own mistakes. By this time, you ought to have a real good understanding of how to do the 4th Step Inventory process... Let's continue by reading the example of the Resentments worksheet in its entirety...

Sponsee

Col.#1 I'm Resentful at: (People)	Col.#2 The Cause:	Col.#3 Affects My	Col.#4 Where had I been:	Col.#5 Where was I to Blame:
DAD: Robert	He wasn't around when I needed him. He had very little time or attention for me.	-Security - Ambitions -Personal relations... -Pride	I was selfish dishonest, self-seeking, and fright-ened in my attitudes, the way I treated, the ways I tried to to get even with my father. He was wrong, I was right.	I would come up with alibis, real or imagined, so I wouldn't spend time with him when he did try to do so with me... I blamed him for everything wrong in my life... I drank to oblivion and stayed resentful... I never tried to work things out with him.

Sponsor Here is an example of Institutions:

Sponsee

Col.#1 I'm Resentful at: (Institutions)	Col.#2 The Cause:	Col.#3 Affects My	Col.#4 Where had I been:	Col.#5 Where was I to Blame:
Catholic School	To many rules and regulations.... It was no fun... The teachers were unfair... The students made fun of me...	-Security - Ambitions -Personal relations... -Pride -Self-Esteem	I was selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, and frightened by my irresponsible, immature, and defiant actions I treated fellow students, teachers, assignments, rules and regulations with total disregard and adversity...	I wasted time, resources, and took everything for granted... I lived by my own agenda... I was lazy... I drank at school and abused manipulated, and broke the rules on purpose. I was wrong in my life... I was a professional victim... and victimizer.....

Sponsor Here is an example of Principles:

Col.#1 I'm Resentful at: (Principles)	Col.#2 The Cause:	Col.#3 Affects My	Col.#4 Where had I been:	Col.#5 Where was I to Blame:
Competition	I was never good enough. It was	-Security -	I was selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, and frightened by being	I would lie and cheat so I could win. I would either run & hide, or stay and

always embarrassing and too challenging... I feared confrontation and exposure... I hated to lose...	Pocketbook - Self- esteem -Ambitions -Personal relations... -Pride	passive and aggressive... I lived the role of a victim or victimizer... My Agendas, wants, & desires were based upon ignorance & contempt... I lived a fearful life based on serving only one thing: ME!	fight... I'd never compromise... I was full of fear... I was always talkin' the talk, but never walkin' the walk. I anticipated and hardly participated... I was two- faced, an actor. I drank over it – To escape... and or to deal with it...
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Sponsor Let's move on to "Fears". The Big Book simplifies everything when it comes to our fears. See if you can draw some conclusions about your position on fears as we read in the Big Book **pages 67 & 68**.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor **The directions for the Fear Inventory...**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor **The action we must take & not take... the solution is given, accept and change our attitudes and rely upon God...**

Sponsee 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. Perhaps there is a better way – we think so.

Sponsor **The bottom line is "Fear is Wrong Believing"**. Let's continue, if we have taken steps 1, 2, and 3...

Sponsee For we are now on a different basis; the basis of trusting and relying upon God. We trust infinite God rather than our finite selves. We are in the world to play the role He assigns. Just to the extent that we do as we think He would have us, and humbly rely on Him does He enable us to match calamity with serenity.

Sponsor **Warning**

Sponsee We never apologize to anyone for depending upon our Creator. We can laugh at those who think spirituality the way of weakness. Paradoxically, it is the way of strength. The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage. All men of faith have courage. They trust their God. We never apologize for God. Instead we let him demonstrate through us what he can do.

Sponsor **Pray**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor The kind of fears that the 4th step inventory process deals with, are a specific kind of fear. All human beings have fears, instinctual fears that we are all born with... These fears are reasonable... they motivate us and protect us. The fears that we need to consider in Step 4, are the kind that stifle us that destroy us... The kind of fears that we are taught and instilled with; home grown fears... They are lies that we tell ourselves and/or have been told, and also the denial of the truth, a definite wrong believing that's designed to destroy and/or kill us... So, basically, we need to look at the wrong believing and the lies and denials that we have been living, with, and throughout our alcoholic careers and lives... Here are some examples of the kind of fears that we are talking about...

Sponsee Whether it be a person, institution or principle, have you ever made statements or perhaps had these kinds of conversations with yourself...

- What are they going to do with me?
- What's going to happen if I do that?
- Poor me...
- Why me...
- I can't...
- I'll never make it...
- I'd never survive that...
- I'm no good, a loser...
- I'll show you a thing or two...
- That's beneath me, I refuse to do it!
- What if I lose my job, how would I ever make it?

Sponsor Fear is cunning, baffling and powerful... We must review them, get them on paper, and honestly face them... Let's go to page #5, column #1, and answer the statement "we reviewed our fears thoroughly"... Go back through your life and think of any people, institutions, or principles that you fear... put those items in column #1, and in column #2 answer accordingly, the question; why we had them... one column at a time, one item at a time, vertically until columns #1 & 2 are completed. Read the "mock" examples of the Fears Inventory work sheet...

Sponsee

"Fears Inventory"	Big Book Pages 67 & 68
Column #1	Column #2
<i>We reviewed our fears thoroughly</i>	<i>We asked ourselves why we had them</i>
(People)	What will he do to me if he catches me?
(Childhood Bully)	What will everyone think and say about me if he beats me up? I'm a coward, a weakling, and no good... I'll never survive this...
Danny Diamond	What would happen to me there? Will they beat me? Rape me? What else?
(Institutions)	What about all the other things people
Prison	

(Principles)
The Ten Commandments

tell you about? I would never make it... I would die there for sure...
I'll go to hell for all eternity if I break them and sin... I'll be punished and have to live the rest of my life in a living hell... I'm a bad person and God will hate me if I break them... I must be perfect or else!

Sponsor Fear is silly, it's in our heads... It's wrong believing, it's believing a lie, it's denying the truth... It is relying on self, rather than relying on God. "Pray or be Prey". "Our ideas did not work but the God idea did". "Our troubles we think are of our own making." "Selfishness, self-centeredness that we think is the root of our own troubles." "We can now see how ridiculous our alcoholic fears are, and have been... Fear is simple, alcoholics are complicated..."

Sponsee There are many kinds of harms done that have occurred over the years past... Sex is one of them. It is singled out because it is instinctual, controversial and above all else, it is common ground for all alcoholics, all human beings. The whole point is told to us by the Big Book when it comes to our own conduct over the years past... It tells us "In other words, we treat sex as we would any other problem." With any harmful conduct we apply the solution from the pages of the Big Book.

Sponsor Let's look at the Sex Inventory example on page 6.

Sponsee **The problem is explained. The Bottom line.** 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 procreation. 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 humans if we didn't. What can we do about them?

Sponsor **The Directions Are Given...**

Sponsee We reviewed our 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 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?

Sponsor **The solution is given (prayer). We must change our attitudes and our conduct, our actions...**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor **(Warning)**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor **(Prayer)**

Sponsee In meditation, we ask God what we should do about each specific matter. The right answer will come, if we want it.

Sponsor **(Warning)**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor **(Warning)**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor **(Prayer)**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor **(Warning)**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor To sum up about sex: **(Prayer)**

Sponsee We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the strength to do the right thing.

Sponsor **The cure all...**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor As in the other inventories let's move on to the "Harms Done", example on page 8. Again, keeping in line with the directions, we answer one column at a time vertically, thinking of people,

institutions or principles.

Sponsee "Harms Done" 4th Step Inventory... **Big Book Pages 67-76...**

We review3ed our conduct over the years past. We got this all down on paper and looked at it...

#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
Where had we been selfish, dishonest or inconsiderate?	Whom had we hurt?	Did we unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness?	Where had we been at fault?	What should we have done instead?
Family	(Mom) Dorothy	Yes, suspicion & bitterness	I stole and forged checks = \$250... Lied about it & never paid her back.	Paid my own debts & consequences. Sober, responsible son. Pay back the \$250 and apologize...
Bank	Manager (Bill)	Yes, bitterness...	Jeopardized his job by manipulating our friendship to get cash advances on credit card... I lied...	Used card responsibly, apologize and respect the friendship.
Marriage	(wife) Donna	Yes, all the above...	Ruined the marriage, lied, stole \$1000, cheated, and led her on. Used her, abused our friendship and drank throughout.	Stayed sober, no marriage, just friends... apologize and pay back the \$1000.

Sponsor Consider this equation to step 4: An alcoholic (-) minus alcohol (=) equals; an IC".

"IC" is described as being, what we as alcoholics are left with when we go to step 4... Which is: that we are abstinent but still, according to the Big Book throughout; unmanageable, powerless, insane, beyond human aid, obsessive, vain, abnormal bodily and mentally different, illusional, delusional and many other things... The whole problem comes down to this: (In step 4) We did and probably still have wrong judgment, wrong believing, & wrong actions... Until we take ourselves through the rest of the 12 steps, we are simply living with untreated alcoholism and will try the old game again...

Sponsee You should now have an understanding of who, what, when, where, how and the why of the 4th step. It's directions from the Big Book and a definite and valuable example of the inventory process. If you're still confused or perhaps just not sure, keep coming back... Remember, it's not important that you feel great and totally grasp step 4, in order to complete it. Take a risk and see what happens... We learn by doing, not by feeling, and hopefully you'll be amazed before you are half way through. Its quality not Quantity, Progress not perfection.

Sponsor 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 the Big 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.

Next class will be steps 6, 7, 8, 9...

Serenity Prayer -- CLASS FOUR (steps 6, 7, 8, and 9)

Sponsor Here is some food for thought:

1. If I blame others for my failures I must also credit them for my successes.
2. Making amends is a good way to have the last word!
3. An alcoholic is a master mathematician. He has a fraction of his sanity, a percentage of his marbles; he multiplies his troubles, subtracts from his wallet, adds to his miseries, and divides his family. After joining Alcoholics Anonymous, he subtracts his miseries, multiplies his blessing, adds to his happiness, and divides his time into Twenty-Four hour days. One Day at a Time.
4. Tact is the ability to close my mouth before someone else wants to!!
5. The ability to be big enough, is to be small enough, to let the other guy be as big as he wants to be, or thinks he is.
6. Happiness is contagious. Don't wait to catch it from others. Be a carrier!!
7. Sometimes my feet have trouble following my mouth!
8. And finally, you wouldn't be so concerned about what other people think of you, if you would only stop to think of how seldom they do!

Sponsee IF YOU ABSOLUTELY CANNOT REFRAIN FROM DRINKING, START A SALOON IN YOUR OWN HOME. GIVE YOUR FAMILY \$25.00 TO BUY A GALLON OF WHISKEY. THERE ARE 128 DRINKS IN A GALLON. BUY ALL OF YOUR DRINKS FROM YOUR FAMILY AT A \$1.00 A SHOT, AND IN 4 DAYS WHEN THE GALLON IS GONE, YOUR FAMILY WILL HAVE \$103.00 TO PUT IN THE BANK AND \$25.00 TO BUY ANOTHER GALLON. IF YOU LIVE 10 YEARS AND BUY ALL YOUR BOOZE FROM YOUR FAMILY, AND THEN DIE WITH THE SHAKES AND SNAKES IN YOUR BOOTS, THEY WILL HAVE \$127,300 IN THE BANK. ENOUGH TO BURY YOU RESPECTFULLY, BRING UP YOUR CHILDREN, BUY A HOUSE AND A LOT OF WONDERFUL THINGS – LIKE FORGETTING THEY NEVER KNEW A DRUNK LIKE YOU.

Sponsor This is the fourth class in a series based upon the 1944 pamphlet, "AA an interpretation of our Twelve Steps". It was reprinted throughout the United States and as the result of the way the 12 steps were taught, it was instrumental in the 75% recovery rate back in the 40's. These are classes where we take the steps together. We cannot get this AA program through effortless absorption of ideas it takes action.

Back in the 40's the approach was that just about everyone who came into AA, was taken through a very simple process... The groups that were established would have a secretary who greeted the newcomer at the door. The secretary would then go down the list of members and appoint and introduce the newcomer to a sponsor. It was the sponsors' responsibility to guide the newcomer through the classes and the 12 Steps, right out of the Big Book. There was no hesitation in this recovery process. They blasted through it! There was a 75% success rate! It was always the same package deal... No matter how the newcomer got to AA... Family, friends, doctors, significant others, courts, ministers, etc. Whether the newcomer walked in off the street or came from the hospital, the asylum, -- jail, no matter

how they got to AA they were taken through the same process... No exceptions, no variations... The newcomer was responsibly taken care of. They were given access to one single message. The message was and still is, in the Big Book, period! There was no time wasted on problems outside of alcoholism. AA deals with one message, one purpose, one requirement, and one illness, just one thing: Alcoholism only and alcoholics only! AA cannot be all things to all people.

There are several benefits to look forward to in AA, we won't discover them, sorry to say, if we don't do the work and continue to do the work. If we just wallow around, living with untreated alcoholism, we will go back out and die an alcoholic death. This is always a life and death situation. Our lives are always in the balance. Again, there was no time wasted on problems outside of alcoholism... Just non-stop action in the solution that is in the Big Book period! In review of the last 3 classes let's look at what we have done, and where we are in this recovery process. **From page 72...**

Sponsee we have been trying to get a new attitude, a new relationship with our Creator...

Sponsor Which are steps 1, 2, & 3.

Sponsee ...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 fingers on the weak items in our inventory.

Sponsor Which is step 4.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Which is step 5. Now that we have taken Steps 1 through 5, let's consider these pertinent questions...

Sponsee 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?

Sponsor Remember, always spiritual progress not perfection! We consider these questions very carefully, keeping in mind that more will be revealed as we go forward into the recovery process. So if this is the best you can do, then that is good enough. Let's move on to Step Number 6.

Sponsee Step Number 6... **"We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character."**

Sponsor Let's consider these 7 points. Point number 1.

Sponsee After admitting our wrong thinking and wrong actions in Step 5, we now do something more than "admit" or "confess".

Sponsor Point number 2...

Sponsee We now become READY and WILLING to have God remove the defects in our CHARACTER.

Sponsor Point number 3...

Sponsee Remember it is OUR character we are working on. Not the other fellows. Here is a good place to drop the CRITICAL attitude toward others – the SUPERIOR attitude toward others.

Sponsor Point number 4...

Sponsee We must clean our mind of wrong thinking – petty jealousy – envy – self-pity – remorse, etc.

Sponsor Point number 5...

Sponsee Here is the place to drop RESENTMENTS, one of the biggest hurdles the alcoholic has to get over.

Sponsor Point number 6...

Sponsee What concerns us here is that we drop all thoughts of resentment – anger – hatred – revenge.

Sponsor Point number 7...

Sponsee WE turn our WILL over to God and let HIS WILL direct us how to patiently remove, one by one, all defects in our character.

Sponsor Let's move on to Step number 7 read from the pamphlet.

Sponsee "Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings."

Sponsor The meaning of this step is clear. Prayer ----- Humility. There are three points to consider. Point number 1...

Sponsee Prayer. No man can tell another HOW to pray. Each one has, or works out for himself, his own method. If we cannot pray, we just talk to God and tell Him our troubles. Meditate --- think clearly and cleanly --- and ask God to direct our thoughts. Christ said "ask and ye shall receive." What method is simpler --- merely "ask". If you cannot pray ask God to teach you to pray.

Sponsor Point number 2...

Sponsee Humility. This, simply, is the virtue of being ourselves and realizing how small we are in a big world full of its own trouble. Drop all pretense. We must not be Mr. Big Shot --- bragging, boasting. Shed false pride. Tell the simple, plain, unvarnished truth. Act, walk and talk simply. See the little bit of good that exists in evil man. Forget the little bit of evil that exists in the good man. We must not look down on the very lowest of GOD's creatures or man's mistakes. Think clearly, honestly, fairly, generously.

Sponsor Point number 3...

Sponsee The shortcomings we ask GOD to remove are the very defects in character that make us drink. The

same defects we drink to hide or to get away from.

Sponsor On page 76, line 1 of the Big Book we have the timeline, requirements, directions and explanations to Step 6.

Sponsee 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 – everyone? If we still cling to something we will not let go...

Sponsor And here we have the 6th Step prayer.

Sponsee ... we ask God to help us be willing.

Sponsor It tells us if we are satisfied, willing, and ready, then the requirements, timeline and directions have been met for Step Six. Just be willing and you can proceed. If not, pray for willingness and move on. Remember this equation from here on out; willingness (-) action (=) procrastination... The things that are objectionable, meaning our grosser handicaps which are resentments, fears, and harms done, are God's business to remove in His time these three things are the exact nature of our wrongs. These have been blocking us. Our defects of character, which lead us to our shortcomings, are: that we've been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, frightened, and inconsiderate throughout our lives. This is how we reacted and responded throughout our drinking careers. These defects are our Business. This is the turning point with the principles of willingness and humility. We are guided to do our part and we realize now, that we desperately need God's help, the rest of the steps and all of His living advisors, if we are going to change for the better. So, if you are ready, let's take Step 7 together. We can do this by repeating the Prayer found on **Page 76, line 17**. When we are ready, together we say something like this...

Both: *"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 ---"*

Sponsor We have completed step Seven. In the next paragraph on this same page, we have a time-line, a requirement, and a warning...

Sponsee --- Now we need more action, without which we find that...

Sponsor Here continuing with the same sentence, we are given the 6th and 7th step promise...

Sponsee "Faith without works is dead."

Sponsor Let's look at steps Eight and Nine.

Sponsee **STEP 8 "Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all."**

Sponsor Under this step we will make a written list of those we have harmed. We ask God to let His Will be

done, not OUR will, and ask for the strength and courage to become willing to forget resentments, false pride and make amends to those we have harmed. We must not do this step grudgingly, or as an unpleasant task to be rid of quickly. We must do it WILLINGLY, fairly and humbly --- without Condescension.

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

Sponsor Here is where we make peace with ourselves by making peace with those we have hurt. The amends we make must be direct. We must pay in kind for the hurt we have done them. If we cheated, we must make restitution. If we have hurt their feelings we must ask forgiveness from them. The list of harms may be long but the list of amends is equally long. For every “wrong” we have done, there is a “right” we may do to compensate. There is only one exception. We must develop a sense of justice, a spirit of fairness, an attitude of common sense. If our effort to make amends would create further harm or cause a scandal we will have to skip the “direct amends” and clean the matter up under Step Five. **Staying on page 76, line 17;** this is Step Eight.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor The four kinds of amends are: Number 1

Sponsee Now

Sponsor Two

Sponsee later

Sponsor Three

Sponsee Maybe

Sponsor And Number 4

Sponsee Never

Sponsor Continuing on with **Line 20**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Next we have the 8th Step Prayer.

Sponsee If we haven’t the will to do this, we ask until it comes.

Sponsor Here we have a major requirement for sobriety.

Sponsee Remember it was agreed at the beginning we would go to any lengths for victory over alcohol.

Sponsor We read earlier, that “Faith without works is dead.” Faith in this context simply means: it doesn’t matter what happened to you, as much as what you do now about it. **The work begins here.** Steps 8 and 9 are not about fixing the recovering individual. They are about repairing the damage that was done and taking responsibility for our lives and our actions from here on out. We do this by the principles of Justice and Brotherly Love. Good Judgment and Self-discipline. **We go to page 77, line 3** where we see our real purpose in sobriety.

Sponsee Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us.

Sponsor This is the main attitude we need to carry with us from here on out. This is the reason, requirement, and goal in our lives. To continue, maintain, and grow in the recovery process. So, let’s read about Step Nine and look at four situations, the 3 warnings, 2 requirements, 5 prayers, and directions to the restitution phase... And, these are the tools that we use and attitudes we carry for the amends process. **WE go to line 13, page 77.**

Sponsee a demonstration of good will...

Sponsor skipping 2 lines...

Sponsee When it will serve any good purpose, we are willing to announce our convictions with tact and common sense.

Sponsor skipping 3 lines...

Sponsee ... a better attitude

Sponsor **We go to line 26** for another requirement.

Sponsee We go to him in a helpful and forgiving spirit, confessing our former ill feeling and expressing our regret.

Sponsor In the next paragraph we have a warning.

Sponsee Under no condition do we criticize such a person or argue. Simply we 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 worthwhile 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.

Sponsor These are 12 steps down to humility. Remember to use the spiritual principles of justice and brotherly love, good judgment and self-discipline. Let’s continue, we go to **line 12, page 78** and here we have a requirement.

Sponsee We have made our demonstration, done our part. It’s water over the dam.

Sponsor We take the action, that’s our part; God’s part is the outcome. **We go to line 14** here we have a warning.

Sponsee We do not dodge our creditors. Telling them what we are trying to do, we make no bones about our drinking.

Sponsor **On line 17**, we have another warning.

Sponsee Nor are we afraid of disclosing our alcoholism.

Sponsor **On line 21**, another requirement.

Sponsee Arranging the best deal we can we let these people know we are sorry.

Sponsor **Line 23**, a warning.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor WE must go to any lengths; this is a life and death errand!! Next we have some situations we may have to face in sobriety. Line 26 in the book tells us of 10 such situations. --- Number 1.

Sponsee committed a criminal offense.

Sponsor **skipping a line** numbers 2 & 3.

Sponsee short in our accounts and unable to make good.

Sponsor **Next line** numbers 4 & 5

Sponsee we would be imprisoned or lose our job.

Sponsor **Next line**, situation number 6.

Sponsee a petty offense such as padding the expense account.

Sponsor **Page 79, line 1**, number 7 & 8.

Sponsee Maybe we are divorced and remarried.

Sponsor **Next line**, number 9.

Sponsee haven't kept up the alimony.

Sponsor **Next line**, here we have the last situation, #10.

Sponsee has a warrant out for our arrest.

Sponsor Remember Step 9 is not about fixing me, it is about making the world in which we live better. Now in summary, the book tells us... **Next paragraph same page.**

Sponsee Although these reparations take innumerable forms, there are some general principles which we find guiding. We remind ourselves that we have decided to go to any lengths to find a

spiritual experience.

Sponsor The 9th Step Prayer.

Sponsee We ask to be given strength and direction to do the right thing, no matter what the personal consequences may be.

Sponsor Continue reading **Line 11**, here we have another requirement.

Sponsee We may lose our position or reputation or face jail, but we are willing. We have to be. We must not shrink at anything.

Sponsor We must be willing to make amends wherever possible. And on **Line 15** we have a warning.

Sponsee we are not to be the hasty and foolish martyr who would needlessly sacrifice others to save himself from the alcoholic pit.

Sponsor Remember the 9th Step Prayer. Now we go to **Page 80, line 1** and the book tells us of some more directions and a couple of options to consider before making amends.

Sponsee Before taking drastic action

Sponsor **We skip a line.**

Sponsee have consulted with others, asked God to help.

Sponsor Think about this, when making amends, there are a couple of options to consider, you can go stand in the corner and count yourself and see what you come up with, or run it by your sponsor, and loving advisors, and pray on it! **Line 24**, same page, we have a warning.

Sponsee He saw that he had to place the outcome in God's hands or he would soon start drinking again.

Sponsor You've heard about faith with works, well this is works with faith. We go to **Page 81, line 17**, where we have a requirement.

Sponsee Whatever the situation, we usually have to do something about it.

Sponsor We take action but use caution. Go to **line 25** and here we have a prayer.

Sponsee We are sorry for what we have done and, God willing, it shall not be repeated. More than that we cannot do.

Sponsor A prayer that says, we have limitations so, "Keep it Simple"!! **Go to the last paragraph.**

Sponsee Our design for living is not a one-way street.

Sponsor "A heart that beats only in one direction, eventually dies... We go to **page 82 line 11** for more directions.

Sponsee Good generalship may decide that the problem be attacked on the flank rather than risk a fact-to-

face combat.

Sponsor Use caution! Ask yourself, is it helpful or harmful? Next, we have a warning, **Line 15**.

Sponsee Sometimes we hear an alcoholic say that the only thing he needs to do is to keep sober. Certainly, he must keep sober.

Sponsor Stopping drinking isn't the cure to what is wrong with us. Alcohol is just a symptom and, as we continue to read, the book explains what we have wrought over our drinking careers. Continue reading with the **last paragraph** on this same page.

Sponsee 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 blowing?"

Sponsor **On page 83, line 1** we have another requirement.

Sponsee Yes, there is a long period of reconstruction ahead. We must take the lead.

Sponsor Take responsibility, but, give it time. Next, we have another Prayer, the Family Prayer, **Line 7**.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor In the **next paragraph** we have a major factor for sobriety.

Sponsee The spiritual life is not a theory. *We have to live it.*

Sponsor It is better to act your way into right living than it is to think and feel your way into right living. **Line 15** another major fact.

Sponsee Our behavior will convince them more than our words.

Sponsor Take it easy, **but do it!** Remember, actions are louder than words. **Line 25** has some final requirements.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Remember always, that these are 12 Steps **down** to humility, not 12 Steps to Mr. or Mrs. Magnificent! *Humility isn't thinking less of me, it's thinking of me less.* To be so humble that you can't be humiliated. In summary; there are a lot of components to consider in the restitution phase, the amends process. These must be studied and explored. Use God, the Big Book, and your sponsor. And as long as we do the work and continue to do the work, wherever possible, and remain entirely willing to do our part, this is what will happen, the 9th Step Promises as found on **Page 83 last paragraph**.

Sponsee If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through. (1) We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. (2) We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. (3) We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. (4) No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. (5) That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. (6) We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. (7) Self-seeking will slip away. (8) Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. (9) Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. (10) We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. (11) 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.

Sponsor What phase of our development?

Sponsee Steps 8 & 9, the restitution phase...

Sponsor Amazed before we are halfway through what?

Sponsee Step Nine, the amends process...

Sponsor They will always materialize if we work for them, what work?

Sponsee Steps 10, 11, & 12 daily. This is the work we must do.

Sponsor Trivia: Did you know that there are over 500 promises in the Big Book!! Found within the Title Page and up to and including page 164!! In overview of what we have done, up to and including this class, we look at the recovery process in terms of phases and spiritual principles... Step One. The ADMISSION PHASE.

Sponsee The spiritual principle of SELF-HONESTY.

Sponsor Next is the SUBMISSION PHASE. Step Two

Sponsee The spiritual principle of HOPE.

Sponsor Step Three

Sponsee The spiritual principle of FAITH.

Sponsor Step Four

Sponsee The spiritual principle of COURAGE.

Sponsor Step Five

Sponsee The spiritual principle of INTEGRITY.

Sponsor Step Six

Sponsee The spiritual principle of WILLINGNESS.

Sponsor Step Seven

Sponsee The spiritual principle of HUMILITY.

Sponsor Next is the RESTITUTION PHASE. Step Eight.

Sponsee The spiritual principles of JUSTICE & BROTHERLY LOVE.

Sponsor Step Nine

Sponsee The spiritual principles of GOOD JUDGEMENT & SELF-DISCIPLINE.

Sponsor Next class is the CONSTRUCTION PHASE, Steps 10, 11, & 12. The 12th Step reads: **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 spiritual principles we just read will do 4 things. Number 1...

Sponsee Remove the obsession to drink.

Sponsor Number 2

Sponsee Allow the sufferer to become happy.

Sponsor Number 3

Sponsee Allow us to become useful.

Sponsor Number 4

Sponsee Allow us to become whole.

Sponsor So, we do not practice the 12 steps over and over again we practice the principles that we just stated over and over again!! Next class we move on to the construction phase of AA's program of recovery.

Serenity Prayer -- CLASS FIVE (steps 10, 11, and 12)

Sponsor I hate meetings. I hate Higher Power. I hate anyone who has a program. To all who come in contact with me, I wish you death and I wish you suffering. Allow me to introduce myself. I am the illness of Alcoholism.

Cunning, baffling, powerful, that's me. I have killed millions, and I am pleased. I live to catch you with the element of surprise. I love pretending I am your friend and lover. I have given you comfort, have I not? Wasn't I there when you were lonely? When you wanted to die, didn't you call on me? I was there.

I love to make you hurt, I love to make you cry. Better yet, I love when I make you so numb you can neither hurt nor cry. You can't feel anything at all. This is true glory. I will give you instant gratification and all I ask of you is long term suffering. I've been there for you always. When things were going right in your life, you invited me. You said you didn't deserve these good things and I was the only one who would agree with you. Together we were able to destroy all things good in your life.

People don't take me seriously. They take strokes, heart attacks, even diabetes seriously, fools that they are. They don't know that without my help, these things would not be made possible. I am such a hated illness. And yet I do not come uninvited. You choose to have me. Many have chosen me over reality and peace.

I, more than you hate me, I hate all of you who have a 12 Step Program. Your program, your meetings, your Higher Power all weakens me and I can't function in the manner I am accustomed to.

Now I must lie here quietly. You don't see me, but I am growing, bigger than ever. When you only exist; I may live. When you live, I only exist. But I am here... until we meet again... if we meet again... I wish you death and suffering.

I'M YOUR ILLNESS...

Sponsee This is what you would get if 99.9% is good enough:

- 200,000 incorrect drug prescriptions per year.
- 16,000 pieces of mail lost by the U.S. Postal Service each hour.
- 70 incorrect surgical operations each day.
- 13 newborn babies dropped at birth by doctors each day.
- 22,000 checks deducted from the wrong bank accounts each hour.
- 103 missed heart beats per person per day.
- 10 minutes without electricity, water, heating/cooling and telephones (Includes traffic lights each week).
- 10 commercial airline crashes per day.
- OH, AND BY THE WAY; NOT TO MENTION
- NO AA & NO SOBRIETY**

Sponsor We have been taking the steps as they were taken back in the 1940's. Our teacher is the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, which is our text for recovery. We learned earlier that we are suffering from an illness which only a spiritual solution will conquer. We are well on our way to that spiritual awakening, which will produce the personality change that will bring about our recovery from alcoholism. Before we get into this class, which is about the growth steps 10, 11, & 12, let's look at our progress so far... In the first class we made two admissions. Number one.

Sponsee That we were alcoholic.

Sponsor Number two...

Sponsee That we could not manage our lives, and we learned that we have a physical allergy and a mental obsession. An illness called alcoholism and the only relief is entire abstinence. In the second class we answered two questions.

Sponsor Number one...

Sponsee Were we willing to believe in a Power greater than ourselves? Even though it was impossible for any of us to fully define or comprehend that power, which is God.

Sponsor Number two...

Sponsee Were we willing to surrender ourselves to whatever concept we had of God? We learned that God was within us and we needed to make contact with him. Also, we discovered the things that were blocking us off from God and we explored the paramount importance of sitting in counsel with God and another, sharing our life story. In the third and fourth class we learned that the work begins here! We had to have God's help and all of His loving advisors through the rest of the steps if we were going to change for the better. Also, we learned we must make restitution for harms done, to do our part in eliminating our defects of character and shortcomings. So this is where we are tonight.

Sponsor First, Step 10...

Sponsee We are going to learn about personal inventory.

Sponsor Second, Step 11...

Sponsee We are going to learn about contact with God.

Sponsor Third, Step 12...

Sponsee We are going to explore the exact, precise result of the twelve steps. The early AA's told us to take steps 1 through 9 once and to take steps 10, 11, & 12 daily for the rest of our lifetime. Steps 1 through 9 bring us into recovery and get us sober they do not keep us sober Steps 10, 11, & 12 keep us sober through the spiritual principle of perseverance...

Sponsor Which is Step 10.

Sponsee The spiritual principles of awareness and belief...

Sponsor Which is Step 11.

Sponsee The spiritual principles of love and service.

Sponsor Which is Step 12. That's how it was done back in the 40's and it worked! Consider this, in Chapter 5, "How it Works", **pages 59 and 60**, the 12 steps are displayed. If we look closely we will find some interesting facts. Notice the words, continued, sought and improved, carry and practice. These key actions in Steps 10, 11, & 12, our daily reprieve as the book calls it, are actions that we do in the "now" time frame. According to the Big Book, we do Steps 1 through 9 once, and then do steps 10, 11, & 12 for the rest of our lifetime. Let's look at Step 10.

Sponsee "**Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.**"

Sponsor In coming to AA we usually will have a pretty big inventory to work on, as in Steps 4, 8, & 9. But even after that, we will not be perfect. We have a long way to go. We will continue to make mistakes and will be inclined to do some more wrong thinking and wrong doing. So, at intervals, we **CONTINUE** to take inventory. Here the purpose is to check on our progress. We certainly cannot be perfect so the need for regular inventory is apparent. These inventories are **PERSONAL**. We confine the inventory to ourselves. We are the one who needs it. Never mind the other fellow. He too, is probably troubled and will have to make his own Inventory.

Sponsee When we make these inventories, probably the best way to start is to go over, one by one, each of the twelve steps and try to discover just what, in these Steps, we are not following. The businessman HAS to make a physical inventory from time to time. We have to make a personal inventory of ourselves from time to time if we want to recover from a serious mental illness.

Sponsor On **page 84, line 16**, for Step 10 in the Big Book; we have a timeline for Step 10, **Chapter 6 "Into Action"**

Sponsee This thought brings us to Step 10, which suggests...

Sponsor And here we have the explanation of Step 10 which reads...

Sponsee ...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 Sprit.

Sponsor Followed by the 10th Step requirements...

Sponsee Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness.

Sponsor Another timeline tells us:

Sponsee This is not an overnight matter. It should continue for our lifetime.

Sponsor Next we are given the 10th Step directions...

Sponsee Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear.

Sponsor Which is Step 4.

Sponsee When these crop up, we ask GOD at once to remove them.

Sponsor Which are Steps 6 & 7.

Sponsee WE discuss them with someone immediately...

Sponsor Which is Step 5.

Sponsee ...and make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone.

Sponsor Which is Steps 8 and 9. Remember, **from page 77, line 3**, we studied that our real purpose, is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us. Continuing on reading in the **same line...**

Sponsee Then we resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help. Love and tolerance of others is our code.

Sponsor The 10th Step is actually using the following steps daily as needed, Steps 4 through 9. This daily action, through the spiritual principle of perseverance, provides growth in understanding and effectiveness in our personal lives. This is how God wants us to live: To stay sober and keep spiritually fit, mentally fit, emotionally fit, socially and physically fit. This we do in order to live to good purpose under all conditions on an ongoing basis. The precise result of this daily action of Step ten is; The 10th Step promises.

Sponsee And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone, even alcohol. For by this time sanity will have returned.

Sponsor This is where Step Two is completed. We are restored to sanity. So, we don't really take Step Two, Step Two takes us. Our belief and hope in God has paid off. Continue reading on the same line and page.

Sponsee 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 it 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.

Sponsor Here we have a warning: Remember that our lives are always in the balance. In the **next paragraph**

on the same page we read.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor We gave our will and our lives over to the care of God in Step 3, when we decided to go through with the steps. Now, in Step 10, He gives our will and our lives back. Because, we know what to do: to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us. We cannot stay sober on the past action we took in steps 1 through 9; the steps that brought us this far. We cannot keep sober on yesterday's spiritual experiences. We must create new spiritual experiences daily. So, this fit spiritual condition is only temporary. This daily action of Step 10 is one third of the way to create that temporary condition. One third of the "precise" way to a daily reprieve. Let's take Step Ten together. Let's say the quote on Page 85, lines 19 and 20 together: "How can I best serve Thee – Thy will (not mine) be done." That is Step 10. But the 10th Step alone won't keep this fit spiritual condition. Staying on, **page 85, next to the last paragraph** the book gives us a summary or an over-view of where we are in the recovery process.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor In summary of everything we have done, Steps 1 through 10, the book tells us: If we have carefully followed these precise directions, we will have received the following spiritual gifts: strength, inspiration, direction, knowledge, power, His Spirit, God-consciousness, and have begun to develop this vital sixth sense. The timeline says: We must go further, more action. Let's move on to Step 11.

Sponsee ***Step 11 "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understand Him praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."***

Sponsor Let's consider these three points. Point number one...

Sponsee We pray each night --- every night --- a prayer of thanks.

Sponsor Point number two...

Sponsee We pray each morning --- every morning --- for help and guidance.

Sponsor Point number three...

Sponsee When we are lonely, confused, uncertain, we pray. Most of us find it well to:

Sponsor Here we have 8 items to consider. Number one...

Sponsee Choose, for each day, a "quiet time" to meditate on the program on your progress in it.

Sponsor Number two...

Sponsee Keep conscious contact with God and pray to make the contact closer.

Sponsor Number three...

Sponsee We Pray that our will be laid aside and that God's will direct us.

Sponsor Number four...

Sponsee Pray for calmness --- quiet --- relaxation --- rest.

Sponsor Number five...

Sponsee Pray for strength and courage to enable us to do today's work today.

Sponsor Number six...

Sponsee Pray for forgiveness for yesterday's errors.

Sponsor Number seven...

Sponsee Ask for hope for better things tomorrow.

Sponsor Number eight...

Sponsee Pray for what we feel we need. We will not get what we "want". We will get what we "need". What is good for us.

Sponsor Let's look at Step 11 in the Big Book **last paragraph on page 85**. Here we have some requirements. These are definite and valuable requirements.

Sponsee Step Eleven suggests prayer and meditation. We shouldn't be shy on this matter of prayer. Better men than we, are using it constantly.

Sponsor Next we have one of the many promises given as we explore Step 11... **Continuing with the same line...**

Sponsee It works, if we have the proper attitude and work at it,

Sponsor Next, **on the same line**, the book warns us not to take this lightly... That prayer and meditation are precise and of major importance. It would be easy to be vague about this matter. Yet, we believe we can make some definite and valuable suggestions.

Sponsee Prayer and meditation is simply spending time with God as you understand Him. Prayer is talking with God. Meditation is listening to God. Prayer and meditation is putting God in on everything. So what is our part or purpose in doing this prayer and meditation daily? To gain the wisdom to know the difference between God's will for us and our will for us. To feed ourselves with spiritual nourishment and to allow God to guide us. The sentiment down through the ages has been summed up in this saying: "Pray or be Prey."

Sponsor So, these are the directions on how to continue to build our way to being spiritually fit for one day. Let's continue to look at Step 11... Notice that the book is directing us to steps 10, 11, & 12, and here we have a timeline explanation, requirements and directions to create that daily reprieve beginning with **Page 86, line 5**.

Sponsee When we retire at night, we constructively review our day.

Sponsor Next is step 4...

Sponsee Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid?

Sponsor Followed by Steps 8 & 9...

Sponsee Do we owe an apology?

Sponsor And next we have Step 5...

Sponsee Have we kept something to ourselves which should be discussed with another person, or our sponsor, at once?

Sponsor And the following questions are all Step 4...

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Here we have a warning.

Sponsee But we must be careful not to drift into worry, remorse or morbid reflection, for that would diminish our usefulness to others.

Sponsor Next we have Steps 6 & 7, and the forgiveness prayer.

Sponsee After making our review we ask God's forgiveness and inquire what corrective measures should be taken.

Sponsor The paragraph we just studied is actually Step 10. Which as we read earlier is steps 4 – 9 daily as needed. Next we have another timeline and some more direction. The **next paragraph on the same page**.

Sponsee On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin...

Sponsor And here we have the thinker's prayer.

Sponsee ...we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives.

Sponsor Next we have a Promise... one of the many results from Step 11...

Sponsee Under these conditions we can employ our mental faculties with assurance...

Sponsor Followed by a major requirement.

Sponsee ...for after all God gave us brains to use.

Sponsor Another promise.

Sponsee Our thought-life will be placed on a much higher plane when our thinking is cleared of wrong motives.

Sponsor Next we have another time-line and some more directions. **Page 86, last paragraph.**

Sponsee In thinking about our day we may face indecision. We may not be able to determine which course to take.

Sponsor Here we have the indecision prayer...

Sponsee Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision.

Sponsor More requirements...

Sponsee We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle...

Sponsor Another promise...

Sponsee We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while.

Sponsor Continuing with our study of Step 11, **page 87, line 1**, we have another promise.

Sponsee What used to be the hunch or the occasional inspiration gradually becomes a working part of the mind.

Sponsor Now we have a warning...

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Followed by a promise...

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor The next paragraph, same page, has another time-line and some more precise direction.

Sponsee We usually conclude the period of meditation with a prayer...

Sponsor And here we have the all-day prayers...

Sponsee ...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.

Sponsor Another warning.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor In the **next paragraph** we have some options for Step 11...

Sponsee 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. Make use of what they offer.

Sponsor So, pray, read, write, and get advice. More directions and another time-line are found in the **last paragraph on the same page**.

Sponsee As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful...

Sponsor The Doubter's Prayer...

Sponsee ...and ask for the right thought or action.

Sponsor A requirement.

Sponsee We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show...

Sponsor **Page 88, line 1.** The All-Purpose Prayer...

Sponsee ...humbly saying to ourselves we are no longer running the show. Thy will be done.

Sponsor Another Promise.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor In the **next line** we have a major promise for Step 11.

Sponsee It works, it really does.

Sponsor **Next line**, we have a major fact for us alcoholics.

Sponsee We alcoholics are undisciplined. *So* we let God discipline us in the simple way we have just outlined.

Sponsor But this is not all there is action and more action. "Faith without works is dead." In summary, Step Eleven is an exclusive relationship with God, a life of prayer and meditation. Step Eleven equips us to live in harmony with, and to rightly relate ourselves to God and our fellows. Step Eleven also prepares us through the principles of awareness and belief, to be of some value to some drunk along the line. Study this book, don't just read it!! It gives us clear-cut directions on how to find the Power, on how to use the Power, and how to keep the Power that is greater than us... GOD!!

Let's take a moment of silent meditation and listen for God's guidance, that quiet voice, God's message... (Spend a minute in silence together.)

The next chapter is entirely devoted to *Step Twelve*.

Sponsee **Step Twelve** – *"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."*

Sponsor This step logically separates into three parts. Part Number One. The Spiritual Experience. The following is a summary and excerpts from **Appendices II** in the **Big Book**.

Sponsee The terms "Spiritual Experience" and "Spiritual Awakenings" used here and in the book of Alcoholics Anonymous, mean, upon careful reading, 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 growing membership of thousands of alcoholics such transformations, though frequent, are by no means the rule. Most of our experiences are what 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 ourselves.

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 principles. Willingness, Honesty, and Open Mindedness are the Essentials of Recovery, but these are indispensable.

Sponsor Part Number Two: Carry the message to others.

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

Sponsor Here we have eleven requirements to follow, --A.

Sponsee By attending EVERY meeting of our own group.

Sponsor **B**

Sponsee By making calls...

Sponsor **C**

Sponsee By speaking at group meetings...

Sponsor **D**

Sponsee By supporting our group financially to make group meetings possible...

Sponsor **E**

Sponsee By assisting at meetings...

Sponsor **F**

Sponsee By setting a good example of complete sobriety...

Sponsor **G**

Sponsee By owning, and loaning to new comers, a copy of the AA Big Book...

Sponsor **H**

Sponsee By encouraging those who find the way difficult.

Sponsor **I**

Sponsee By serving as an officer or on group committees or special assignment when asked.

Sponsor **J**

Sponsee By doing all of the foregoing cheerfully and willingly.

Sponsor **K**

Sponsee We do any or all of the foregoing at some sacrifice to OURSELVES WITH Definite Thought of Developing UNSELFISHNESS IN OUR OWN CHARACTER.

Sponsor Part Number Three: WE PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor How do we go about it? Here we have seven components for sobriety. – **A.**

Sponsee We resolve to live our life, one day at time – just 24 hours.

Sponsor **B**

Sponsee We pray each day for guidance that day.

Sponsor **C**

Sponsee We pray each night – thanks for that day.

Sponsor **D**

Sponsee We resolve to keep our heads and to forego any anger, no matter what situation arises.

Sponsor **E**

Sponsee We are patient.

Sponsor **F**

Sponsee We keep calm – relaxed.

Sponsor **G**

Sponsee Now, and most important, whatever LITTLE ordinary situation as well as BIG situations arise, we look at it calmly and fairly, with an open mind. Then act on it in exact accordance with the simple true principles that AA has taught and will teach us.

Sponsor 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 AA, 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 friction, discontent, and unhappy rebellious moods that lead right back to our chief fault of drinking. We go to **page 89, line 1, Chapter 7, “Working with Others”**, where the book tells us of some more promises to look forward to. We continue to build our way to a daily reprieve. Here the book tells us the major requirement for sobriety, which just happens to be a major promise for sobriety.

Sponsee PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics.

Sponsor Followed by another major promise...

Sponsee It works when other activities fail.

Sponsor The directions read...

Sponsee This is our twelfth suggestion Carry this message to other alcoholics.

Sponsor What message? The chapter the Doctors Opinion and first 103 pages of this book. Let's read the rest of the 12th Step Promises in **line 5, page 89**.

Sponsee You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others 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 we 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.

Sponsor The rest of this chapter is clear cut directions on how to work with other alcoholics. It is a sponsor's guide. Let's take a look at the directions. They are very clear so, when you go out to work with other alcoholics you'll be armed with the facts! Let's begin with **line 23 on page 89**. Here we have a major fact, and some major requirements for Step 12.

Sponsee ...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.

Sponsor We go to **page 90, line 1**, to continue to read and study Step 12.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor It's been said, that whatever gets your attention first, gets you... So, we just plant the seed... and realize, at the least, you've ruined their drinking. **We go to line 12...**

Sponsee ...put yourself in his place, to see how you would like him to approach you if the tables were turned.

Sponsor Each and every alcoholic, sober or not, teaches us very valuable lessons about ourselves and about our own personal recovery. Carrying the message is always a win-win situation. We have nothing to lose except our egotism. So, humbly and gratefully, we considerately carry AA's message. **Moving to the last paragraph...**

Sponsee If he does not want to see you, never force yourself upon him.

Sponsor WE carry the message, we don't force it. Some of us change when we see the light. Most of us change when we feel the heat. Next we go to **page 91, line 18**.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor We gain their confidence. Remember that the one who makes light of things is least likely to stumble around in the dark. **Moving on to page 92, line 1.**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor We share our story. We tell of the obsession of the mind and the insanity of the first drink. It's been said that an alcoholic, is like a whiskey bottle --- all neck and belly and no head. Interesting analogy isn't it? **We go to line 15.**

Sponsee And be careful not to brand him as an alcoholic. Let him draw his own conclusion.

Sponsor Prospects learn self-honesty in their own time. Remember recovery is an inside job. **We go to line 21.**

Sponsee ...speak of alcoholism as an illness, a fatal malady. Talk about the conditions of body and mind which accompany it.

Sponsor We tell of the allergy, the obsession, and the phenomenon of craving that alcoholism is an illness, affliction, and a malady that carries over into sobriety. We go to **page 93, line 3.**

Sponsee 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 can live by spiritual principles.*

Sponsor It is easier to stay out of a situation than it is go get out of a situation, so we stay out of controversy. **We go to page 94, line 4.**

Sponsee 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 own recovery.

Sponsor We talk of the Steps, the solution, and our honest motives. Realize this: eventually every alcoholic takes their last drink. Those of us in AA sober; have lived to tell others about it. **We go to the last paragraph.**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor When we first came to AA; we heard people talking about things that we, personally, were trying to keep everyone else from finding out about... **We go to Page 95, line 8.**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor We don't lecture. We look them in the eye. Give them a copy of the Big Book. Tell them your story. Take them to meetings. The only time we look down at another alcoholic is when we are bending over to help them up. **We go to the next paragraph.**

Sponsee If he is not interested in your solution, if he expects you to act only as a banker for financial difficulties or a nurse for his sprees, you may have to drop him until he changes his mind.

Sponsor We do not enable!! When we first came to AA, we knew the price of everything, but the value of absolutely nothing. **We go to the last paragraph.**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor We support and encourage them. From **Page 31 line 12** --- "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." And just a personal note: we've taken our hats off at many a grave side. **We go to Page 96, line 4.**

Sponsee We find it a waste of time to keep chasing a man who cannot or will not work with you.

Sponsor Sponsorship is a two-way street. Cooperation is essential. Remember that sometimes prospects just get homesick for hell. **We go to line 16.**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor We offer them temporary sponsorship. Back when we were drinking, we didn't care much who we drank with. Ironical that we can be particular about who we get sober with. **We go to Page 97, line 3.**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor Ask yourself, is it helpful or harmful? Remember this, when I help another dig their way out of their own trouble, the hole that is left over, is the grave for my own sorrow. **We go to line 25.**

Sponsee Though an alcoholic does not respond, there is no reason why you should neglect his family.

Sponsor Alcoholism has many faces... many casualties... It is a family illness, besides our aim is only to be helpful... not conditional... **We go to page 98, line 2.**

Sponsee The men, who cry for money and shelter before conquering alcohol, are on the wrong track.

Sponsor This is the wrong approach, from Page 64, line 27 & 28, when the spiritual malady is overcome, we

straighten out mentally and physically. **We go to line 8.**

Sponsee 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. ...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.

Sponsor This is the right track, from **page 52, line 26 & 27...** "Our ideas did not work, but the God idea did." Think about this: for most alcoholic's skid row is between their ears. **We go to Page 99, line 10.**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor We tell them that it takes time and don't give up before the miracle happens. Besides, we didn't get drunk with everyone out there, so, we're not going to get sober with everyone in here. **We go to the last line on this page.**

Sponsee Remind the prospect that his recovery is not dependent upon people. It is dependent upon his relationship with God.

Sponsor God is everything; he is the solution ... period!!! **We go to page 100, line 5.**

Sponsee Both you and the new man must walk day by day in the path of spiritual progress. If you persist, remarkable things will happen.

Sponsor What we just read, is one of the finest descriptions of sponsorship in this book. Food for thought... If you want leave footprints in the sand, be sure to wear your work boots. **We go to the last paragraph.**

Sponsee Assuming we are spiritually fit we can do all sorts of things alcoholics are not supposed to do.

Sponsor From page 85, lines 16, 17, & 18... "What we really have is a daily reprieve, contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition. We are recovered." **We go to Page 101, line 7.**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor We change ourselves to meet life's conditions. It is not the other way around, remembering always that our problems occur from the inside out. It's been said that if you find yourself in a hole, all you need to do is stop digging. **We go to line 23.**

Sponsee So our rule is not to avoid a place where there is drinking, *if we have a legitimate reason for being there.*

Sponsor Anyone can get drunk, it takes effort to be an alcoholic.

The point is that we are pursuing spiritual principles and motives in Step 12. Ask yourself – Is it God's will, goodwill, or is it my-will, ill-will? **We go to Page 102, line 3.**

Sponsee 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!

Sponsor The difference between a stumbling block and stepping stone is how you use it. Think about it! **We go to line 23.**

Sponsee 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 spots on earth on such an errand. Keep on the firing line of life with these motives and God will keep you unharmed.

Sponsor Let's consider this analogy of AA's program of recovery from alcoholism. We made an application for the Job in Steps 1, 2, and 3... We made a resume for the job in Step 4... We made an interview for the job in Step 5... We made a trial period of employment for the job in Steps 6, 7, 8, and 9... And now our Job Description is Steps 10, 11, and 12 daily: The Daily Reprieve... The Job Title: Recovered Alcoholic. – The place of Employment: The Firing Line of Life... And the Job: Sobriety... **We go to Page 103, line 3.**

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor We are all, as recovered alcoholics, living examples of spiritual principles, ideals, and attitudes. We are each individual, AA... We are God's loving advisors and loving sponsors... the definition of what AA is all about is simply the art of helping another alcoholic grow up without putting them down. **Let's continue studying, line 14.**

Sponsee Some day we hope that Alcoholic 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!!*

Sponsor Remember always that alcoholism comes in people, not in bottles. So, as members of AA it is our duty to carry AA's message that is in this book, and to keep the message pure. There's more than meets the eye when it comes to alcoholism, be careful, carry AA's message and not your own mess. Just another bit of food for thought: The difference between us and God is that God doesn't try to play us. Now let's have some final thoughts about AA's program of recovery. **We go to Page 164, line 12.**

Sponsee God will constantly disclose more to you and to us.

Sponsor Followed by the Twelfth Step Prayer...

Sponsee Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick.

Sponsor Next we have a Major Promise, and some warnings, to the daily reprieve, the fit spiritual

condition...

Sponsee The answers will come, if your own house is in order.

Sponsor And next a Major Warning to Step 10...

Sponsee But obviously you cannot transmit something YOU haven't got.

Sponsor Followed by a Major Warning to Step 11...

Sponsee See to it that your relationship with Him is right...

Sponsor Here we have another Major Promise to Step 12...

Sponsee ...and great events will come to pass for you and countless others. This is the Great Fact for us.

Sponsor Now the next paragraph contains the whole deal. The time-lines, requirements, directions and explanation of sobriety. Step 11... Which Reads.....

Sponsee Abandon yourself to God as you understand God.

Sponsor Next is Step 10. Which Reads...

Sponsee Admit your faults to Him and to your fellow. Clear away the wreckage of your past.

Sponsor And Step 12... which reads...

Sponsee Give freely of what you find and join us.

Sponsor And here we are given AA's final promise.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor And the last line is a simple AA prayer--and our hope for all of you...

Sponsee May God bless you and keep you --- until then.

Sponsor This is Step 12: the principles of love and service to *God and our fellows*. This is the highest level of living. Nothing is higher. This is the main reason for our existence. This is why we have been spared... "We have what the next alcoholic needs, the kind of love that has no price tag." **On page 132, Chapter 9, "The Family Afterward".**

Sponsee We have been speaking to you of serious, sometimes tragic things. We have been dealing with alcohol in its worst aspect. But we aren't a glum lot. If newcomers could see no joy or fun in our existence, they wouldn't want it.

Sponsor "AND here is another main requirement for sobriety...

Sponsee We absolutely insist on enjoying life.

Sponsor Let's continue. Here we have a major requirement to Alcoholics Anonymous: That states simply: We, as Alcoholics Anonymous, have one purpose, one requirement, one message, one reason, and one single responsibility... and that deals with alcoholics and alcoholism only" Period!

Sponsee We try not to indulge in cynicism over the state of the nations, nor do we carry the world's troubles on our shoulders. When we see a man sinking in to the mire that is alcoholism, we give him first aid and place what we have at his disposal. For his sake we do recount and almost relive the horrors of our past.

Sponsor Next, we have a Major Warning for the individual member that says we cannot be all things to all people.

Sponsee But those of us who have tried to shoulder the entire burden and trouble of others find we are soon overcome by them.

Sponsor **Next paragraph**, more requirements.

Sponsee So we think cheerfulness and laughter make for usefulness. Outsiders are sometimes shocked when we burst into merriment over a seemingly tragic experience out of the past. But why shouldn't we laugh.

Sponsor Consider this equation when it comes to sobriety: Tragedy plus time equals comedy. Continue in the **next line**, here we have the big pay off!!

Sponsee We have recovered and have been given the power to help others.

Sponsor **Continue, last paragraph**. A fact... A requirement...

Sponsee Everybody knows that those in bad health, and those who seldom play, do not laugh much. So let each family play together or separately, as much as their circumstances warrant.

Sponsor Another main requirement...

Sponsee We are sure God wants us to be happy, joyous, and free.

Sponsor Warning... and the bottom line to our personal recovery.

Sponsee We cannot subscribe to the belief that this life is a vale of tears, though it once was just that for many of us. But it is clear that we made our own misery. God didn't do it.

Sponsor A Final Requirement... That says: "Adversity is our greatest teacher... and that these are 12 Steps to God..."

Sponsee Avoid then, the deliberate manufacture of misery, but if trouble comes, cheerfully capitalize it as an opportunity to demonstrate His omnipotence.

Sponsor **We go to page 15, line 4... Chapter 2 "There is a Solution"** to sum up AA's program of recovery, the summary says it all.

Sponsee 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.

Sponsor **There Was nothing left for us, but to pick up the simple kit of spiritual tools laid at our feet. FOUND IN THE BIG BOOK OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS!!!** Continue reading **line 13...**

Sponsee 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 those things for us which we could never do by ourselves.

Sponsor Welcome, you have completed the 12 Steps. Congratulations. May God bless you and keep you, as you trudge the road of happy destiny. Next **Read pages 84 through 103** to discuss with your sponsor.

