

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

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—I **trust** God to replace my anger with **forgiveness**—I ask God to replace my fear with **trust** in God—I 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 Chapters Seven through Ten, Alcoholics Anonymous directs me and inspires me to be of **service**, to try to carry the message of my spiritual awakening to another alcoholic and to try to practice these spiritual principles in my marriage, with my family and in the workplace.

*Now, in Chapter Eleven, “A Vision for You”, we see further how to “try to carry the message” and try “to practice these principles in all our affairs”. We see how the two “magnificent standards” of **humility** and **responsibility** grow in us as we try to apply the spiritual attributes of **honesty**, **forgiveness**, **trust**, **consideration**, **love** and **tolerance** in **service** to God and others. With these attributes, we become service to God and others.*

We conclude this study with some of the “risks and rewards” of the Twelve Steps.

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

Humility and Responsibility with Service in Step Twelve—Part Two. (pp. 151-164)

“You will be bound to them ... escape disaster together ... common journey.” (pp. 152-153)

“We realize we know only a little. God will constantly disclose more to you and to us.” (p. 164)

Chapter Eleven: “A Vision for You” ... trying “to carry the message” and “practice these principles ...”

“A Vision for You” is the most “poetic prose” chapter in Alcoholics Anonymous. In it, at least three “visions” are presented. First, Bill W. presents his vision of what the life-saving and life-sustaining spiritual recovery program can be for the desperate alcoholic. (pp. 151-153) Second, the vision of spreading the spiritual recovery offered by the Fellowship and the Twelve Steps of AA is presented. (pp. 153-162) Third, the newly sober member is given the vision to grow the program “though you be but one [person] with this book in your hand”. (pp. 162-163)

Two “Magnificent Standards” of Humility and Responsibility.

The opening eight paragraphs on pp. 151-153 contain examples of the two “magnificent standards” and seven attributes. We see how to recognize them. We can continue to find them on every page of this chapter, and every page in the entire book, for that matter!

The chapter begins with two paragraphs I call “the gift of desperation”, climaxing in the “hideous Four Horsemen—Terror, Bewilderment, Frustration, Despair”. First, I learn **humility**—“to move out from ourselves toward others and toward God”—through desperation.

Examples of **humility** in these opening paragraphs are:

“Some day he will be unable to imagine ...” (p. 152)

“Yes, I’m willing. But ...” “

“... I must get along without liquor ... have you a sufficient substitute?” “

“Should you wish them above all else ...” (p. 153)

Then, in paragraphs seven and eight we find examples of **responsibility**:

“... give of yourself that others may survive.” (p. 153)

“Love thy neighbor as thyself.” “

“... be willing to make use of our experience ...” “

We also find application of **Seven** of our **Spiritual Attributes** in these pages:

Honesty: “Unhappy drinkers who read this page will understand.” (p. 151)

“Have you a sufficient substitute?” “Yes ... and vastly more ...” (p. 152)

Forgiveness. “We have shown how we got out from under.” (see p. 67) (p. 152)

“... like some righteous people I see?” (see p. 66) “

Trust. “You will find release from care, boredom and worry.” “

“Life will mean something at last.” “

Consideration. “Near you, alcoholics are dying helplessly ... sinking ship.” “

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

Love. “Love thy neighbor as thyself.” (p. 153)

Tolerance. “High and low, rich and poor ...” (p. 152)

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

I encourage everyone to use “A Vision for You” on a regular basis to *enlarge your spiritual life!*

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

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

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Risks and Rewards in the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Step One. Risk. I have a problem. I must **humbly** admit “I know I don’t know what to do.”

Reward. I **honestly** admit I am an alcoholic to someone else—my help begins.

Step Two. Risk. I must **humbly** accept spiritual help from some Power beyond myself.

Reward. My hopelessness begins to yield to a **humble** hope.

Step Three. Risk. I **humbly** seek relief from “the bondage of self” from a God uncertain to me.

Reward. In my “I offer myself to Thee” a peculiar **honest** relief enters my life.

Step Four. Risk. Beginning to **forgive** others, I do not know how life will be without anger.

Reward. Asking for God’s help, I have less anger, less fear—more **consideration**.

Step Five. Risk. **Forgiving** others feels like I am losing control—“letting them off the hook”.

Reward. I learn more **humility** and **trust**—my “control” was an illusion.

Step Six. Risk. I do not know how to live feeling “safe” without my “objectionable things”.

Reward. I learn to **trust** God for my safety instead of my “objectionable things”.

Step Seven. Risk. I must face the uncertainty of what it means to let God have “all of me”.

Reward. I learn to **trust** God with uncertainty.

Step Eight. Risk. I am apprehensive about taking **responsibility** for my past wrongdoings.

Reward. I learn to **trust** God more by praying for willingness for each amend.

Step Nine. Risk. I am apprehensive about how others will receive my direct amends.

Reward. Being **honest** with others frees me of my secrets from others and myself.

Step Ten. Risk. I fail to “watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear” each day.

Reward. I live in more comfort and serenity, with **love** and **tolerance** for others..

Step Eleven. Risk. I fail to “pause, when agitated or doubtful”, missing God’s answer for me.

Reward. I live with more desire to be of **service** to God and others.

Step Twelve. Risk. I measure the success of my **service** on outcomes, not my input.

Reward. In **humility** and with **responsibility**, I live in “the world of the Spirit”
and in “the Fellowship of the Spirit”.

.....
*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 “ndage of self (“L. O .L.”) as I try to share, with **humility** and **responsibility**, the gift of recovery I have received, including the spiritual attributes of **honesty**, **trust**, **forgiveness**, **consideration**, **love** and **tolerance**. I seek to continue to enlarge my spiritual life so that I can be of maximum **service** to God and others. Amen.*
.....

New Series Next Time: “Removing Barriers from our Spiritual Awakening” — Step One.