

## **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, unless otherwise noted.)

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

### **Healthy Relationships in the Fellowship, including God—Step Twelve, Part Five.**

**September 27, Chapter Eleven “A Vision for You”, pp. 151-164.**

**“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)

**“... and [we tried] to practice these principles in all our affairs.”**

“A Vision for You” is more than a vision statement. It is a summation of the “Vision Plan of Action” that is the book Alcoholics Anonymous. This chapter summarizes the history and the vision of Alcoholics Anonymous—as both the fellowship of and for alcoholics, and the Twelve Step spiritual solution for the individual suffering with the illness of alcoholism.

“A Vision for You” includes every *spiritual principle* we have discussed in this series that instill and sustain healthy relationship practices, especially *service*.

#### **“The Vision”, Part One: The Fellowship.**

“I know I must get along without liquor ... Have you a sufficient substitute?

Yes, there is a substitute and it is vastly more than that. It is a fellowship in Alcoholics Anonymous.” (A substitute for liquor and its “illusion”: p. 151, para. 1) (p. 152)

The newcomer’s “vision” is only learning how to live without alcohol.

The “vision” for the newcomer is expanded by introducing the fellowship as not only a “sufficient substitute” for liquor but as “vastly more than that”. This “Vision of the Fellowship”, including the nurturing of the spiritual solution, has been present since early in the book:

“We meet frequently so that newcomers may find the fellowship ...” (p. 15)

“But there exists among us a fellowship, a friendliness, and an understanding ...” (p. 17)

“... having shared in a **common peril** is one element in the powerful cement which binds us. But that in itself would never have held us together as we are now

joined ... we have discovered a **common solution** ... a way out on which we can absolutely agree, and upon which we can join in brotherly and harmonious action.” “

“... see how our experience can benefit others.” (Change in what is “desirable”.) (p. 84)

“... to see a fellowship grow up about you ...” (p. 89)

“Offer [the newcomer] friendship and fellowship.” (p. 95)

#### **“The Vision”, Part Two: The Spiritual Awakening produced by the Twelve Steps.**

“A spiritual experience, he conceded, was absolutely necessary ...” (p. 155)

The vision of “Spiritual Awakening” has been present since early in the book:

“... recovery begins when one alcoholic talks with another alcoholic, sharing experience, strength, and hope.” (A new vision replaces the old vision.) (p. xxii)

“... when these things were done ... a new relationship with my Creator ...” (p. 13)

“*There is a solution* ... accept spiritual help.” (Cease resisting.) (p. 25)

“... directions are given ... the way he established his relationship with God.” (p. 29)

“... find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem.” (p. 45)

“... ‘spiritual experience’ ... ‘spiritual awakening’ ... personality change sufficient to bring about a recovery from alcoholism ...” (p. 567)

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#### **Healthy Relationship Practices of the Spiritual Awakening in the Fellowship of AA.**

“How is that to come about?” You ask. “Where am I to find these people?” (p. 152)

“You will be bound to them with new and wonderful ties

... escape disaster together

...commence shoulder to shoulder your common journey.” *Service.* (pp. 152-153)

“... give of yourself that others may survive and rediscover life.” *Service.* (p. 153)

“Should you wish [to rise out of such misery, bad repute and hopelessness]

above all else, and are willing to make use of our experience ... *Honesty.* “

(See the revealing description of “the hideous Four Horsemen”, p. 151)

“... a glimpse of your future ... describe the growth of the fellowship ...” (pp. 153-159)

“Years ago, in 1935, one of our number made a journey ... perhaps

he could handle, say, three drinks—no more ... those other

alcoholics ... sanity returned ...” *Restraint.* (p. 154)

“[Bill W.] related his experience [to Dr. Bob S.]” *Honesty.* (p. 155)

“... a spiritual experience was absolutely necessary ...” *Acceptance.* “

“... both saw that they must keep spiritually active.” *Responsibility.* (p. 156)

“ ‘Damn little to laugh about that I can see.’ The two friends spoke of their spiritual experience ...” *Forgiveness, Tolerance.* (p. 157)

“After several failures to find others, a fourth turned up.” *Patience.* (p. 158)

“They shared their homes, their slender resources ...” *Kindliness.* (p. 159)

“A year and six months later these three had succeeded with seven more.” *Patience, Trust, Restraint, Consideration, Tolerance, Love.* “

“Seeing much of each other, scarce an evening passed that someone’s home did not shelter a little gathering of men and women, happy in their release, and constantly thinking of how they might present their discovery to some newcomer.” *Service.* (pp. 159-163)

“... one night a week for a meeting ... fellowship ... provide a time and place where new people might bring their problems.” *Responsibility.* (p. 159)

“Many a distracted wife has visited this house to find loving and understanding company ...” *Love, Kindliness, Service.* (p. 160)

“Many an alcoholic who entered there came away with an answer ... the expressions on the faces ... indefinable something in the eyes ... the stimulating and electric atmosphere of the place ... the absence of intolerance ...” (see p. 151, para.1) *Consideration.* “

“No one is too discredited or has sunk too low to be welcomed cordially—if he means business.” *Acceptance, Forgiveness, Tolerance.* (p. 161)

“Thus we grow. And so can you ... to duplicate ... what we have accomplished Is only a matter of willingness, *patience* and labor.” *Trust, Responsibility, Service.* (pp. 162- 163)

**“... real reliance is always upon [God] ... how to create the fellowship you crave.”** (p. 164)

**Next Time: Healthy Relationships with God, Myself and Others, in the Twelve Traditions.**