

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.)

Healthy Relationships in Sponsorship, including God—Step Twelve, Part One.

August 30, Chapter Seven “Working with Others”, pp. 89-103.

“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.” (p. 60)

“... we tried to carry this message to alcoholics ...”

“Each day, somewhere in the world, recovery begins when one alcoholic talks with another alcoholic, sharing experience, strength, and hope.” (“**Work**”) (p. xxii)

“Each individual ... describes in his own language and from his own point of view the way he established his relationship with God.” (“**Message**”) (p. 29)

“Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum *service* to God and the people about us.” (“**You can help**”) (p. 77)

“Working with Others”: Healthy Relationship Practices we learn in Sponsorship.

In Chapter Seven, we learn how to “sponsor” another alcoholic—how *service* is a spiritual principle for healthy relationships—why “love and tolerance of others is our code.”

There are many healthy relationship practices presented in this chapter. Each of these relationship practices are essential for healthy sponsorship in AA. These healthy sponsorship relationship practices are also applicable to any healthy relationship, in or out of AA. Our Step Twelve work, trying to carry the message of our spiritual awakening to alcoholics, helps us develop our healthy relationship principles and practices we learned in our first Eleven steps. In being of *service* to other alcoholics, we learn to be of healthy *service* in all our relationships.

“Spiritual principles” we have seen in our “Healthy Relationships” work so far:

Steps One, Two, Three:	<i>Acceptance, Trust.</i>	(with God)
Steps Four, Five, Six:	<i>Honesty, Restraint, Forgiveness.</i>	(with Ourselves)
Steps Seven, Eight, Nine:	<i>Responsibility, Consideration.</i>	(With Others)
Steps Ten, Eleven:	<i>Patience, Tolerance, Kindliness, Love.</i>	(Daily)
Step Twelve.	<i>Service.</i>	(in all our Relationships)

Introduction and Preparation for First Visit: “Working with Others”, pp. 89-91.

“Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive **work** with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail. This is our *twelfth suggestion*: Carry this **message** to other alcoholics! **You can help** when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others fail. Remember they are very ill.” (p. 89)

“Life will take on new meaning.”

“So cooperate; never criticize. To be helpful is our only aim.” (“Helpful”, not enable) “

“They should be patient, realizing they are dealing with a sick person.” (p. 66). (p. 90)

“... find out all you can ... if he wants to quit for good ... go to any extreme ...”

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First Visit: “Working with Others”, pp. 91-96.

- “Tell ... about your ... experiences ...being careful not to moralize or lecture.” (p. 91)
- “Let him draw his own conclusion ... alcoholism as illness ... hopelessness ...” (p. 92)
- “Tell him exactly what happened to you.”* (p. 93)
- “The main thing is that he be willing to believe in a Power greater than himself and that he live by spiritual principles.”* “
- “...faith ... accompanied by self-sacrifice and unselfish, constructive action.” “
- “... he place the welfare of other people ahead of his own.” (p. 77) (p. 94)
- “If your talk has been sane, quiet and full of human understanding ...” “
- “Do not contradict such views.” “
- “Give him a chance to think it over.” (p. 95)
- “Never talk down to an alcoholic from any moral or spiritual rooftop ...” “
- “Offer ... friendship and fellowship.” (p. 77) “
- “If he is to find God, the desire must come from within.” “

Second Visit and On-going Sponsorship: “Working with Others”, pp. 96-103.

- “Let him know you are available ... but do not insist upon it ...” (p. 96)
- “But be sure you use discretion.” “
- “Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery.” (p. 77) (p. 97)
- “... continue to be friendly to them.” “
- “It is not the matter of giving that is in question, but when and how to give.” (p. 98)
- “The only condition is that he trust in God and clean house.” (Steps 1-9) “
- “Argument and fault-finding are to be avoided like the plague.” “
- “... defects ... can be discussed in an atmosphere of helpfulness and friendliness.” (p. 99)
- “... the alcoholic continues to demonstrate that he can be sober, considerate and helpful, regardless of what anyone says or does.” “
- “You can’t talk your way out of a problem you behaved yourself into.” (Stephen C.)
- “Both you and the [newcomer] must walk day by day in the path of spiritual progress.” (Steps 10, 11) (p. 100)
- “Have I any good social, business, or personal reason for going to this place?” (p. 101)
- “... be sure you are on solid spiritual ground before you start and that your motive for going is thoroughly good. Do not think what you can get out of the occasion. Think of what you can bring to it.” (p. 77) (p. 102)
- “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.” (p. 77) “
- “We are careful never to show intolerance or hatred of drinking ...” (p. 103)
- “...we shall be of little use if our attitude is one of bitterness or hostility.” “

“After all, our problems were of our own making. (p. 62) Bottles were only a symbol. (p. 64) Besides, we have stopped fighting anybody or anything. (p. 84) We have to!” “

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The “Healthy Relationships” service promise of Step Twelve in “Working with Others”:

“Both you and the [newcomer] 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!” (p. 100)

Next Time: “Healthy Relationships” in the Marriage, including God—“To Wives”.