

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS WITH GOD, MYSELF AND OTHERS

An AA “Big Book” Step and Tradition Study

July 5 through October 4, 2021

(All page cites from Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition, except as noted)

(Note that *spiritual principles* are noted in italics throughout the text)

Establish a Healthy Relationship with Ourselves, including God—Steps Four, Five and Six.

Part 2, July 26: Steps Five and Six, pp. 75-76.

I *accept* in Step One that I have a fatal, incurable illness called alcoholism. I *accept* that I have a physical allergy to alcohol that reacts to one drink with an over-powering craving for more and more drinks. I *accept* that I am powerless over that physical craving and that I am powerless over not taking the first drink. As long as I denied and defied the truth of my illness, my life became more and more unmanageable—“pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization”. (p. 30) I got better for a period of time, but the day inevitably came when I had the “awful awakening to face the hideous Four Horsemen—Terror, Bewilderment, Frustration, Despair.” I was “unable to imagine life either with alcohol or without it.” (pp. 151-152)

I learned to *trust* in Step Two that there was hope—hope that I could recover “from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body”. I stopped “doubting the power of God”. (p. 52)

I decided in Step Three to “offer myself to [God] ... to ask that “I do [God’s] will always.” I decided since God was my “new Employer”, I would try to learn how to let [God] “build with me and do with me as [God would] ... to “take away my difficulties” ... to have “victory over [my difficulties]” ... use me as an example “to those I would help of [God’s Power, Love and Way of life]”. (p. 63) I *accepted* my need for God’s help and became willing to *trust* God’s help.

I “launched out on a course of vigorous action” (p. 63) with my Step Four inventories of my resentments, fears and sexual conduct. I *accepted* that my resentments were fatal—I was letting my unforgiving feelings toward others dominate me. I prayed to God for *restraint*, “save me from being angry”—to *forgive* those who had harmed me—“kindly and tolerant view of each and every one”. (p. 67) I became *honest* about my part—I had been “selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened”. (p. 67) I *accepted* that my fears were largely based on a failure of my self-reliance. I began to *trust* “infinite God rather than [my] finite self”. (p. 68) I *trusted* God “to remove [my] fear, and direct [my] attention to what [God] would have [me] be”. (p. 68) I *accepted* my inconsiderate conduct in my relationships, sexual and otherwise. I *honestly* admitted the inconsiderate part I played in these relationships. I asked, “God to mold [my] ideals.” (p. 69) I *trusted* God to *restrain* me, to *forgive* me and to help me live up to these ideals.

STEP FIVE.

“Having made our personal inventory, what shall we do about it? We have been trying to get a new attitude, a new relationship with our Creator, 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 finger on the weak items in our personal inventory. Now these are about to be cast out.” (p. 72)

My “new [*trusting* and *honest*] relationship with [my] Creator” began in Steps One through Three. I have begun to have a healthy relationship with myself as I accept my shortcomings and become willing to ask God to help me with *restraint* and *forgiveness*.

I “must be entirely *honest* with somebody if [I] expect to live long or happily in this world” ... waste no time ... prepared for a long talk ... life-and-death errand.” (pp. 72-75)

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STEP FIVE (con’t).

“Now [the weak items in our personal inventory] are about to be cast out.” (p. 75)
I continue the process to “relieve me of the bondage of self” with *honest* self-examination.

“We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past.” (p. 75)

“Once we have taken this step, withholding nothing, we are delighted.” (p. 75)

My “delight” is because I have begun to have a healthy relationship with myself!
I have *trusted* another person with the truth about myself as best I can at the time. By being *honest* with another person about the less pleasant parts of me and my past behaviors, I have begun to experience the relief from “the bondage of self” that are my secrets. I am beginning to *accept* all of me, good and bad. (See Step Seven)

“[I] can look the world in the eye.” I am *honest* with me. I no longer fear my secrets.

“[I] can be alone at perfect peace and ease.” I have begun to experience *forgiveness* as I ask God to *restrain* my anger and ask God to help me *forgive* those who have harmed me.

“[My] fears fall from me.” “We ask [God] to remove our fear and direct our attention to what [God] would have us be. At once, we commence to outgrow fear.” (p. 68)

“[I] begin to feel the nearness of [my] Creator.” “... to face, and to be rid of, the things in ourselves which had been blocking us.” (p. 64)

“... now [I] 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.”

“We thank God from the bottom of our heart that we know [God] better.”

I am experiencing the healthy effect of the principles of *acceptance, trust, honesty, restraint* and *forgiveness* in my new, healthy relationship with God and myself.

Step Five/Step Six. (p. 75)

Now I must go further to improve this new healthy relationship with God and myself. I must become willing to be *honest* and *accept* the objectionable things about myself that have been disclosed to me in Steps Four and Five. I must *trust* God more and ask God to grant me the willingness to exercise more *restraint* and *forgiveness* as I “let go” of my objectionable things. I answer the questions on page 75 that prepare me for Step Six:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| - Have I omitted anything? | Lied? |
| - Is my work solid so far? | Honest? |
| - Are the stones properly in place? | Admitted part I played? |
| - Have I skimmed on the cement put into the foundation? | Told partial truth? |
| - Have I tried to make mortar without sand? | Omitted prayer? |

Step Six. (p. 76)

“If we can answer to our satisfaction, we then look at *Step Six*.”

(See p. 63—similar to “Being convinced” preceding Step Three)

- Am I now ready to let God remove from me ... my admitted objectionable things?
- Can God now take them all—every one?
- If I still cling to something I will not **let go**, I ask God to help me be willing.

The most effective thing I can do in my new, healthy relationship with myself is to put God first in my life— all day, every day. I *trust* God to grant me willingness to **let go** of my objectionable things I now *accept* are blocking me from seeking God’s spiritual help for my spiritual malady.

Next Time: Establish a Healthy Relationship with Others, including God: Steps 7 and 8.