

**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 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

In this study we also 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.

.....
In Steps One, Two and Three, I become **honest** about my alcoholism illness, my “objectionable” drinking and my need for a spiritual solution. In Steps Four and Five, I discover my selfish motivations. I ask God to “save me from being angry”; to guide me away from my unforgiving nature towards **forgiveness**; to guide me to be considerate of others. I develop **humility**, a “desire to seek and do God’s will”. “... *defects ... are about to be cast out.*” (p. 72) In Step Six, I become **humble** enough to **trust** God with helping me change, to “let go” of my defects of character so they can be “cast out”. I “come to believe” I can **trust** God to help me.

Now, in Step Seven, my spiritual awakening continues to grow. I use the **trust** in God nurtured in me in Step Six, when I ask God to help me be willing to “let go” of the objectionable things in me, my character defects, that are blocking me from the help I need from God. In Step Seven, I “let God” have “all of me, good and bad”. I become **responsible** to learn to live a sober life in recovery, free from the bondage of self— a life of serenity, safety and security.

*In Step Seven, I **trust** God to “grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do God’s bidding”, **responsibly**. I seek to be “happy, joyous and free” on God’s terms, not my terms.*

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

Responsibility and Trust in Step Seven.

“When ready, we say something like this: ‘My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad.’” (p. 76)

Step Seven is like spiritual surgery. When I become **responsible** enough to surrender “all of me” to God, I report to the “spiritual surgery center”. I **trust** God, the “spiritual surgeon”.

I **trust** God’s character. I do not have to know what God is going to “remove” from me. I **trust** that God’s will is better for me than my will, even when my will is good.

“When many hundreds of people are able to say that the consciousness of the Presence of God is today the most important fact of their lives, they present a powerful reason why one should have faith.” (p. 51) *“Faith ... complete **trust** and confidence in someone.”*

I tried to control my life and the lives of others with my self-will alone. Giving up my will to my “new Employer” in Step Three was a sacrifice—giving up something of real value to me in the hope of receiving something greater in return. In Step Seven, I increase my desire to seek and receive something of greater value to me than my will—God’s will.

*I “let go” of my illusion of control—I stop worrying about what God is going to do. I **trust** God to limit, re-direct and guide my will to be **responsible** for what God wants me to be and to do.*

“I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows.” (p. 76)

I am now in the operating room at the “spiritual surgery center”. I am **responsible** to “let God” be the spiritual surgeon. I **trust** that God will know what to “remove” first. His criteria is not what bothers me or someone else the most. God’s criteria is simply what “defect of character” in me is blocking me right now from being useful to God and the people in my life.

“Humility ... a clear recognition of who and what we really are [Steps One through Six], followed by a sincere attempt to become what we could be.” [Steps Seven through Twelve] (AA 12x12, p. 58)

*In Step Six, I **trust** God to help me be willing to “let go” of my known “objectionable” things. In Step Seven, I am **responsible** to ask God to “remove from me” my unknown defects, the ones that God considers are blocking my spiritual growth—my service to God and others.*

“Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding.” (p. 76)

I am now leaving the “spiritual surgery center”. I may have some healing to do. I thought my sarcasm was my worst defect of character. But I will discover in Step Eight that God considers my unwillingness to take responsibility for the wrongs I did to others the thing most blocking me from my usefulness to God and others.

*I **trust** that God will grant me the strength to live **responsibly**, free of the illusionary defenses of lying, cheating, stealing, sarcasm, resentments, fears and inconsideration of others.*

“Amen”. (p. 76)

Amen means “firm”, “sure”, “so be it”. Amen means to **trust** what has been said.

*Now, I am **humbly** seeking to know and do God’s will, to **trust** God. I learn in Step Seven to “let God” help me be **responsible** for my choices and accept the consequences of my choices.*

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Observations on Responsibility and Trust in Step Seven.

1. I grow in **honesty** and **forgiveness** in Steps One through Five, becoming less dis-honest about myself and less un-forgiving toward others. By Step Six, I **humbly** seek to know, do and **trust** God’s will, not mine. In Step Seven, I take **responsibility** for my choices and the consequences of my choices, in my relationship with God and with others. I **trust** God.
2. When I believe a lie, I deserve the truth I receive. I believed I could control my drinking—that was a lie. I believed I could wish away my resentments—that was a lie. I believe I can grow emotionally on my own without God’s help—that is a lie. In Step Seven, I **trust** God to help me be **responsible**, to stop believing my lies and to **trust** God’s truth.
3. I am still not totally trustworthy. I am human—not perfect, not complete. Only God is totally **trustworthy**. My **responsibility** is to **trust** God to limit, re-direct and guide my self-will.
4. I am **responsible** to seek God’s strength to know and do God’s will— to **trust** God, to “let go and let God” help me make spiritual progress, not achieve spiritual perfection.
5. In Step Seven, I seek God’s strength to let God, **trust** God, to “create, measure and control”. I am **responsible** to “let go” of my obsession to “create” an environment that is comfortable only to me. I am **responsible** to “let go” of my compulsive desire to constantly judge, to “measure” others. I am **responsible** to “let go” of my selfish illusion that I am in “control”.
6. In Step Seven, I **trust** that strength of prayer depends on God’s strength, not mine. I am **responsible** to “feed my faith, not my fear”. God’s will is not limited by my understanding.
7. In Step Seven, I realize that change is not painful—that resistance to change is painful. I “let go” of my need to control in Step Six. I **trust** God to limit, re-direct and guide my self-will in Step Seven. I stop resisting change. I welcome the liberating freedom of learning to live **responsibly** in God’s will, free from the consequences of “self-will run riot”.
8. I reflect in Step Seven how I can apply this simple prayer to the unmanageability diagnosis, the “bedevilments”, on p. 52:
 “Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding” ...
 - to change my point of view,
 - to improve my personal relationships,
 - to control my emotional nature,
 - to relieve my misery and depression,
 - to make a living,
 - to feel useful,
 - to free me from unrealistic fears,
 - to feel happy,
 - to be of real help to other people.
9. In Step Seven, I see that **humility** is not a burden—to “move out from” myself toward God and others is a blessing. I **trust** God to help me be **responsible** to move out from myself.

“I am now willing that [God] should have all of me ... from here to do [God’s] bidding.”

Next Time: Responsibility and Consideration in Step Eight.