

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 the Family, including God—Step Twelve, Part Three.

September 13, Chapter Nine “The Family Afterward”, pp. 122-135.

“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.”

“I have seen hundreds of families set their feet in the path that really goes somewhere; have seen the most impossible domestic situations righted; feuds and bitterness of all sorts wiped out.” (p. 15)

“Unless one’s family expresses a desire to live upon spiritual principles we think we ought not to urge them.” (p. 83)

“... helping to settle family differences ...” (p. 161)

“The Family Afterward”: Healthy Relationship Practices we learn in the Family.

In Chapter Nine, we encounter the family of the newly-sober alcoholic. “To Wives” dealt primarily with issues involving living with a still-active alcoholic. Now, we learn what the family can, and cannot do, to help the alcoholic and themselves deal with the family illness of alcoholism. Alcoholics Anonymous was written for loved ones of alcoholics, too!

Several healthy relationship practices are suggested in this chapter for family, friends and loved ones of alcoholics. Again, these healthy relationship practices are simple to state—and virtually impossible to do without help from a Higher Power.

As in the chapter “To Wives”, several of these healthy relationship practices became part of the Alanon program: powerlessness of one person over another; the difference between helping and enabling; the difference between explanation and excuse for behavior; the need to “meet upon the common ground of tolerance, understanding and love”. (p. 122)

The *spiritual principles* we learned to practice in the first eleven steps are vital here:

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

The Family Problem.

“We find the more one member of the family demands that the others concede to him, the more resentful they become. This makes for discord and unhappiness.” (p.122)

“The entire family is, to some extent, ill.” “

The Family Solution.

“All members of the family should meet upon the common ground of tolerance, understanding and love. This involves a process of deflation.” (p. 122)

“... the family ... may do well to examine the spiritual principles by which the alcoholic member is trying to live.” (p. 130)

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 Choices the Family Members Can Make, guided by Spiritual Principles.

“Cessation of drinking is but the first step away from a highly strained, abnormal condition ... years of living with an alcoholic is almost sure to make any wife or child neurotic. The entire family is, to some extent, ill.” *Acceptance. Honesty.* (p. 122)

“Family ... demand that dad bring [the good old days] back instantly!” (p. 123)

“... the new structures will take years to complete.” *Patience.* “

“Now and then, the family will be plagued by spectres from the past ... bury [them].” (p. 123)

“The alcoholic’s past thus becomes the principle asset of the family ...” *Trust.* (p. 124)

“It is possible to dig up past misdeeds so they become a blight ...” (p. 124)

... past occurrences should not be discussed.” *Restraint.* (p. 125)

“We do talk about each other ... temper such talk by a spirit of *love* and *tolerance*.” (p. 125)

“... we do not relate intimate experiences of another person ...” (p. 125)

“... we ... stick to our own stories.” *Restraint. Responsibility.* “

“[Family] ... been neglected ... dad doesn’t give freely of himself. Resentment grows.” (p. 126)

“Let them praise his progress ... *tolerance, love* and spiritual understanding.” (p. 127)

“... material well-being always followed spiritual progress ...”. *Service.* (p. 127)

“... family talks will be constructive ... without heated argument, self-pity, self-justification or resentful criticism.” *Forgiveness. Tolerance.* (p. 127)

“... demand that the family find God in a hurry, or exhibit amazing indifference ...” (p. 128)

“... a spiritual life which does not include his family obligations ...” *Patience.* (p. 129)

“Though the family does not fully agree with dad’s spiritual activities ...” (p. 129)

“... they should let him have his head.” *Kindliness.* “

“Whether the family has spiritual convictions or not, they may do well to examine the principles by which the alcoholic member is trying to live.” *Consideration.* (p. 130)

Opportunities for Spiritual Balance in Healthy Family Relationships.

Shared Family Leadership: (p. 130)

Balanced Outside Interests: (p. 131)

New Social Life: (p. 131)

Possible Religious Life: (p. 131)

Enjoying Life Together: (p. 132)

Restoring Health: (p. 133)

Healthy Sexual Relations: (p. 134)

Friendly Relations with the Children: (p. 134)

“We have three little mottoes which are apropos. Here they are:

First Things First. Live and Let Live. Easy Does It.” (p. 135)

Next Time: “Healthy Relationships” in the Workplace and the Fellowship, including God.