

SPIRITUAL



CARTEL

Presents The
WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

2 PART WORKSHOP



With

HOWARD E

THE BIG BOOK COMES ALIVE WORKSHOPS

ALTAMONTE SPRINGS, FLORIDA

TAKING CRITICAL NEWCOMERS THROUGH THE STEPS
(according to the Big Book)

IN **2** DAYS

Wednesday 22nd January & Wednesday 29th January 2025

PRINT THIS WORK BOOK AND BRING YOUR BIG BOOKS



Dedication

This work would never have happened without the initial impetus of Chris Raymer and the ongoing support, understanding and love of my Muse, Cathy McCague-Eber, the one true love of my life. And, of course, to Waldo.

Introduction

If your doctor told you a big malignant tumor latched onto your cerebral cortex, and then suggested dietary modifications, vitamin supplements and exercise as your treatment, you'd find a new doctor - **IMMEDIATELY!!!** And yet this is exactly what the anonymous fellowships often do when a new person arrives-- we suggest 90 meetings in 90 days, a phone list, and a bunch of other "disease management" tactics that are certainly valuable but aren't going to deal with the root problem.

For the chronic addict/alcoholic, the 12 steps are the aggressive treatment that offers the best chance for eradicating the root cause of our destructive behaviour.

In my experience, the majority of our meetings are not about the aggressive treatment of the condition. They are more like Hospice Care.

Of course, that's just my opinion..... I could be wrong

#1 TUMOR PROGNOSIS

When a newcomer enters the Twelve-step community, whether from a treatment centre, detox, or off the street -- they pass through a "window of opportunity" - a time when they are most "teachable." How long does a person remain in this state? In other words, how much time does it take a newcomer to realize the pain he or she is experiencing in recovery is worse than the pain they remember when using? How much time do we have to alleviate this pain?

Do we have a year? Absolutely not! Do we have a month? Sometimes we do, sometimes we don't. Do we have a week? For many, that may be pushing it. What if we only have today? What if we assume the newcomer is going to relapse tomorrow (and in many cases this is true). Why not take them through the steps today in order to prevent that relapse tomorrow?

"We want our prospects to have the desperation of drowning men" (28:2) and then take six to ten months to get them thru the "recovery portion...the First 164 pages of the book." Is it any wonder AAWS puts our "success rate at less than 10 percent" versus 75% according to the Big Book (pgXX/Foreward to Second Edition) or 93% according to Clarence Snyder (DB&GOT pg261)."

TRIAGE & QUALIFICATION:

58:2 : "If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it. Then you are ready to take certain steps."

Q #1 : But what exactly do we mean by "what we have"?

A #1 : See page **25:1** to **25:2** (aka "The A.A. Brochure")

"We have found much of heaven.... which we could never do by ourselves."

Q #2 : But what exactly do we mean by "going to any length to get **IT**"? ("IT = a life run by God) as detailed on pgs **59-60** / The Twelve Steps)

“WILLING TO GO TO ANY LENGTHS”?

1. Willing to be QUALIFIED? (Read: **20:5 to 21:1**)

(Hard vs Real)

-- Some folks DO get there by mistake!

2. Willing to take the Steps QUICKLY? {Yes, it is a race!}

3. Willing to attend specific meetings early on? (Lit based)

See handout: **No1**

4. Willing to focus on JUST the Big Book until Steps are “done”
And bring your copy to every meeting you attend?

5. Willing to be completely HONEST? (eg: Sex, Checks & Meds)

6. Willing to take a service commitment? NOW! (page **129:3**)

7. Willing to learn the Traditions?

"THIS IS A THREE FOLD DISEASE..." (Add in a blank area of last page of "Doctors Opinion")

This is a THREE FOLD DISEASE

(add in the blank area of xxxii)

- 1) BODY:** *PHYSICAL ALLERGY* / Craving (Drs. Opinion to page 23)
- 2) MIND:** *MENTAL OBSESSION* (pages 23 - 43)
- 3) SPIRIT:** *SPIRITUAL MALADY* (pages 44 - 64)
Unmanageability & Untreated Alcoholism

BODY: Lack of control Craving

Dr Op xxiv study version (Pg xxvi 4th Edit): "...that the body is quite as abnormal as his mind. "..... But we are sure that our bodies... is incomplete."... We have an allergy to alcohol"

Define "ALLERGY"

Dr Op xxvi (xxvii): First full paragraph: "We believe and so suggested..... alcohol in any form at all..... difficult to solve".

Explain: "alcohol in any form at all"

MIND: "This brings us up to the Mental Component of our malady: The Obsession."

- Define Obsession**
- Pg **22:4** (4th Line) - Pg **23:1** (5th Line) "Once he takes...rather than his body"
- Pg **23:4** >> end Pg **24:2**: "The tragic truth.... On a hot stove."
- #20A Screen Shot:** "Note: REVIEW & Note opposite (or bottom of page 24 to 25)"

We've lost the power to choose to STOP once we start

Because of the Physical Allergy and

We've lost the power to choose NOT TO START

Because of the Mental Obsession

The OBSESSION makes us DRINK

The ALLERGY makes us DRUNK

OR:

The OBSESSION condemns us to DRINK

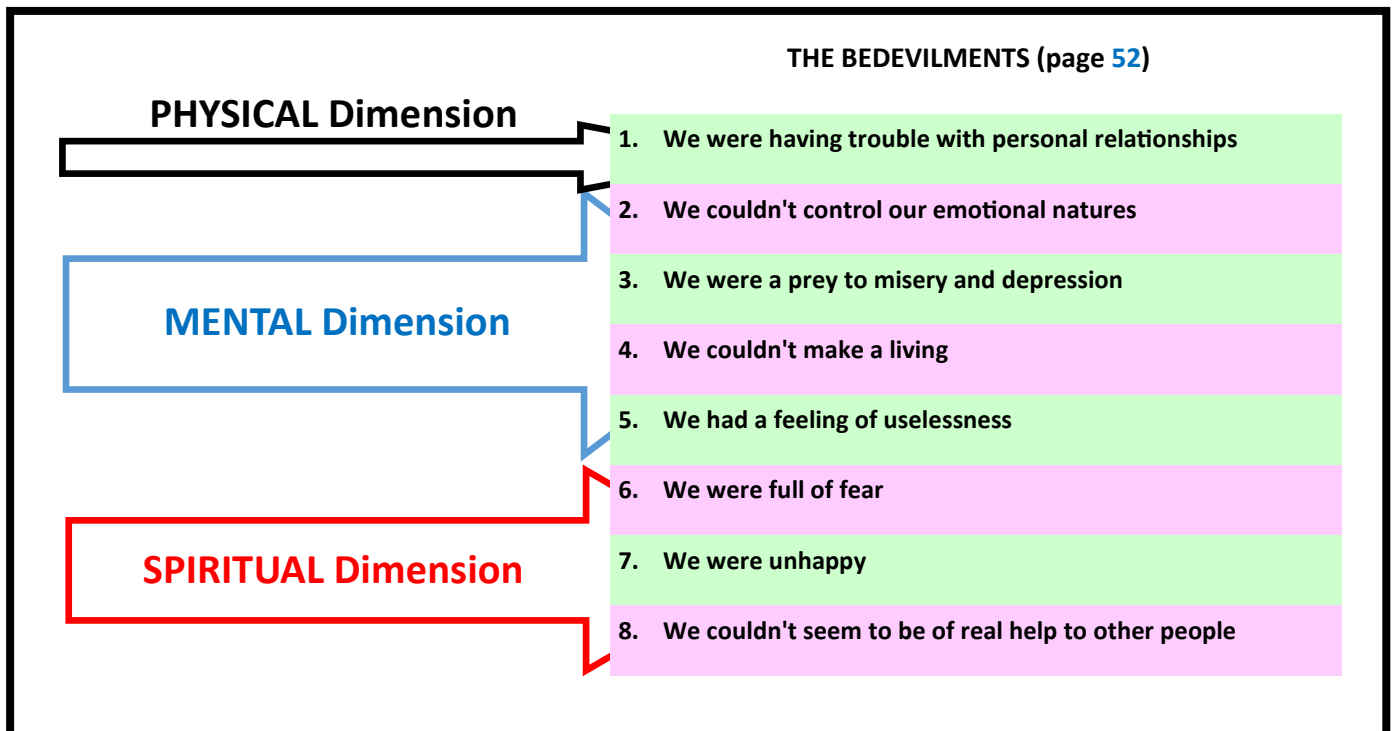
And the ALLERGY condemns us to DIE

“The SPIRITUAL MALADY”: Unmanageability

Dr Op xxvi (xxviii 4th Edit) “(We) are restless, irritable and discontented, unless (we) can again experience the sense of ease and comfort which comes at once by taking a few drinks...This is repeated over and over..” **Question:** What exactly is “repeated over and over”? **Answer:** Periods of unbearable drunkenness followed by periods of unbearable sobriety followed by periods of unbearable drunkenness followed by periods of unbearable sobriety.....

Pg 51:0 (3rd & 4th lines):
 “Leaving aside the drink question... why living was so unsatisfactory,”

“The Bedevilments” (Pg 52:2) - (Read & Number)

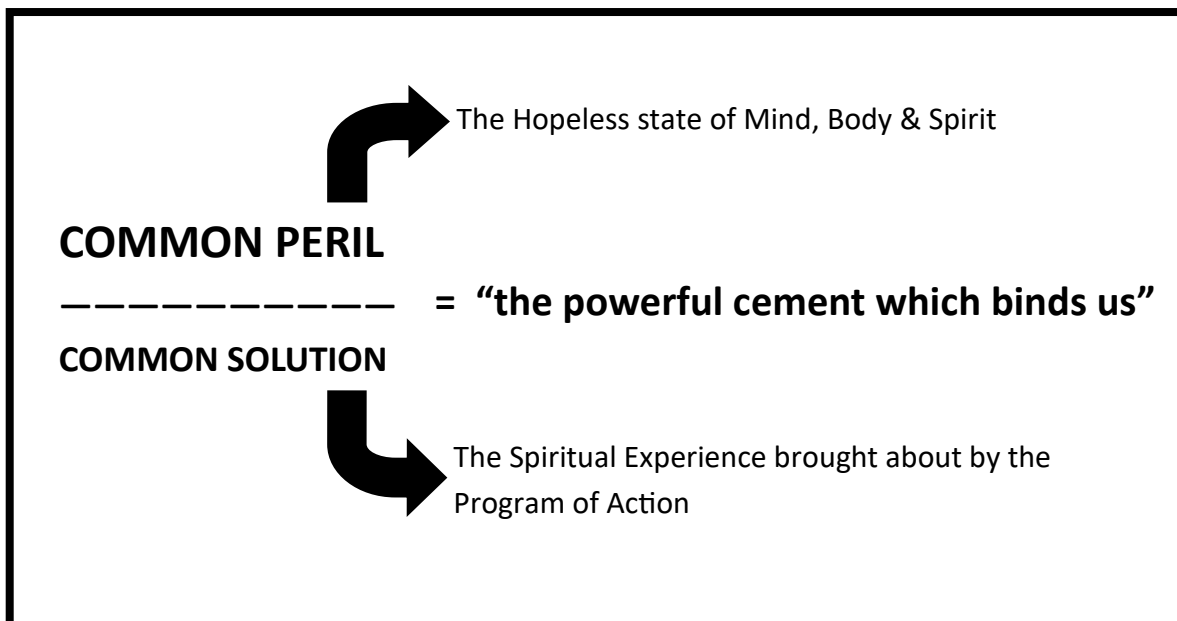


Ask Yourself: 1) Do any of these Bedevilments describe your current life?
 2) How is your way working out for you?

THERE IS A SOLUTION

- (starts out praising Fellowship: Pg 17:1 :Underline the following words: friendliness, understanding, indescribably wonderful, camaraderie, joyousness and democracy")
- Pg 17:2 (last four lines) - 17:3 (end of paragraph): "The feeling of having shared in a common peril...are now joined. The tremendous fact.. Who suffer from alcoholism."

Add to Top (or Bottom) of Page 17



(ends page with a WARNING of FELLOWSHIP alone)

- Pg 19:1: "We feel the elimination....and affairs."
- SEE Pg 82:3 "We feel a man is unthinking when he says that sobriety is enough."
But are THEY a Real Alcoholic???
- Back to Pg 20:5-22:2: "Moderate drinkers.... to other matters."

WE AGNOSTICS

Pg 44:1 (4th line-7th line): Rewritten as "Step One Questions"

#1 Screen Shot: "Step One Questions"

STEP ONE QUESTIONS

- 1) Have you been able to quit entirely on your own resources?

- 2) Do you have any control over the amount you take once you start?

STEP 1 (First part): I can't handle my drinking

STEP 1 (Second part): I can't handle my sobriety

TAKE STEP ONE

SEE Pg 30:2 "Have we conceded to our innermost selves that we were alcoholic?
(Review "Surrender" vs "Concede")

LACK OF POWER

- Pg **45:1-45:2** (6th line): "Lack of power, that was our dilemma... that we are going to talk about God"

(Review "power" vs "Power" : "Strength vs God")

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT:

Make a list of qualities you'd like your Higher Power to have

- Pg **46:1** (third line) to **47:1** (end of paragraph)
"We found that as soon.... however limited it was"

#2 Screen Shot : "How to find God"

HOW TO FIND GOD

- 1) as soon as we are able to.... lay aside prejudice.... (**46:1**)
- 2)and express even a willingness to believe... (**46:1**)
- 3)with those who seek him. (**46:2**)

2A Screen Shot: “Belief vs Faith”

BELIEF vs FAITH

Step 2 says “We came to believe that a Power Greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity”. It doesn't say we came to know nor does it say we came to have faith, it says we came to believe.

“...upon this simple cornerstone.. (of belief)... a wonderfully effective spiritual structure can be built (Pg 47:2)

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

So it was comforting to learn that **we could commence at a simpler level**”. (Pg 47:3)

And that “simpler level” is **BELIEF**

Faith = Knowledge, surety and “after the fact” information (prior experience)

“I think the greatest difficulty we have in believing is that we want something with more certainty to start with, we want more assurance. We expect faith before we start, but **believing comes first. It is not faith at the beginning; it’s speculation or suspicion, and that’s really all you can expect right then, because believing is the starting point.**” - from The Steps We Took by Joe McQuaney (of Joe & Charlie) (Pg 30)

And based on that **BELIEF** (Step 2)

We make a **DECISION** (Step 3)

To take **ACTION** (Steps 4,5,6,7,8,9,10 & 11)

That produces **RESULTS** (First part of Step 12).....

“And now we have **FAITH**. We now have knowledge, surety and prior experience. We no longer believe — **WE KNOW**. We no longer believe that God could restore us to sanity, we know he will, because he has done so!” (Charlie Parmley, Nevada, August 1998)

BELIEF = HOPE

FAITH = CONFIDENCE

TAKE STEP TWO

- Pg **47:1-47:2** (first 3 lines): "When, therefore, we speak to you of God..... or I am willing to believe, that there is a power greater than myself?"

"Step Two Questions:"

STEP TWO QUESTIONS

"We needed to ask ourselves but one short question. "Do I now believe, or am I willing to believe, that there is a Power Greater than myself?" As soon as a man can say that he does believe, or is willing to believe, we emphatically assure him that he is on his way. It has been repeatedly proven among us that upon this simple cornerstone a wonderfully effective spiritual structure can be built." (Pg **47:2**)

Do you now believe, or are you willing to believe that there is a Power Greater than yourself?

Did you answer "Yes" to this question? If you have, you're through with Step Two and it's time to move onto Step Three!

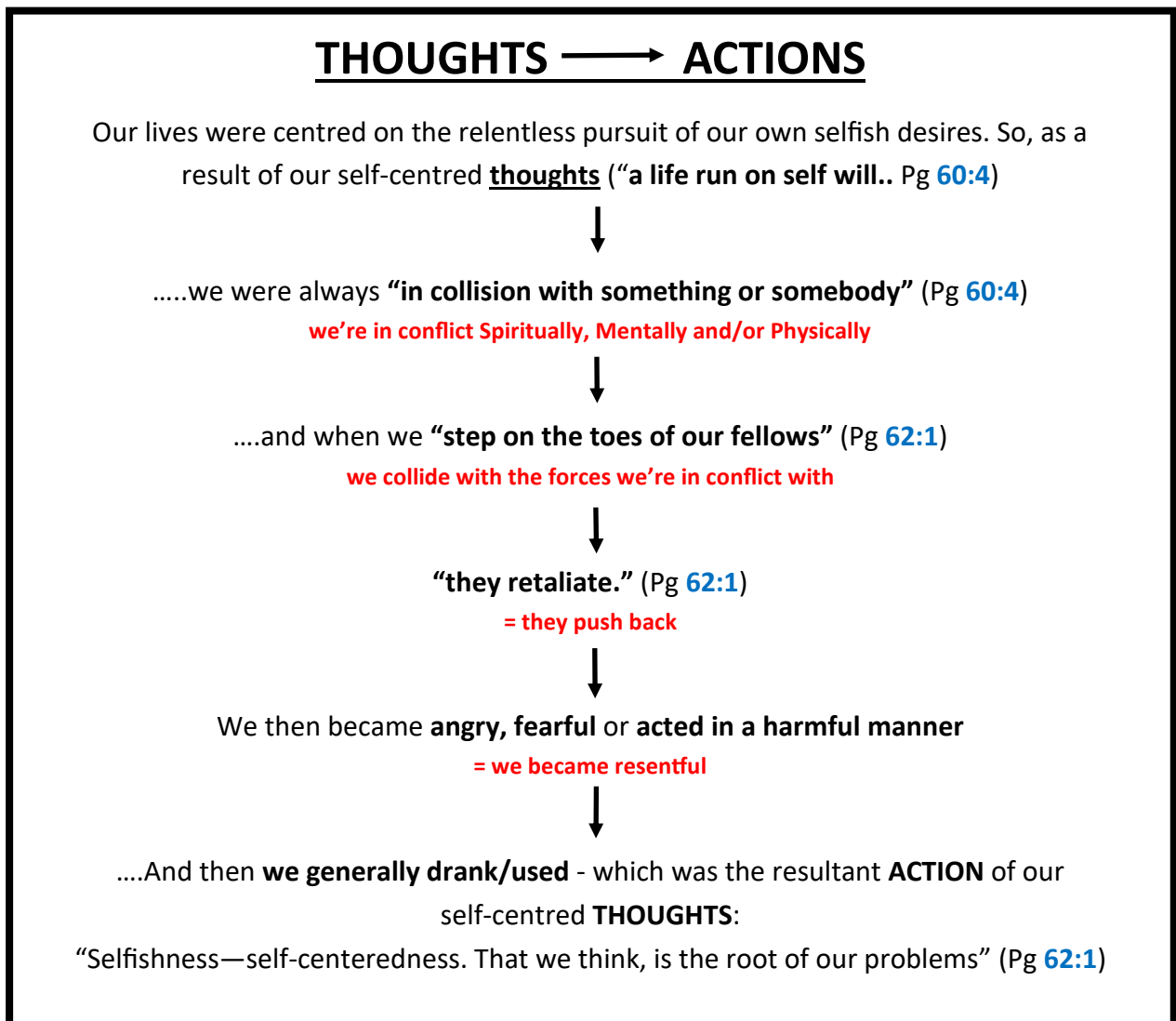
For those of you who have done a Second Step in the past, there is a deeper Step Two question to address:

Do you now believe, or are you willing to believe, that there is a Power Greater than yourself that can take you beyond where you are now, in EVERY area of your life? Past here, past the experience you've already had. Do you believe that there are realms of peace, love, freedom, happiness and understanding - areas of consciousness, wisdom and power that you cannot even imagine?

HOW IT WORKS

- Pg 62:1- end of page: "Selfishness-self-centeredness! That we think is the root of our troubles.... through which we passed to freedom."

#3 Screen Shot: Thoughts vs Actions



TAKE STEP THREE

- Pg 63:1(entire paragraph)
- Pg 63:2(first eight lines) **REPEAT ALOUD**
"We were now at Step Three. Many of us said... God I offer myself to thee.....
May I do thy will always."

Third Step Prayer

God,

I offer myself to Thee - to
build with me and to do
with me as Thou wilt.

Relieve me of the
bondage of self, that I may
better do Thy will.

Take away my
difficulties, that
victory over them may
bear witness to those I
would help of Thy Power,
Thy Love, and Thy Way
of life.

May I do Thy will always!

TAKE STEP FOUR (Angers)

- Pg 63:4to64:1(First two lines) "Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action.. Therefore, we started upon a personal inventory. This was Step Four."
- Pg 64:3(third line from the bottom) "Resentment is the "number one" offender We listed people, institutions or, principles with whom we were angry."

#4 Screen Shot: "ANGERS INVENTORY PROMPT SHEET

"ANGERS" INVENTORY PROMPT SHEET

"Being angry or bitter for an extended period of time over some real or imagined issues. A hostile or indignant attitude (displeased/bad tempered) in response to an alleged affront (insult) or personal injury"

Here is a list of people, institutions and principles that may be helpful in your resentment inventory. Feel free to add to the list based on your own experiences.

PEOPLE	INSTITUTIONS	PRINCIPLES
FATHER (STEP)	MARRIAGE	GOD
MOTHER (STEP)	BIBLE	RETRIBUTION
SISTERS (STEP)	CHURCH	TEN COMMANDMENTS
BROTHERS (STEP)	RELIGION	JESUS CHRIST
AUNTS	RACE(s)	RELIGIOUS DOGMA
UNCLES	LAW(s)	MISC DOGMA
COUSINS	AUTHORITY	SATAN
CLERGY	GOVERNMENT	DEATH
POLICE	GOVERNMENT AGENCIES	LIFE AFTER DEATH
LAWYERS	SOCIETY	HEAVEN / HELL
JUDGES	EDUCATION SYSTEM	SIN
DOCTORS	PRISONS	ADULTERY
EMPLOYER'S	MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM	FIDELITY
EMPLOYEE'S	PHILOSOPHY	ORIGINAL SIN
CO-WORKERS	NATIONALITY	SEVEN DEADLY SINS
IN-LAWS	ANONYMOUS FELLOWSHIP	HOMOPHOBIA
HUSBANDS	STEP STUDY WORKSHOPS	THE STEPS / TRADITIONS / CONCEPTS
WIVES	ARMED FORCES	BIGOTRY / ANTI-SEMITISM
CREDITORS	REHABS	OLD SAYINGS
CHILDHOOD FRIENDS	POLITICAL PARTY	
SCHOOL FRIENDS		
TEACHERS		
LIFE LONG FRIENDS		
BEST FRIENDS		
ACQUAINTANCES		
GIRL FRIENDS		
BOY FRIENDS		
PAROLE OFFICERS		
PROBATION OFFICERS		
FRIENDS IN FELLOWSHIP		
SERVICE FRIENDS		
SPONSORS (CURRENT OR PAST)		
SPONSEES (CURRENT OR PASSED)		
RELATIVES		
HAPPY SHINY PEOPLE		
GAYS / STRAIGHTS		

FEARS

Pg 68:1 to 68:3 (end of paragraph) "We reviewed our fears thoroughly. We put them on paper..... At once we commence to outgrow fear."

#7 Screen Shot: "FEARS INVENTORY PROMPT SHEET"

FEAR INVENTORY PROMPT SHEET

Here is a list of fears that may be helpful in your fear inventory.
 Feel free to add to the list as you see fit

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Fear of God | Fear of Responsibility |
| Fear of Dying | Fear of Physical Pain |
| Fear of Insanity | Fear of Drowning |
| Fear of Intimacy | Fear of Men |
| Fear of Sex | Fear of Women |
| Fear of Rejection | Fear of Being Alone |
| Fear of Confrontation | Fear of People |
| Fear of Disease(s) | Fear of Crying |
| Fear of Alcohol | Fear of Poverty |
| Fear of Drugs | Fear of Races |
| Fear of Relapse | Fear of The Unknown |
| Fear of Lonliness | Fear of Abandonment |
| Fear of Sin | Fear of Disapproval |
| Fear of Self-Expression | Fear of Sobriety |
| Fear of Authority | Fear of Feelings |
| Fear of Heights | Fear of Getting Old |
| Fear of Unemployment | Fear of Hurting Others |
| Fear of Employment | Fear of Violence |
| Fear of Parents | Fear of Writing Inventory |
| Fear of Losing a Loved One | Fear of Government |
| Fear of Animals | Fear of Gangs |
| Fear of Insects | Fear of Gossip |
| Fear of Police | Fear of Wealthy / Poor People |
| Fear of Jail | Fear of Guns |
| Fear of Doctors / Dentists / Surgeons / Hospitals | Fear of Change |
| Fear of Stealing | Fear of being on-time |
| Fear of Creditors | Fear of being late |
| Fear of Being Found Out | Fear of Impotence |
| Fear of Homosexuals / Lesbians / Straight | Fear of Sexual Disfunction |
| Fear of Failure | Fear of Mistakes |
| Fear of Success | Fear of Public Speaking |
| Fear of Heart Attack | Fear of Cancer |
| Fear of Parkinsons | |

#8 Screen Shot: FEARS INSTRUCTION

REVIEW OF FEARS: INSTRUCTIONS

1) “We reviewed of fears thoroughly. **We put them on paper**” (Pg 68:1)

So - our first task is to make a list of irrational fears. These are God-given fears that are out of proportion - have become out of control - and adversely rule, control and dominate

I’m afraid of: I’m afraid of:

I’m afraid of: I’m afraid of:

I’m afraid of: I’m afraid of:

I’m afraid of: I’m afraid of:

2) “We asked ourselves **why** we had them.” (Pg 68:1)

Looking back over my lifetime, I cannot identify a single fear that didn't revolve around one or more of the following:

- *I’m afraid of losing something I have, or*
- *I’m afraid of not getting something I want, or*
- *I’ve done something I don’t want revealed and I’m afraid of being found out*

So, which of those explains why you were afraid of.....?

It is suggested that the reason for having our fears was “because self-reliance failed us..(that)... self-reliance was good, as far as it went, but it didn't go far enough..(and).. it didn't fully solve the fear problem, or any other” So, using terms like “didn't go far enough” and “fully solve” makes it clear that a part - a vital and essential part - of the “fear removal process” was missing. And that part was God. I’ve discovered that when God is invited into any situation, the dynamics change - immediately.

The book points out that we’re now on a different path, the basis of which is “trusting and relying upon God” (Pg 68:2). Whereas we have limited (finite) resources, God’s powers are unlimited (infinite). So - if we want relief, we First must **ask**. Then, we must **act** as God would have us act. And - to the extent that we do (act) as God would have us, does he match/replace

So **3)** “We (earnestly) ask him to remove our fear of..... and direct our attention to what he would have us be” (Pg 68:3). In other words, by **seeking Gods help** and **applying all the will-power at our command**, we act courageously. “At once, we commence to outgrow fear (Pg 68:3)

Please note that it does not say that we’re now free from fear. What it promises is that we have “commenced” - or embarked on a course of action to do so. That process will be refined and mature in the related work of the 7th Step.

SEX HARMS

#9 Screen Shot: "SEX HARMS GRID (Five Columns)"

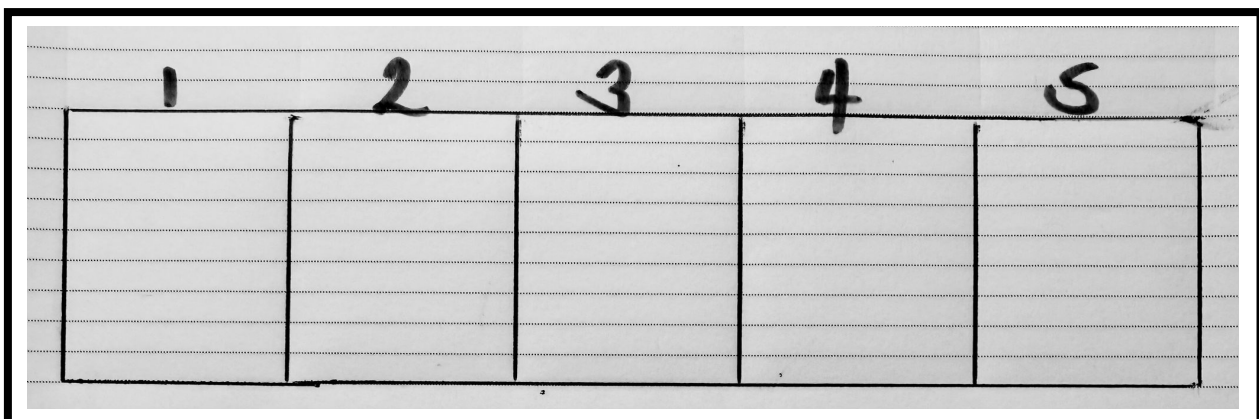
Pg 69:2 (second line) to end of paragraph. "We subjected each relation to this test.... despised or loathed." (REVIEW "Selfish"/ Col. 3 and "Opinion")

REVIEW OF MY OWN SEX CONDUCT				
COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3	COLUMN 4	COLUMN 5
Who Did I Hurt?	What Did I Do?:	Affects My: Which part of self caused me to do what I did. Was it caused by: self-esteem pride emotional security financial security physical security ambitions or personal relations <i>Self-esteem</i> How I feel about me <i>Pride</i> How I think the world feels about me <i>Emotional Security</i> General sense of well being <i>Ambitions</i> My ability to do or accomplish things	What Feelings Did I Create in Others? Did I unjustifiably arouse jealousy suspicion anger fear or bitterness What should I have done instead? (Remember, we're trying to shape a new attitude towards future "sexual decisions" (Pg 69:2) Other suggestions: Insecurity Confusion Frustration Sadness Embarrassment Hurt	Where had I Been: - Frightened - Inconsiderate - Irresponsible - Selfish - Self-Seeking - Judgemental Which of the above character defects caused me to do what I did to harm another? Self-seeking Attempting to advance oneself at another's expense

CRITERIA

"We subjected each relation to this test - was it selfish or not?" (Pg 69:2)
 Was it for reasons other than reproduction or mutual pleasure?

#10 Screen Shot: Inventory Notebook Layout (Five Columns)



STEP FIVE

- Pg **72:1-73:0** (end of paragraph): "Having made our personal inventory..... a solitary self-appraisal insufficient..... until they told someone else all their life story."

"Step Five Review"

STEP FIVE

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs

"Wrongs" (**STEP 5**), "defects" (**STEP 6**) & "shortcomings" (**STEP 7**)
the same thing >> Defects of Character (Column 5 / Fourth Step)

So - We're beginning to "get right" in the three dimensions of life:
The Spiritual ("**to God**"), the Mental ("**to ourselves**") and the Physical
("**to another human being**")

Wrong Judgements = Caused our Angers = Affected the Mental Dimension

Wrong Believing = Caused our Fears = Affected the Spiritual Dimension

Wrong Actions = Caused us to Harm Others = Affected the Physical Dimension

SET APPT to TAKE STEP FIVE (ASAP)

STEP SIX

- Pg 75:2 (second line) to end of paragraph : "Once we have taken this step..... Spirit of the Universe".
- READ AND ACTION** : Pg 75:3 to end of paragraph : "Returning we find.... Water without sand."
- AFTER ACTION** : Pg 76:1 to end of paragraph : "If we can answer..... help us be willing."

#11 Screen Shot: "Step SIX Review Sheet"

STEP 6

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character

"..... carefully reviewing what we have done." (Pg 75:3)

- *Admitting Powerlessness in Step One opens us to the Power in Step Two.*
- *Believing in that Power in Step Two, prepares us for the decision to turn our thoughts and actions over to that Power in Step Three.*
- *Making that decision in Step Three sends us on a quest to face and be rid of the things that block us from God in Step Four.*
- *By identifying those defects in Step Four, we are prepared to admit them to God and another human being in Step Five*
- *By recognizing the damage those defective thoughts have had on our lives in Step Five, we become ready to have God Remove them in Step Six.*

Driven by our defects -- "Self-will run riot" (Pg 62:2) -- manifested by our Frightened, Irresponsible, Inconsiderate, Dishonest, Selfish, Self-Seeking, and Judgemental THOUGHTS, we were "almost always in collision with something or somebody" (Pg 60:4)

> When "we step on the toes of our fellows.... they retaliate" (Pg 62:1) >

> When they retaliated, we get **ANGRY, FEARFUL** or **ACTED IN A WAY** which caused us **GUILT, SHAME** and **REMORSE** >

> And when we felt that way, we ended up drinking or drugging.

So, if the **ACTION** of drinking is the END RESULT of our "defective" THOUGHTS, then surely those things in the fifth column of our Fourth Step have now become objectionable to us -- "We have commenced to see their terrible destructiveness" (Pg 70:3) Are we ready to turn them loose.

"Are we now ready to let God remove from us all the things which we have admitted are objectionable?" (Pg 76:1)

"If we are, we're through with Step Six and it's time to move on to Step Seven"

STEP 7

Pg 76:2 to end of paragraph :“When ready, we say... completed Step seven.”

#12 Screen Shot: “Step SEVEN Review Sheet” back

Step Seven: Review Sheet

But **BE CAREFUL**. Be very careful. Because if we work the Seventh Step the way the Big Book directs us to, we can no longer blame anyone ever again for our problems. If we remain frightened, , irresponsible, inconsiderate, dishonest, selfish, self-seeking and judgemental - - *after* being provided with these tools for change - it is because we made a conscious decision to stay that way! And, we cannot blame anyone or anything anymore. The “blame game” is over!!

The Seventh Step teaches us to accept responsibility - right here and right now - for our actions and behaviours

<u>DEFECT</u>	—————→	<u>ASSET</u>
FRIGHTENED	<u>with God's help.</u> NOW exercise >	COURAGE
IRRESPONSIBLE	<u>with God's help.</u> NOW act >	RESPONSIBLY
INCONSIDERATE	<u>with God's help.</u> NOW practise >	CONSIDERATION
DISHONEST	<u>with God's help.</u> NOW behave >	HONESTLY
SELFISH	<u>with God's help.</u> NOW become >	CONCERNED FOR OTHERS
SELF-SEEKING	<u>with God's help.</u> NOW practise >	HUMILITY
JUDGMENTAL	<u>with God's help.</u> NOW become >	ACCEPTING

STEP EIGHT & NINE

#13 A&B Screen Shot: "All About Amends"

AMENDS:

Compensation for loss or injury; reparation (*NOTE: not the same as "Amend", which is "to free from fault; to improve, change or correct ("The new Universities WEBSTER Dictionary" 1938)*)

What are "amends" according to the Big Book

- | | | |
|----|----------------|--|
| 1. | Pg 76:3 | <i>"...repair the damage done in the past"</i> |
| 2. | Pg 76:3 | <i>"...to sweep away the debris..."</i> |
| 3. | Pg 77:0 | <i>"...to set right the wrong."</i> |
| 4. | Pg 77:2 | <i>"...to straighten out the past."</i> |
| 5. | Pg 77:2 | <i>"...to sweep off our side of the street..."</i> |
| 6. | Pg 81:1 | <i>"...(to) admit our fault"</i> |
| 7. | Pg 82:2 | <i>"...making good."</i> |
| 8. | Pg 83:1 | <i>"...reconstruction."</i> |

What are the categories of "amends" according to the Big Book?

- | | | |
|----|----------------|--|
| 1. | Pg 76:4 | <i>Business acquaintances and friends</i> |
| 2. | Pg 77:1 | <i>The man we hate & Former enemies (Pg 78:1)</i> |
| 3. | Pg 78:2 | <i>To whom we owe money (Creditors)</i> |
| 4. | Pg 78:3 | <i>Criminal Offenses</i> |
| 5. | Pg 80:5 | <i>Domestic troubles (Infidelity)</i> |
| 6. | Pg 82:2 | <i>Wife or parents</i> |
| 7. | Pg 83:1 | <i>The family</i> |
| 8. | Pg 83:3 | <i>Wrongs we can never fully right</i> |

STEP EIGHT & NINE

AMENDS:

What are the Big Books 12 "Guiding Principles" of making amends?

1. Pg **77:1** *"We go to him in a helpful and forgiving spirit..."*
2. Pg **77:2&83:1** *"...we never criticize...or argue" ("being very careful not to criticize them")*
3. Pg **78:0** *"His faults are not discussed...our manner is calm, Frank and open..."*
4. Pg **78:2** *"We must lose our fear..."*
5. Pg **79:1** *"We ask that we be given strength and direction to do the right thing no matter what the personal consequences may be."*
6. Pg **79:1 & 80:1** *"...we must not shrink."*
7. Pg **80:4** *"...place the outcome in Gods hands..."*
8. Pg **81:1** *"...we have no right to involve another person."*
9. Pg **82:1** *"Good generalship may decide that the problem be attacked on the flank rather than risk a face-to-face combat."*
10. Pg **83:1** *"A remorseful mumbling that we are sorry wont fill the bill at all."*
11. Pg **83:3** *"There may be some wrongs we can never fully right. We don't worry about them if we can honestly say to ourselves that we would right them if we could."*
12. Pg **83:3** *"...we don't crawl before anyone."*

Our MOTIVE (why we're here):

"...a SINCERE DESIRE TO SET RIGHT THE WRONG" (Pg 77:0)

Examples of WRONG Motives:

- To Be Accepted
- To Be Liked
- To Be Rewarded
- To be Complimented
- To Set Right THEIR Wrongs, etc.

What ACTION(s) do we take?

"...a DEMONSTRATION of good will" (Pg 77:0)

Remember:

- Pray for willingness. We ask until it comes but do not delay in starting to make our Amends.
- COMMIT TO DOING ONE AMENDS A DAY UNTIL COMPLETED

DON'T FORGET TO ASK THEM THE THREE QUESTIONS:

- 1. Can you tell me how this made you feel?**
- 2. How can I make this right?**
- 3. Is there anything else you'd like to say go me?**

Quietly listen to their answers without responding!!!

#15 Screen Shot: "Step NINE Script"

Suggested "Script" for making Step Nine Amends

I'm a sober member of Alcoholics Anonymous trying to live by certain Spiritual Principles - - the way I believe God wants me to live. Two of those principles are Restitution and Amends, and I'm here today to make an amends to you for the harm that I've caused.

My drinking/using affected our relationship. I "deeply regret" (Pg 77:1) how I treated you (or: "how I acted" / or: "what I've put you through" or: "I was wrong to have....")

I (explain the harm)

I was selfish, dishonest, inconsiderate, irresponsible, and filled with fear. I'm not living that life anymore and I know I jeopardised (or: "ruined") our relationship.

My drinking/using caused me to act in a manner which has caused me much guilt, shame and remorse. My recovery requires me to make restitution for the harms I have done. And to not do so would jeopardise my sobriety.

Can you tell me how this made you feel?

So, what I'm prepared to offer is.....

*OR: What can I do to make this right? (**LISTEN SILENTLY**)*

*Are there any more/other harms I have caused you? (**LISTEN SILENTLY**)*

*Do you have anything you'd like to say to me? (**LISTEN SILENTLY**)*

REVIEW: Amends Grid w/ Sponsor

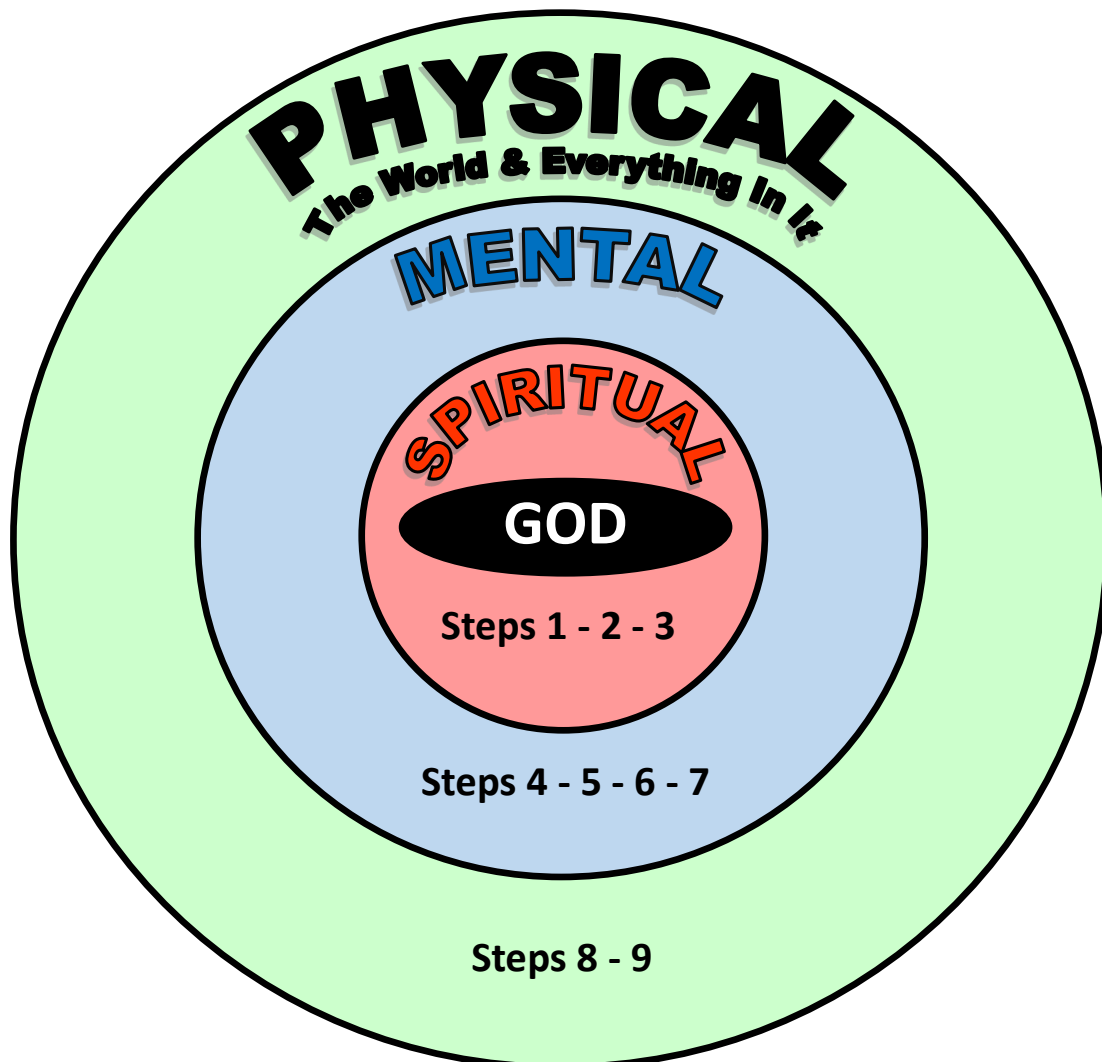
MAKE APPOINTMENTS for Amends (IN ORDER)

(NOTE: See Pg 76:4 (last line) re" "..... Our First approach .")

START MAKING AMENDS

**#16 Screen Shot: "FOURTH DIMESION"
("THE THREE DIMENSIONS OF LIFE")**

The THREE DIMENSIONS OF LIFE
"Getting Right" in Steps 1 thru 9



The FOURTH DIMENSION OF EXISTENCE (Pg 8:2 & 25:1)
the Harmonious Blend of the Spiritual, Mental & Physical

#17 Screen Shot: "The BEDEVILMENTS vs The PROMISES"

THE BEDEVILMENTS (page 52)		THE PROMISES (page 83)
1. We were having trouble with personal relationships.	↔	We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away.
2. We couldn't control our emotional natures.	↔	We will comprehend the word serenity and we know peace.
3. We were a prey to misery and depression.	↔	Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.
4. We couldn't make a living.	↔	Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us.
5. We had a feeling of uselessness.	↔	That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.
6. We were full of fear.	↔	We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.
7. We were unhappy.	↔	We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it
8. We couldn't seem to be of real help to other people.	↔	No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.
And, most of all,	↔	We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

STEP TEN

- Pg 84:2 (entire paragraph): "This thought brings us to Step Ten... Love and tolerance of others is our code (NOTE: NOT "We'll love you until you learn to love yourself")"

#18 "WADAT" Screen Shot: "Step 10 Review":

STEP 10

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it

(Pg 84:2)

1. "Continue to **W**atch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear." (Step 4)
2. "When these crop up, we **A**sk God at once to remove them." (Steps 6 & 7)
3. "We **D**iscuss them with someone immediately..." (Step 5)
4. "...and make **A**mends quickly if we have harmed anyone." (Steps 8 & 9)
5. "Then we resolutely **T**urn our thoughts to someone we can help." (Step 12)

THE DIRECTIONS: **W.A.D.A.T**

1. **W**atch
2. **A**sk
3. **D**iscuss
4. **A**mends
5. **T**urn

WHEN? **"PROMPTLY"**

1. "Continue"
2. "At Once"
3. "Immediately"
4. "Quickly"

= **URGENCY : EARLY DETECTION** is the best means of treating any illness

STEP ELEVEN

- Pg **85:2** to **86:0** (end of paragraph) "Much has already been said about receiving strength, inspiration and directions...we believe we can make some definite and valuable suggestions."
- Pg **86:1** to **87:0** (end of paragraph) "When we retire at night... we come to rely on it."

#19 Screen Shot: "Step 11: Instructions for REVIEWING OUR DAY"

STEP 11: Instructions for REVIEWING OUR DAY (Pg 86:1)

Was I resentful today? YES or NO

- If YES. How?

Was I selfish today? YES or NO

- If YES. How?

Was I dishonest today? YES or NO

- If YES. How?

Was I afraid today? YES or NO

- If YES. How?

Do I owe an apology? YES or NO

- If YES, to whom? Why?

Have I kept something to myself which should be discussed with another person? YES or NO

- If YES, what?

Was I kind and loving towards all? YES or NO

- What could I have done better?

Was I thinking of myself most of the time? YES or NO

Was I thinking of what I could do for others? YES or NO

Was I thinking of what I could pack into the stream of life? (Alternate: Was I being useful to others?)

Was I contributing or taking? YES or NO

PRAYER

God, if I have been frightened, irresponsible, inconsiderate, dishonest, selfish, self-seeking or judgemental, please help me be courageous, responsible, considerate, honest, giving, humble and accepting (or: tolerant, compassionate, patient and forgiving with love and good will towards my fellow man) - - So I might be more useful to you and others. Please guide me to correct being (defect) to/with _____ . What should I do to correct this?

Pg 87:3 to 88:0 (second line) "As we go through the day...thy will be done"

#20 Screen Shot: P...A...R...S... (Pg 87:3 to 88:0)

P...A...R...S...

Pause

Ask

Remind

Say

STEP TWELVE

#21 Screen Shot: "The Three Parts of Step 12"

The Three Parts of Step 12

Having had a Spiritual awakening as a result of these steps. --- THE PROMISE

we tried to carry this message to alcoholics --- THE CHARGE

and practise these principles in all our affairs --- THE CHALLENGE

Spiritual Awakening = *"personality change sufficient to bring about recovery" ... "vast change in feeling and outlook"....."transformations...of the educational variety because they develop slowly over a period of time"....."profound alteration in his reaction to life"*
"Spiritual Experience Appendix" (Pg 569)

"Ideas, emotions and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast to one side, and a completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them."

"There is A Solution" (Pg 27:4)

"...an entire psychic change"

"The Doctors Opinion" (Pg XXVii)

#22 Screen Shot: "Directions for Working With Others"

(SEE APPENDIX ONE)

#23 Screen Shot: "Practicing These Principles"

"Practicing These Principles"

To Wives (Chapter 8) & The Family Afterward (Chapter 9)

We've already established that the 12th Step is made of 3 Parts:

THE PROMISE - - Having had a Spiritual awakening as a result of these steps.

THE CHARGE - - we tried to carry this message to alcoholics

THE CHALLENGE - - and practise these principles in all our affairs

Chapter Seven (*Working With Others*) is based on the assumption that we have had a Spiritual Awakening as the result of working the First 11 steps. This was accomplished by following the "*clear cut directions*" (Pg 29:3) laid out in Dr's Opinion and chapters One through Six.

So having realized the **Promise** of the First part of Step 12, we are **Charged** with a responsibility to carry that message in the second part of the step., and are given our marching orders in Chapter Seven.

Where then, do we find the instructions for meeting the **Challenge** of the third part of the step?

Well, we believe the book is written in a particular sequence to guide us from one step to another, "which the process requires for it's successful consummation" (Pg 25:6), which of course is, a Spiritual Awakening. Accordingly, "practising these principles" MUST be covered somewhere after Chapter Seven.

But those chapters are directed to Wives, the Family and Employers - so jt cannot be obtained in those - or can it?

That's the question we set out to answer by studying those chapters with the mind-set of finding the directions for how to "*practise these principles in all my affairs.*" Since showing "*other alcoholics precisely how we have recovered is the main purpose of this book*", (Pg xiii) we knew it had to be there somewhere. The "*design for living*" (Pg 15-17) just would not be complete without it!

And, lo and behold, Bill Wilson was true to form. Because these principles of success are indeed very much covered in these sections. But it requires "careful reading" (Pg 567:3)

So, we will now set out to carefully comb through these chapters to extract Bill's advice for how to practise these principles. If you come upon some "pearl of wisdom" which we miss in our review, please pass it on (send to: thebigbookstudy@aol.com)

#24 Screen Shot: "The Principles of Success"

(SEE APPENDIX TWO)

“DIRECTIONS for Working with Others” (43)

- 1) Do not start out as an evangelist or reformer. 89:3
- 2) Find out all you can about the newcomer 90:1
- 3) *Get an idea of his behavior, his problems, his background, the seriousness of his condition, and his religious leanings. You need this information to **put yourself in his place**, to see how you would like him to approach you if the tables were turned. 90:2*
- 4) Don't deal with him when he is **very** drunk. 90:3
- 5) See your man alone (*without family members present*) At first engage in general conversation. (*take note of his environment*) 91:3
- 6) After a while, turn the talk to some phase of drinking. Tell him enough about your drinking habits, symptoms and experiences to encourage him to speak of himself. If he wishes to talk, let him do so. You will thus get a better idea of how you ought to proceed If he is not communicative, give him a sketch of your drinking career up to the time you quit. But say nothing, for the moment, of how that was accomplished. If he is in a serious mood dwell on the troubles liquor has caused you, ***being careful not to moralize or lecture***. If his mood is light, tell him humorous stories of your escapades. Get him to tell some of his. 91:3
- 7) When he sees you know all about the drinking game, commence to **describe yourself as an alcoholic** 91:4
- 8) 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 (the Obsession) which leads to the first drink of the spree (physical craving). 92:0
- 9) If you are satisfied that he is a real alcoholic, begin to dwell on the hopeless feature of the malady. Show him, from, your own experience, how the queer mental condition surrounding that first drink prevents normal functioning of the will power. 92:1
- 10) Be careful not to brand him as an alcoholic. Let him draw his own conclusions. 92:1 (*Suggestion: Perhaps this is a good time to ask the prospects the two questions from 44:1*)

APPENDIX ONE:

- 11) Continue to speak of alcoholism as an illness, a fatal malady. Talk about the conditions of body and mind which accompany it. Keep his attention focused mainly on your personal experience. Explain that many are doomed who never realize their predicament. Doctors are rightly loath to tell alcoholic patients the whole story unless it will serve some good purpose. But you may talk to him about the hopelessness of alcoholism because you offer a solution. 92:2
- 12) Even though your protégé may not have entirely admitted his condition, he has become very curious to know how you got well. Let him ask you that question (how you got well). 93:0
- 13) Tell him exactly what happened to you. 93:0 (**HINT: "I accessed a Power that did for me what I couldn't do for myself"**) Stress the spiritual feature freely. 93:0 (**HINT: This might be a good opportunity to explain the difference between Spirituality and Religion**) If the man be agnostic or atheist (**HINT: Define terms**), make it emphatic that *he does not have to agree with your conception of God*. He can choose any conception he likes, provided it makes sense to him. The main thing is that he be willing to believe in a Power greater than himself and that he live by Spiritual (**NOTE: NOT RELIGIOUS**) Principles. 93:0
- 14) **Make a list of traits he/she would like their Higher Power to Possess.**
- 15) You had better use everyday language to describe spiritual principles. 93:1
- 16) Let him see that you are not there to instruct him in religion. 93:2
- 17) Outline the program of action, explaining how you made a self-appraisal, how you straightened out your past and why you are now endeavoring to be helpful to him. It is important for him to realize that your attempt to pass this on to him plays a vital part in your recovery. Actually, he may be helping you more than you are helping him. Make it plain he is under no obligation to you, that you hope only that he will try to help other alcoholics when he escapes his own difficulties. Suggest how important it is that he place the welfare of other people a head of his own. Make it clear that he is not under pressure, that he needn't see you again if he doesn't want to. Make it plain that he is under no obligation to you, that you hope only that he will try to help other alcoholics when he escapes his own difficulties. 94:1
- 18) ...**disturb** him about the question of alcoholism. 94:1

APPENDIX ONE:

- 19) On your first (conversation), tell him about the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. 94:2 (HINT: See pg. 17: *camaraderie, joyousness, democracy, friendliness, understanding, brotherly, harmonious, etc.* : the Spirit of the Fellowship)
- 20) Sometimes a new man is anxious to proceed at once. And you may be tempted to let him do so. This is **sometimes** a mistake. If he has trouble later, he is likely to say you rushed him. You will be most successful with alcoholics if you do not exhibit any passion for crusade or reform. (**NOTE: remember, this the *first* conversation**) 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 if he wants to get well you will do anything to help. 95:1
- 21) (CONTAINS the FIVE "Ifs") ***If he is not interested*** in your solution, ***if he expects you to act*** only as a banker for his financial difficulties or a nurse for his sprees, you may have to drop him until he changes his mind. **This he may do after he gets hurt some more.** 95:2
- If he is sincerely interested*** and wants to see you again, ask him to read to read this book in the interval [*pick three stories & ask: 1) Did that happen to me? 2) Did I feel like that & 3) Do I think this can work for me too?*] After doing that, he must decide for himself whether he wants to go on. He should not be pushed or prodded by you, his wife or his friends. ***If he is to find God, the desire must come from within.*** 95:3
- If he thinks he can do the job in some other way*** or prefers some other spiritual approach, encourage him to follow his own conscience. We have no monopoly on God; we merely have an approach that worked with us. But point out that we alcoholics have much in common and that you would like, in any case, to be friendly. **Let it go at that.** 95:4
- 22) Do not be discouraged if your prospect does not respond at once. Search out another alcoholic and try again.....Find someone desperate enough to accept with eagerness what you offer. We find it a waste of time to keep chasing a man who cannot or will not work with you.....To spend too much time on any one situation is to deny some other alcoholic an opportunity to live and be happy. 96:1

APPENDIX ONE:

- 23) ON THE SECOND (CONVERSATION): (If) he 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 (*Step Three*) and tell his story (*take Steps Four & Five*) but do not insist upon it if he prefers to consult with someone else (*if he chooses to get another Sponsor*). 96:2
- 24) He may be broke and homeless. If he is, you might try to help him about getting a job, or give him a little financial assistance. But you should not deprive your family or creditors of money they should have. Perhaps you will want to take the man into your home for a few days. But be sure you use discretion. Be certain he will be welcomed by your family, and that he is not trying to impose upon you for money, connections, or shelter. Permit that and you only harm him. You will be making it possible for him to be insincere. You may be aiding in his destruction rather than his recovery. (*Hint: Don't be an enabler*) 96:3-97:0
- 25) Never avoid these responsibilities but be sure you are doing the right thing if you assume them. *Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery.* A kindly act once in a while isn't enough. *You have to act the Good Samaritan every day,* if need be. 97:1
- 26) **THE TWELVE INCONVENIENCES:**
- 1. It may mean the loss of many nights' sleep,
 - 2. great interference with your pleasures,
 - 3. Interruptions to your business.
 - 4. It may mean sharing your money and your home,
 - 5. counseling frantic wives and relatives,
 - 6. Innumerable trips to police courts, sanitariums, hospitals, jails and asylums.
 - 7. Your telephone may jangle at any time of the day or night.
 - 8. Your wife may sometimes say she is neglected.
 - 9. A drunk may smash the furniture in your home, or burn a mattress.
 - 10. You may have to fight with him if he is violent.
 - 11. Sometimes you will have to call a doctor and administer sedatives under his direction.
 - 12. Another time you may have to send for the police or an ambulance. Occasionally you will have to meet such conditions. 97:1

APPENDIX ONE:

- 27) We seldom allow an alcoholic to live in our homes for long at a time. It is not good for him, and it sometimes creates serious complications in a family. 97:2
- 28) The family should be offered your way of life. 97:3
- 29) It is not the matter of giving that is in question, but when and how to give. That often makes the difference between failure and success. The minute we put our work on a service plane, the alcoholic commences to rely upon our assistance rather than upon God. He clamors for this or that, claiming he cannot master alcohol until his material needs are cared for. Nonsense. Some of us have taken very hard knocks to learn this truth: Job or no job—wife or no wife—we simply do not stop drinking so long as we place dependence upon other people ahead of dependence on God. 98:1
- 30) 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. 98:2
- 31) When your prospect has made such reparation as he can to his family, and has thoroughly explained to them the new principles by which he is living, he should proceed to **put those principles into action at home**. 98:3
- 32) Though his family be at fault in many respects, he should not be concerned about that. He should concentrate on his own spiritual demonstration. **Argument and fault-finding are to be avoided like the plague**. 98:3
- 33) After they have seen tangible results, the family will perhaps want to go along. These things will come to pass naturally and in good time provided, however, the alcoholic continues to demonstrate that he can be sober, considerate and helpful, regardless of what anyone says or does. Of course, we all fall much below this standard many times. But we must try to repair the damage immediately lest we pay the penalty by a spree. 99:1
- 34) If there be divorce or separation, there should be no undue haste for the couple to get together. The man should be sure of his recovery. The wife should fully understand his new way of life. If their old relationship is to be resumed it must be on a better basis, since the former did not work. This means a new attitude and spirit all around. Sometimes it is to the best interests of all concerned that a couple remain apart. Obviously, no rule can be laid down. Let the alcoholic continue his

program day by day. When the time for living together has come, it will be apparent to both parties. 99:2

- 35) Remind the prospect that his recovery is not dependent upon *people*. It is dependent upon his relationship with **God**. 99:3-100:0
- 36) Both you and the new man must walk day by day in the path of spiritual progress. If you persist, remarkable things will happen. When we look back, we realize that the things which came to us when we put ourselves in God's hands were better than anything we could have planned. Follow the dictates of a Higher Power and you will presently live in a new and wonderful world, no matter what your present circumstances! 100:1
- 37) When working with a man and his family, you should take care not to participate in their quarrels. You may spoil your chance of being helpful if you do. But urge upon a man's family that he has been a very sick person and should be treated accordingly. You should warn against arousing resentment or jealousy. You should point out that his defects of character are not going to disappear over night. Show them that he has entered upon a period of growth. Ask them to remember, when they are impatient, the blessed fact of his sobriety. 100:2

The next 11 Paragraphs shift from detailed instructions on working with the prospect to extolling the benefits coming to them now they're "spiritually fit".

- 38) Assuming we are **spiritually fit**, we can do all sorts of things alcoholics are not supposed to do... 100:4
- 39) ...if we have a legitimate reason for being there. 101:3
- 40) Be sure (they) are on **solid spiritual ground** before you start and that (their) **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! 102:0
- 41) Your job now is to be at the place where you may be of maximum helpfulness to others, so never hesitate to go anywhere if you can be helpful. You should not hesitate to visit the most sordid spot on earth on such an errand. Keep on the firing line of life with these motives and God will keep you unharmed. 102:2

APPENDIX ONE:

- 42) We are careful never to show intolerance or hatred of drinking as an institution. Experience shows that such an attitude is not helpful to anyone. Every new alcoholic looks for this spirit among us and is immensely relieved when he finds we are not witch burners. A spirit of intolerance might repel alcoholics whose lives could have been saved, had it not been for such stupidity. 103:1-2
- 43) we shall be of little use if our attitude is one of bitterness or hostility. Drinkers will not stand for it.

And always remember: *"Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail. 89:1*

So ...Carry this message to other alcoholics! You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others fail.....(89:1).....because of your own 1.19.2025drinking experience you can be uniquely useful to other alcoholics.

89:3

Life will take on new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends—this is an experience you must not miss. 89:2

Tolerance / Compassion / Patience / Forgiveness / Humility / Good Will / Love

PRINCIPLES OF SUCCESS (73)

Chapter 8: TO WIVES (pgs. 104-121)

- 1) **The first principle of success is that you should never be angry.**
(111:1)
- 2) **Patience and good temper are most necessary** (111:1)
- 3) **you should never tell him what he must do** (111:2)
 - 4) **have a full and useful life** (111:3)
 - 5) Do not set your heart on reforming (111:3)
 - 6) **reasonableness and patience** (111:4)
 - 7) **Be sure you are not critical** (111:4)
 - 8) **put yourself in his place** (111:4)
 - 9) **be helpful rather than critical** (111:4)
- 10) **(Show him you) have confidence** (112:0)
 - 11) ***Patient waiting*** (112:2)
 - 12) **Share your enthusiasm** (113:2)
 - 13) you should not crowd him (113:2)
- 14) urge action without arousing hostility (113:2)
 - 15) The power of God goes deep! (114:1)
- 16) **be on guard not to embarrass or harm** (115:1)
 - 17) ***...sympathetic understanding*** (115:2)

- 18) **courage, good nature and lack of self-consciousness will do wonders**
(115:2)
- 19) **it is best not to take sides in any argument** (115:3)>>>**Use your energies to promote a better understanding all around** (115:3)
- 20) **be careful not to be resentful** (116:0)
- 21) ...how much better life is when lived on a spiritual plane (116:2)
- 22) As (we) began to apply spiritual principles...(we) began to see the desirability of doing so (too) (116:2)
- 23) put spiritual principles to work in every department of our lives (116:3)
- 24) *faith and sincerity* ... should be regarded as part of your education, for thus you will be learning to live (117:2)
- 25) **be careful not to disagree in a resentful or critical spirit** (117:3)
- 26) Next time you and (he) have a heated discussion, no matter what the subject, it should be the privilege of either to smile and say, ***"This is getting serious. I'm sorry I got disturbed. Let's talk about it later."*** (NOTE: try a "re-set") (118:1)
- 27) **avoid disagreement or contention** (118:1)
- 28) ***Patience, tolerance, understanding and love* are the watchwords**
(118:2)
- 29) **Live and let live** (118:2)
- 30) **show a willingness to remedy your own defects** (118:2)
- 31) **Be patient** (118:3)
- 32) When resentful thoughts come, try to pause and count your blessings
(119:0)
- 33) **Cooperate, rather than complain** (119:2)
- 34) **Sense of responsibility for others** (120:0)

- 35) **think of what you can put into life instead of how much you can take out** (120:0)
- 36) You need not remind him of his spiritual deficiency (120:1)
- 37) Cheer him up and ask him how you can **be still more helpful** (120:1)
- 38) **Never, never try to arrange a man's life** (120:3)
- 39) **place the problem, along with everything else, in God's hands** (120:3)

Chapter 9: THE FAMILY AFTERWARD (pgs. 122-135)

- 40) **meet upon the common ground of tolerance, understanding and love** (122:1)
- 41) **This involves a process of deflation** (122:1)
- 42) he shouldn't be reproached (123:3)
- 43) **We grow by our willingness to face and rectify errors and convert them into assets** (124:1)
- (a) **painful past may be of infinite value to other(s)** (124:2)>>>
- (b) **be ... willing to bring former mistakes, no matter how grievous, out of their hiding places** (124:2)>>>
- (c) **unless some good and useful purpose is to be served, past occurrences should not be discussed** **(125:0)**
- 44) Cling to the thought that, in God's hands, the dark past is the greatest possession you have – the key to life and happiness for others. With it you can avert death and misery for them. (124:2)
- 45) **We do talk about each other a great deal, but we almost invariably temper such talk by a spirit of love and tolerance.** (125:1)
- 46) **we do not relate intimate experiences of another person unless we are sure he would approve.** (125:2)
- 47) **stick to our own stories** (125:2)

- 48) **be thankful** (127:0)
- 49) praise his progress (127:0)
- 50) there is tolerance, love, and spiritual understanding. (127:0)
- 51) **material well-being always followed spiritual progress; it never preceded** (127:1)
- 52) **show unselfishness and love** (127:2)
- 53) **be constructive ... without heated argument, self-pity, self-justification or resentful criticism.** (127:3)
- 54) Giving, rather than getting, will become the guiding principle (128:0)
- 55) **...go as far as he likes in helping other alcoholics. During those first days of convalescence, this will do more to insure his sobriety than anything else.** (129:3)
- 56) **(Meet) ... responsibilities gallantly** (130:3)
- 57) **yield here and there** (131:2)
- 58) play an **effective** part in the new life (131:2)
- 59) **activity should be balanced** (131:2)
- 60) thoughtful consideration given their needs (131:2)
- 61) **...find new avenues of usefulness** and pleasure.....bring new hope and new courage to many (132:0)
- 62) As non-denominational people, we cannot make up others' minds for them. Each individual should consult his own conscience. (132:0)
- 63) **We absolutely insist on enjoying life** (132:1)
- 64) **try not to indulge in cynicism** (132:1)
- 65) nor do we carry the world's troubles on our shoulders (132:1)

- 66) **When we see a man sinking into the mire that is alcoholism, we give him first aid and place what we have at his disposal. (132:1)**
- 67) **cheerfulness and laughter make for usefulness (132:2)**
- 68) **be happy, joyous, and free (133:0)**
- 69) **Avoid then, the deliberate manufacture of misery, but if trouble comes, cheerfully capitalize it as an opportunity to demonstrate His omnipotence. (133:0)**
- 70) **never belittle (133:2)**
- 71) ***First Things First***
- 72) ***Live and Let Live***
- 73) ***Easy Does It. (135:4)***

**Excerpt from: "Writing the Big Book : The
Creation of A.A."**

By William H. Schaberg (pgs. 279 – 281)

A Power Greater Than Ourselves

The essence of the next chapter Bill wrote is neatly captured in the later wording of the Second Step: "Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity;" this is the only way the alcoholic can overcome the insanity of the first drink. But rather than just bluntly stating the fact that one hundred men had come to believe and thereby been able to stop drinking, Wilson needed to present some persuasive arguments to convince an active alcoholic that he could and should join them in their beliefs about the power of God.

Bill had told Bob Smith he didn't much care for the first draft of "We Agnostics," claiming he thought it was "too preachy" and he felt that it was "rather disconnected." Given his almost impossible task, this is completely understandable; how could he even begin to make an effective argument for the necessary belief in God *without* sounding like a Sunday school preacher? No wonder he suggested to Bob that perhaps it "might better be done... in the form of a dialogue between one of our former agnostics and a tough minded bird lying in a hospital bed."ⁱ Presenting arguments for the existence of God as part of a bedside conversation would have sounded much less like a church sermon and might have proved more appealing to non-believers, but as far as we know, Bill never went down that more literary road.

Whatever he wrote, Wilson knew he needed to do everything in his power to avoid the reaction expected from an alcoholic who had just been told that God was a necessary part in this solution: "Oh, so that's what it is, I'm so disappointed, I had begun to think [you] fellows knew what [you] were talking about."ⁱⁱ Above all else, Bill wanted the reader to keep an open mind and to engage in an exploration of what he called "the God idea." His worst fear was that the agnostic or atheist would reach this point in the book and then just slam it shut, effectively closing off any further discussion.

Wilson tried to make this inclusive point clear from the very beginning by choosing a collegial title of "We Agnostics" for this chapter. He could have just as easily called it "The Agnostic" or "You Agnostics" or even something like "The Agnostic's Dilemma" – all of which would have immediately set up a confrontational scenario. Instead, Bill quickly makes two specific reference to the "We" of his title by noting that originally about half of the Fellowship had been strangers to any sort of spiritual experience and, more specifically, that "something like fifty of us thought we were atheists or agnostics" when first introduced to the Fellowship.ⁱⁱⁱ But even these committed non-believers soon realized the choice they faced was to either "be doomed to an alcoholic hell or be 'saved.'" These two harsh options, Wilson admits, are not always easy to face, but however much agnostic members may have tried to avoid the God issue, "after a while we had to face the fact that we must find a spiritual basis of life – or else" – the "or else" being a return to drinking and a life that could only be characterized as an alcoholic hell.

Having hopefully established some rapport with the non-believing reader, Bill now referred back to the drinker's lack of power regarding the first drink, summing up the essence of his position – and the critical challenge presently facing the atheist or agnostic – in eight short sentences:

Lack of power, that was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be A Power Greater Than Ourselves. Obviously. But where and how were we to find this Power?

Well, that's exactly what this book is about. Its main object is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself, which will solve your problem. That means we have written a book which we believe to be spiritual as well as moral. And it means, of course, that we are going to talk about God.

God as We Understand Him

When writing this chapter Bill was trying to be as open-ended as possible in his talk about the essential "spiritual experience" and the need for a "spiritual basis of life", and he emphasized that liberal approach throughout by using phrases like "A Power Greater Than Ourselves" and "your own conception of God" and even "God, as you understand Him." But many contemporary A.A. readers completely miss the point Wilson was trying to make in "We Agnostics" because they read the chapter from a 21st-century perspective, one which incorporates the tremendous liberalization the phrase "God as we understand Him" has gone through during A.A.'s subsequent history and development. This later and much greater flexibility regarding "God as we understand Him" allows some alcoholics to understand God as a "Group Of Drunks", or "Good Orderly Direction", or the "Gift Of Desperation", or even the "Great Out Doors." While this widely expanded approach has been a boon to the growing membership of Alcoholics Anonymous, it goes far beyond anything Bill Wilson ever intended when he wrote "We Agnostics" in September of 1938.

Today's more liberal contemporary understandings of "God as we understand Him" are put forward under the misconception that this level of freedom of choice was exactly what Bill Wilson meant when he used those open-ended phrases in "We Agnostics." It wasn't. Instead, Bill had two fundamental and very restrictive presumptions that informed all of his writing

in this chapter, presumptions that 21st-century A.A. readers so easily fail to notice because of their own current expectations of the text.

Spiritual Means Belief in a Personal God

The first of these is Wilson's belief in the complementary equations that "spiritual = God" and "God = spiritual." Bill makes it clear in the first six paragraphs of this chapter that there is absolutely no avenue for accessing the spiritual other than through a belief in God. This strict equivalency rejects out-of-hand every other avenue for having a spiritual experience along with any alternate path for discovering a spiritual basis for life. While such an exclusive position is far from today's more liberal attitudes in A.A., it is completely consistent with Bill Wilson's upbringing, with the beliefs and values of the earliest members of the Fellowship, and is perfectly aligned with 1930s American culture (which was far more religious than it is today). More open conceptions of "God" and "spiritual" that were adopted later must therefore be firmly set aside in order to reach a proper understanding of what Wilson was actually saying when he first wrote this chapter.

Bill's second fundamental presumption lies buried within his claim that readers can believe in any conception of God they might like. What is understood in that claim, but never explicitly stated, is that this new belief must be in any *providential* God you want to believe in – a God to whom you can pray, with whom you can make conscious contact, and on whom you can absolutely rely for the help needed to avoid the first drink. Bill offers an open-ended invitation for alcoholics to believe in "a Supreme Being" or "an All Powerful, Guiding, Creative Intelligence" (along with a number of other Impressively Capitalized Titles), but never, for instance, does he offer as an object of belief the God of the Deists – who believe He created the universe and then removed Himself from the realm of human affairs – or any of the

other less involved, less accessible conceptions of divinity that have been suggested over the millennia by religious teachers, mystics, and philosophers.

If you want to get sober, you must align yourself with a *personal* God with whom you can have a *personal* relationship. There is no other option.¹ Again, Bill was not being duplicitous here; this fundamental assumption was not only what had saved his own life², it was the foundational, common currency of belief throughout the Fellowship at that time as well as for religious people across the country. Wilson didn't feel he needed to be explicit about this point when talking about "the God idea;" it was simply a given in the context of that time and place and, in addition, completely obvious from the amount of direct help the alcoholic would need from this Supreme Being. If you want to stop drinking, you must find a spiritual basis of life, and that spiritual basis can only be found by believing in a Supreme Being with whom you can establish a personal relationship.

ⁱ William G. Wilson to Dr. R. Smith, September 27, 1938 (GSO Box 59, Folder B[1], Document 1938-153).

ⁱⁱ "There Is A Solution" (GSO, Box 59, 1938, Folder B, First Two Chapters of the Proposed Book; Trust Indenture, Documents 1938-53 to 1938-75, p. 10).

ⁱⁱⁱ All quotes in this section from "We Agnostics" can be found in *The Book That Started It All*, pp. 52-59.

¹ This was stated much more explicitly in a Chicago pamphlet written in 1940 or 1941 (the words "spiritual experience" still appear in their version of the 12th Step): "All that is required is a recognition of a Supreme Being which would help us were He sincerely petitioned." (available online at <http://silkworth.net/aahistory/impressions.html> - retrieved September 28, 2015).

² See, for instance, the mid-1938 version of "Bill's Story:" "In a power greater than myself I had always believed. I had often pondered these things. I was not an atheist... I had little doubt that a mighty purpose and rhythm underlay all. How could there be so much of precise and immutable law, and no intelligence? I simply had to believe in a Spirit of the Universe, which knew neither time nor limitation. But that was as far as I had gone. With preachers, and the world's religions, I parted right there. When they talked of a God personal to me, which was love, superhuman strength and direction, I became irritated, and my mind snapped shut against such theory... But my friend sat before me, and he made the point blank declaration that God had done for him what he could not do for himself... In effect he had been raised from the dead; suddenly taken from the scrap-heap to a level of life better than the best he had ever known... That floored me. It began to look as though religious people were right, after all. Here was something at work in a human heart which had done the impossible. My ideas about miracles were drastically revised right then..." (GSO, Box 59, 1938, Folder B, First Two Chapters of the Proposed Book; Trust Indenture, Documents 1938-53 to 1938-75, p. 20).

APPENDIX FOUR: The Light Bulb

'My Higher Power The Light Bulb' was copied from the old web page of the "Recover Or Die" group that used to meet in Washingtonville, New York, not far from Cornwall, New York. The "Recover Or Die" group, Mitchell K.'s old home group, no longer exists. Never heard of Cornwall, NY? Well, Cornwall was the birthplace of the A.A. Big Book. All 16 printings of the First Edition of the Big Book were printed at the Cornwall Press as were many of the Second Editions. Bill W., Hank P., Dorothy S. and Ruth Hock (non-alcoholic secretary of AA) went to Cornwall to give the final OK for the printing early in 1939. Bill made many trips up to the beautiful Orange County in preparation for the printing of the book. Orange County holds an important place in AA's History.

My Higher Power - The Light Bulb

By Clarence H. Snyder

(Clarence started AA group #3 in Cleveland & in the beginning had a higher recovery rate than Bill & Dr. Bob combined. His story, "Home Brewmeister," can be found on page 297 of the Big Book.)

In their sincere & honest attempt to maintain a "hands-off" policy regarding fellow members' religious beliefs & perhaps sensitivities, our founding fathers exercised gentle wisdom & proffered spiritual freedom. No one, it was rightly thought, should be permitted to impose his or her own religious concepts & beliefs upon any other member of the fellowship. This area was much too important to the prospective recoveree to be tampered with by mortal man. The very life of the prospect depends, ultimately, upon his or her "personal relationship" with a "Power greater than themselves." The notion was valid in the Program's earlier days - AND IT STILL IS!

In no way, shape or form, however, was the idea conceived to avoid guiding our beloved newcomer along the path of spiritual progress. Quite the contrary, our whole purpose as recovered alcoholics, was & is to help the next person achieve sobriety. If that person is a real alcoholic his only hope is God. So in its most basic & simplest terms our only real purpose is to help the still-suffering alcoholic to find God. A loving God, a healing God is the alcoholic's only real hope.

This is no easy task. A vast array of difficulties presents themselves to thwart the new person on his journey. The foremost adversary, of course, is the illness itself. It seems that many, many alcoholics have a very fierce, emotionally charged resistance to accepting any dependence upon a Power, which, to them, may seem an abstract & remotely distant concept. This internal resistance is most effectively broken down by the potential recoveree's initial desperation. (It seems such a shame that today's AA actually encourages the newcomer to avoid reaping the blessings of that desperation.) If intense enough & deep enough, this emotional "bottom" will be the very propellant the prospect needs to thrust him into the recovery process offered by AA through its 12 Steps.

Another stumbling block, which many people who are new to the program are currently encountering, is us! We seem to be full of fear regarding the responsibility we have been given in the area of spiritual guidance. We shirk this responsibility by evasiveness or by the direct sidestepping of the issue by such statements as, "It's God as you understand Him, & it's up to

APPENDIX FOUR: The Light Bulb

you to come to your own conclusions." So the newcomer is left to his own devices. He is expected to arrive, alone & unguided, at a relationship with his Creator.

One of the most powerful & hope-filled statements to be found in the entire text of Alcoholics Anonymous can be found on page 25. "The great fact is just this, & nothing less: That we have had deep & effective spiritual experiences which have revolutionized our whole attitude toward life, toward our fellows & toward God's universe. The central fact of our lives today is the absolute certainty that our Creator has entered into our hearts & lives in a way that is indeed miraculous. He has commenced to accomplish those things for us which we could never do for ourselves." Are we, today, so far removed from our founder's results of our recovery program that these words are nothing more than a "nice thought" or an exaggeration due to artificially elated emotions? If so, we "obviously cannot transmit something we don't have." We cannot share awareness we don't have. Cannot give guidance we have never gotten. We cannot share a vision of God we have never seen. Our lack, thereby, becomes the newcomer's & he may die because of it! Our resistance becomes his license. In his liquor befogged mind he does not seek & experience God but begins to "create" one. It's no wonder his dryness becomes so barren that in a short while he returns to drink. His "Higher Power" was a light bulb! (No joke. We have heard this comment voiced more than once & not only by a newcomer!) Or perhaps this power greater than himself was a chair, or a wall, or even a mere mortal sponsor. A quick glance at the top of page 93 of the "Big Book" makes instantly clear a very important qualification in the concept of "...as you understand Him," & that is: "He can choose any conception he likes, PROVIDED IT MAKES SENSE TO HIM."

Power greater than himself - a light bulb? A simple flick of a switch turns off that power. A wall? Not so powerful when confronted with a bulldozer. A chair? An ax can make quick kindling of that higher power. A sponsor then? If he fails to perfect his spiritual life, his old foe alcohol is sure to reclaim him. So he won't do very well as a greater power. How about a whole group? Possibly for someone else, but not for us. If one person is powerless over alcohol, & another, we would have a group of people who are powerless over alcohol. We do not have a group who ARE POWERFUL over alcohol. Yet they do not drink! They have gained access to something more powerful than alcohol.

It was never intended that phrases such as "higher power," "power greater than ourselves," or "as we understood Him" were created as an enabling device to justify our membership's continued avoidance of a connection with our Creator. Page 46 of the AA book says, "we found that as soon as we were able to lay aside prejudice & 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." Again, "...that Power, which is God." Our founders apparently held no reservations, whatsoever, with Who was dealing with them. Perhaps, we would be well advised to think twice before we attempt any ourselves. Alcoholics Anonymous is not allied with any religion, as we well know. But it is allied with God, "for our very lives as ex-problem drinkers depend on it." It is allied with spirituality, for despite what our preamble states, AA is not a "fellowship," it is a spiritual way of life.

It is our most earnest desire that no one reading this feel that we are trying to impose any presentation of God of His nature on anyone. Our real hope is that a reader may be jolted from a position of complacency or spiritual evasion & get about the business of recovery.