

**TWO “MAGNIFICENT STANDARDS”—HUMILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY—
and SEVEN ATTRIBUTES of our SPIRITUAL AWAKENING.**

A “Threads of Recovery” Big Book Study Workshop: April 4 through June 27, 2022.

(Page cites from Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition, unless otherwise noted)

“As we know, all A.A. progress can be reckoned in terms of just two words: **humility** and **responsibility**. Our whole spiritual development can be accurately measured by our degree of adherence to these magnificent standards. Ever deepening humility, accompanied by an ever greater willingness to accept and to act upon clear-cut obligations—these are truly our touchstones for all growth in the life of the spirit. They hold up to us the very essence of right being and right doing. It is by them that we are enabled to find and do God’s will.”

Bill W. speech at GSC, 1965

Steps One through Six produce enough **humility** in us for us to try to fulfill our real purpose—“to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us”. (p. 77)

“That basic ingredient of all **humility**, a desire to seek and do God’s will ...”. (T&T, p. 72)

“... **humility** ... to move out from ourselves toward others and toward God.” (T&T, p. 76)

Our **responsibility** grows in Steps Seven through Twelve. We become responsible to share our spiritual awakening with alcoholics—try to practice these principles in all our affairs.

“I am **responsible**. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that: I am **responsible**.” Al S. speech at GSC, 1965

*Our recovery depends upon our personal growth in **humility**, with God’s help.*

*Our recovery depends upon our willingness to act with **responsibility**, with God’s help.*

In this study we see how seven attributes of the Twelve Step spiritual principles enable our “personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism ...” (p. 567):

Honesty grows in us in Steps One, Two and Three, and continues forward;

Forgiveness grows in us in Steps Four and Five, and continues forward;

Trust grows in us in Steps Six and Seven, and continues forward;

Consideration grows in us in Steps Eight and Nine, and continues forward;

Love and **Tolerance** grow in us in Steps Ten and Eleven, and continue forward;

Service grows in us in Step Twelve, and continues forward in our Spiritual Awakening.

.....
The first 60 pages in the Big Book provide all the information I need to **honestly** admit my powerlessness and my unmanageability, and to **humbly** come to believe in my need for help from a Power greater than myself to restore my sanity. Yet, after the “a,b,c.’s” on p. 60:

“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?” (p. 60)

Since we still may not be “convinced”, our book answers these two questions again on pp. 60-63. *Understanding and accepting the answers in the book to these two questions is critical to my Step Three decision, my **honest** and **humble** decision to learn how to seek the help I need from this loving Power greater than myself.*

“We realize we know only a little. God will constantly disclose more to you and to us.”

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Two “Magnificent Standards”—Humility and Responsibility—and the Attribute of Honesty.

Humility and Honesty in Step Three. (Alcoholics Anonymous, pp. 60-63, “How it Works”)

“Just what do we mean by that?” (Honesty)

“...we be convinced that any life run on self-will can hardly be a success.” (p. 60)
“... we are almost always in collision with something or somebody ...” “
“... like an actor who wants to run the whole show ...” “
“... if only people would do as he wished ...” (p. 61)
“... he is sure other people are more to blame.” “
“... a self-seeker ...” “
“... victim of the delusion ... satisfaction and happiness ... he only manages well.” “
“Our actor is self-centered—ego-centric ...” “
“Selfishness—self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles.” (p. 62)
“Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us. God makes that possible.” “

“Just what do we do?” (Humility)

“We had to have God’s help.” (p. 62)
“First of all, we had to quit playing God. It didn’t work.” “
“Next, we decided ... God was going to be our Director.” “
“We had a new Employer.” (p. 63)

“Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.” (A **humble choice to learn how** to turn my will and life over to God.)

“God, I *offer* myself to Thee, to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt.” (p. 63)
First, I “offer” myself—the beginning of letting go of my “self-will run riot”.
Second, I accept that there is going to be some “re-modeling” (“*build* with me”).
Third, I accept that there will be different priorities for my life (“*do* with me”).
*I make this offering of myself as **honestly** as I can at the time of my offering.*

“Relieve me of the *bondage* of self, that I may better do Thy will.” (p. 63)
Here is the centerpiece of Step Three—the summary purpose of my recovery—
relief from the bondage of my dis-honest, prideful, un-guided self will!
*I make this request as **humbly** as I can to God as I understand God at the time of my request.*

“Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life.” (p. 63)
I ask God to “remove” my difficulties, so that I can become a good example of God’s work for others (*to be*), and I can actually become helpful to others (*to do*).
*I **honestly** and **humbly** request God’s help—God’s Power, God’s Love and God’s Way of life. Faith is God’s gift. God is willing to give me faith—when, and if, I ask for it.*

“May I do Thy will always!” (p. 63)
This is the first of many times I will seek that “God’s will, not mine, be done”.
*I **honestly** desire to do God’s will. I **humbly** admit that I “may” do God’s will with God’s help.*

“We thought well before taking this step making sure we were ready; that we could at last abandon ourselves utterly to Him.”

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Observations on Humility and Honesty in Step Three.

Step Three Promises:

“When we sincerely took such a position ... We had a new Employer.”

“Being all powerful, He provided what we needed,
if we kept close to Him and performed His work well.”

“... we became less and less interested in ourselves, our little plans and designs.”

“More and more we became interested in seeing what we could contribute to life.”

“As we felt new power flow in, as we enjoyed peace of mind, as we discovered we could face life successfully, as we became conscious of His presence, we began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter.”

“We were reborn.”

1. Step One diagnoses my problem. Step Two prescribes my solution. In Step Three, I decide to **honestly** believe the diagnosis and to **humbly** learn how to implement the solution.
2. I am not asked to give up my self-will in Step Three, but the bondage of “self-will run riot”.
3. I have a “new Employer”. I **humbly** learn how to work for the “new boss” in Steps Four through Nine. I **honestly** continue to work for my “new boss” in Steps Ten through Twelve.
4. Step Three is my decision to learn how to let God provide what I need, so that the “new Power” could flow into me—when I “kept close to [God] and performed [God’s] work well.”
5. Believing is the key to understanding—not the other way around. I “come to believe”, thus developing a desire to understand. If I wait to understand God, I will never come to believe.
6. My **healthy** “understanding” of God began when I “came to believe” that there is a Power greater than myself and **humbly** accepted that I am not that Power, that I am “not-God”.
7. Belief is more than mental awareness. Belief is a course of action, a way of life. When I admit and come to believe in Steps One and Two, I desire, and decide to learn, a new way to live.
8. My understanding of God grows as I **honestly** trust God and **humbly** seek God’s direction.
9. “Reborn” means God helps me hit the “re-set” button—one more chance to live life well.
10. Re-born” in the context of Step Three means my spirit passes into a new consciousness. I **honestly** seek to be centered in God’s will, not my will. My **humble** hope is now in God.
11. A member once said, “our need is God’s opportunity”. Step Three is my **honest** decision to **humbly** offer myself to God so that God can work His will, His “opportunity”, with me.
12. In Step Three, I take my third risk in the Spiritual Awakening of my recovery from alcoholism—I decide to learn how to **humbly** seek God’s will to direct my will (my choices) and to **honestly** accept God’s will in my life (the consequences of my choices).

“This was only a beginning, though if honestly and humbly made, an effect, sometimes a very great one, was felt at once.” (p. 63)

Next time: Humility and Forgiveness in Step Four.