

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)

Establish a Healthy Relationship with God—Steps One, Two and Three: Part 2.

July 12: Step Three, pp. 58-63.

In our previous session, we discussed in Step One the hopelessness of our lives in the absence of a healthy relationship with God. We found hope in the possibility of a healthy relationship with God in Step Two. We saw that *acceptance* of our powerlessness and the unmanageability of our lives, of the fatal nature of our alcoholism illness, was an essential admission for us to begin to desire recovery. We began to hope for our ability to *trust* in a Power greater than ourselves which could restore us to sane thinking. Now, I want to stop doubting God—to learn how to live a sober, sane and healthy life on God’s terms, not mine.

I decide to learn how to establish a healthy relationship with this Higher Power, the God of my understanding—to *accept* my need for spiritual help and become willing to learn to *trust* God: “Each individual, in the personal stories, describes in his own language and from his own point of view the way he established his relationship with God.” (p. 29)

- I have received important information that has prepared me for this decision:
“... a common solution ... a **way out** on which we can absolutely agree ...” (p. 17)
- What is the “**way**”?
- “... find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem.” (p. 45)
 - “... solve their problems by a simple reliance upon the Spirit of the Universe ...” (p. 52)
 - “God either is, or He isn’t. What was our choice to be?” (p. 53)
 - “... deep down in every [person] is the fundamental idea of God.” (p. 55)
 - “When we drew near to Him He disclosed Himself to us!” (p. 57)
 - “Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path.” (p. 58)
- What does “**out**” mean here?
- First, let’s look at “**out from**” (the bondage of self, p. 63):
- “... recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body.” (p. xiii)
 - “... lose all control of his liquor consumption, once he starts to drink.” (p. 21)
 - “... which led in time to pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization.” (p. 30)
 - “... he went to pieces quickly and was dead within four years.” (p. 33)
 - “... but he failed to enlarge his spiritual life.” (p. 35)
 - “... self-knowledge would not help in those strange mental blank spots.” (p. 42)
 - “... was not a basic solution of these bedevilmments more important ...” (p. 52)
 - “Without help [alcoholism] is too much for us.” (p. 59)
 - “Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness ... or it kills us!” (p. 62)
- Now, let’s look at “**out to**” (the world of the Spirit, p. 84):
- “... has gained access to, and believes in, a Power greater than himself. This Power has ... accomplished the miraculous, the humanly impossible.” (p. 50)
 - “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.” (p. 52)
 - “But there is One who has all power—that One is God. May you find Him now!” (p. 59)

Following the “a,b,c’s” on p. 60, we read: “Being convinced, *we were at Step Three*, which is 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?”

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To establish a healthy relationship with God:

- a. “The first requirement is that we be convinced that any life run on self-will can hardly be a success ... always in collision with something or somebody.” (p. 60)
“... if only people would do as he wished ...” (p. 61)
“... he is sure that other people are more to blame.” (p. 61)
“Selfishness—self-centeredness ... is the root of our troubles!” (p. 62)
- b. “First of all, we had to quit playing God. It didn’t work.” (p. 62)
- c. To seek God, I had to stop being unhealthy in my relationship with God:
“The word God still aroused a certain antipathy.” (p. 12)
“... the sense of His presence ... blotted out by worldly clamors ...” (pp. 12-13)
“Some of us have been violently anti-religious.” (p. 45)
“... we rejected this [childhood] conception because it seemed inadequate.” (p. 45)
“... we had abandoned the God idea entirely.” (p. 45)
“... dependence upon a Power beyond ourselves was somewhat weak ...” (p. 46)
“How could a Supreme Being have anything to do with [this world]?” (p. 46)

“Next, we decided ... God was going to be our Director ... a new Employer.” (pp. 62-63)

I decide to enter into a healthy relationship with God, on God’s terms, not mine.

You told me that God loves me. I desire to learn to receive God’s love, and to love God.

God as we understood Him:

- “... a God personal to me ...” (p. 12)
“... a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem.” (p. 45)
“... a Spirit of the Universe underlying the totality of things ...” (p. 46)
“... Presence of Infinite Power and Love.” (p. 56)
“When we drew near to Him He disclosed Himself to us.” (p. 57)
“But there is One who has all power—that One is God. May you find Him now!” (p. 59)
“Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do Your bidding.” (p. 76)
“... place the outcome in God’s hands or he would soon start drinking again ...” (p. 80)
“... our Creator show us the way of patience, tolerance, kindness and love.” (p. 83)
“... God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.” (p. 84)
“... receiving strength, inspiration, and direction from Him ...” (p. 85)
“... sense the flow of His Spirit into us ... we have become God-conscious.” (p. 85)
“... we ask God to direct our thinking ... inspiration, intuitive thought, decision.” (p. 86)

Our will:

My will is choices, the decisions I make. I desire for God to help me make healthy choices. I desire for God to help me decide to respond in a healthy way to those people, circumstances and situations over which I now *accept* that I am powerless.

Our life:

My life is the consequence of my choices. I desire to *trust* God with the consequences of the choices I make, and to help me deal with those consequences in a healthy manner.

Decided to turn our will and our life over to God as we understood Him:

“We were now at Step Three ... ‘God, I offer myself to [You], to build with me and to do with me as [You] will. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do [Your] will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of [Your] Power, [Your] Love, and [Your] Way of Life. May I do [Your] will always!’ ”

Next time: Establish a Healthy Relationship with Ourselves, including God: Steps 4 and 5.