

“FORGIVENESS—A PATH TO PERSONAL FREEDOM”

Al-Anon District 75 Annual Fall Recovery Roundtable

Saturday, October 23, 2021

(Presented by Tina H., Al-Anon and Bill H., AA, St. Louis, Mo.)

In today’s Recovery Roundtable, we will discuss five questions:

1. Why are we here?

“Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps ...”

(AA, p. 59)

“When we speak of miracles happening in Alanon ...”

(ODAT, p. 283)

We all work the same Twelve Steps;

we each experience our own unique and personal spiritual awakening;

we share our spiritual awakenings with each other.

2. What is the “forgiveness thread” of our spiritual awakening?

“For when harboring such feelings, we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the the Spirit.”

(AA, p. 66)

“We began to see that the world and its people really dominated us.”

“No one ever truly recovered from the effects of alcoholism by harboring anger, or fear, or by holding on to grudges.”

(HAW, p. 85)

Resentments block our spiritual growth. Forgiving others reduces and eliminates our resentments. Our unwillingness to forgive allows negative emotions, including anger, resentment, envy, jealousy, self-righteousness and revenge, to grow and consume us. We remain self-centered and judgmental, separated from God.

3. What is forgiveness?

“Love and tolerance of others is our code.” (*Step Ten*)

(AA, p. 84)

“Forgiveness is no favor.”

(HAW, p. 86)

Forgiveness is a decision—a decision to let go of resentments and thoughts of revenge. The act of another person that hurt or offended us may not go away, but forgiveness lessens its grip on us, freeing us from the control of the other person.

Forgiveness is letting go of our desire to judge; letting go of our desire to punish; setting aside our illusion that anger/resentment gives us control.

4. How can I forgive? (*Steps Three through Nine*)

“We realized that the people who wronged us were perhaps spiritually sick.” (AA, p. 66)

“God save me from being angry.” (*Takes the focus off them, puts it on me*) (AA, p. 67)

“We avoid retaliation and argument.”

“God will show us how to take a kindly and tolerant view of each and every one.” “

“Forgiving is not forgetting, it’s letting go of the hurt.” (C2C, p. 178)

When I decide to forgive others, I learn to receive and feel forgiveness myself.

5. What benefits do I receive when I forgive? (*Steps Ten, Eleven, Twelve*)

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

(AA, p. 133)

“By releasing resentment, I set myself free”

(H4T, p. 274)

(Also, see promises in AA: pp. 63, 75, 84, 85, 88, 164)

Key: AA: Alcoholics Anonymous. ODAT: One Day at a Time. HAW: How Alanon Works.
C2C: Courage to Change. H4T: Hope for Today.