

**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 (silkworth.net)

Steps One through Six grow my **humility** enough for me 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)

My **responsibility** to serve God and others grows in Steps Seven through Twelve:

“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

Seven attributes of the Twelve Step spiritual principles enable our “personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism ...” (p. 567):

In Steps One, Two and Three, I become **honest** about my alcoholism illness and my need for a spiritual solution. I stop separating myself from God.

In Steps Four and Five, I admit my selfish shortcomings—**trust** God to replace anger with forgiveness—replace fear with **trust** in God—seek God’s help to be **considerate** of others. I stop separating myself from me.

In Steps Six and Seven, I am **humble** enough to “let go” and **responsible** enough to “let God” remove my shortcomings. In Steps Eight and Nine, I am **responsible** for the harm I caused others—willing to make **considerate** amends. I stop separating myself from others.

In Steps Ten and Eleven, I apply the spiritual attributes of **love** and **tolerance** daily—*to avoid separating myself from God, myself and others*. In my “meditation moments”, I ask God ... I pause and “do nothing”—*to receive God’s will and God’s power for me that day.*

In Step Twelve, I try to “carry the message” of my spiritual awakening to alcoholics and I try to “practice these principles” of the Twelve Steps (application) in all my affairs. (Service)

My first “big lesson” in recovery is how powerless I am over so many more things than alcohol; my second “big lesson” is that God is present to help me deal with all the limitations that come with my powerlessness—that in God’s presence is opportunity. My third “big lesson” is that in trying to be of **service** to God and others I am **responsible**, with God’s help, for “my part” in every relationship, situation and circumstance—while in **humility** I let God be responsible for the outcomes. I experience freedom from my “bondage of self”—liberation.

*My spiritual life is applied in certainty. My spiritual life grows in uncertainty. God gives me what I need to be **responsible**, to do my part, with certainty—and to accept, with **humility**, the uncertainty of God’s outcome. “We try to carry the message—not the alcoholic.”*

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Two “Magnificent Standards”—Humility and Responsibility—and the attribute of Service.

Humility and Responsibility with Service in Step Twelve—Part One. (pp. 89-150)

*I seek God’s Power in my limitation; God’s Love for my opportunity; and God’s Way of life as my liberation from the “bondage of self” (“L. O. L.”) as I try to share, with **humility** and **responsibility**, the gift of recovery I have received. I seek a life of **service** to God and others.*

My real purpose is “to be of maximum service to God and the people about” me. (p. 77)

*Step Twelve: my **humble** application “faith without works is dead”. (See pp.14, 76, 88)*
I have “faith”—Step Twelve is the “work” (service) God gives me to “enlarge my spiritual life”:

“For if an alcoholic failed to perfect and enlarge his spiritual life through work....” (pp.14-15)

“All went well for a time, but he failed to enlarge his spiritual life.” (p. 35)

Step Twelve: my daily **responsibility** for considerate and compassionate **service** to all.

“Alcoholics Anonymous” presents Step Twelve in Chapters Seven through Eleven.

Chapter Seven: “Carry the message” of my spiritual awakening to *alcoholics*—Service.

“You can help when no one else can.” Responsibility. (p. 89)

“So cooperate; never criticize.” Humility. “

“Continue to speak of alcoholism as an illness ...” Honesty. (p. 92)

“Tell him exactly what happened to you.” Honesty, Trust. (p. 93)

“... not ... agree with your conception of God ...” Consideration. “

“... live by spiritual principles.” Responsibility. “

“... never show intolerance or hatred ...” Love and Tolerance. (p. 103)

“... we have stopped fighting ...” Forgiveness. “

Chapter Eight: “practice these principles” in the *marriage*—Service.

“... situation is too difficult ... no unhappiness ...” Honesty. (p. 104)

“Try not to condemn ... he is ... very sick ...” Forgiveness. (p. 108)

(Four “categories” of alcoholics, pp.108-114). Illness ... don’t enable, pp. 114-121)

“If God can solve the ... riddle of alcoholism ...” Trust. (p. 116)

“... faith and sincerity ... put to the test.” Forgiveness, Consideration. (p. 117)

“Patience, tolerance, understanding and love ...” Love and Tolerance. (p. 118)

“When resentful thoughts come ... pause ...” Humility (p. 119)

“... thought to the wives ...” Responsibility. “

Chapter Nine: “Practice these principles” in the *family*—Service.

“... common ground of tolerance ... love.” Love and Tolerance. (p. 122)

“Showing others who suffer ... given help ...” Responsibility. (p. 124)

“... tolerance, love and spiritual understanding.” Forgive, Love, Tolerance. (p. 127)

“... examine the principles ... adopts program ...” Forgiveness, Trust. (p. 130)

“... family watches for these tendencies ...” Consideration. (p. 131)

“We have recovered ...” (from hopelessness) Humility, Honesty (p. 132)

“... have been given the power to help others.” Responsibility. “

“Avoid ... deliberate manufacture of misery ...” Humility. (p. 133)

“... trouble comes ... [God’s] omnipotence.” Humility, Responsibility. “

“... can’t ... forgive ... in time they will see ...” Forgiveness. (p. 134)

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

First Things First. (Accept Limitations) Responsibility.

Live and Let Live. (Accept Opportunity) Love and Tolerance.

Easy Does It. (Accept Liberation) Humility. (p. 135)

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Chapter Ten: “Practice these principles” in the workplace—Service.

“I did not understand alcoholism.”	Humility.	(p. 137)
“... helped by better understanding ...”	Responsibility.	“
“... concede that your employee is ill ...”	Consideration.	(p. 140)
“... he is mentally and physically sick.”	Love and Tolerance.	(p. 141)
“... transformation of thought and attitude.”	Honesty.	(p. 143)
“... place recovery above everything ...”	Humility and Responsibility.	“
“... this book ... may solve his problem.”	Trust.	(pp. 143-144)
“... enemies of us alcoholics... resentment ...”	Forgiveness	(p. 145)
“... he must be honest if he would live at all.”	Honesty.	(p. 146)

.....
*With **humility** and **responsibility**, I use the spiritual attributes of **honesty**, **forgiveness**, **trust**, **consideration**, **love** and **tolerance** in **service** with alcoholics and in all my affairs.
I “enlarge my spiritual life” as I move from limitation to opportunity to liberation (L. O. L.)*
.....

Observations: Humility and Responsibility with Service in Step Twelve—Part One.

1. Step Twelve is my daily living opportunity to give away what has been so freely given to me.
“Faith has to work twenty-four hours a day in and through us, or we perish.” (p. 16)
2. I find it difficult to get what I want because I don’t always want what is best for me. God finds it difficult to give me what is best for me because when God tries to give me what is best for me I won’t always accept it or receive it. I learn to **A. S. K.—Admit I need help ... Seek** because *I want help* from God ... **Know** so that *I can receive help* from God.
3. God gave me **humility** with Steps One through Six of my recovery. I didn’t know that was “best” for me. God gave me **responsibility** in Steps Seven through Twelve of my recovery. I didn’t know that was “best” for me. As I continue to try to be of **service** to alcoholics and to all other people in my life, I realize what God knows is best for me is what I wanted all along.
4. I do things God’s way so that I can accept God’s way for me, not so that I can get my way!
As I enlarge my spiritual life with a **humble** attitude (“be”) and **responsible** service (“do”), I am more grateful for God’s way and timing—less resentful at not doing or getting “my way”.
5. I am on the spiritual path because of uncertainty. The more I embrace the uncertainty, the more my God-consciousness grows. I encounter new situations of powerlessness each day. These situations make me aware of my *limitations* each day. I seek God’s help in the “*opportunity* of uncertainty”. God’s help brings me a new *liberation* from my bondage of self.
6. My limitations are not shortcomings or character defects. They are simply part of being human. In my *limitations*, I seek the *opportunity* of God’s help in hope. I receive *liberation* from self with God’s Power, God’s Love and God’s Way of life. (See Step Three prayer, p. 63)
7. In Step Twelve, I take my twelfth risk in the Spiritual Awakening of my recovery from alcoholism. I try to apply the spiritual principles in the certainty of my thoughts, words and deeds, not knowing if I am in God’s will; not knowing the uncertainty of the outcome.
“*Thy will be done*” is hopeful, reassuring and faithful—but it still feels risky!

**Next Time: Humility and Responsibility in Service with Step Twelve—Chapter Eleven,
and The Risks (and Rewards!) of Recovery, One Step at a Time.**