

**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)

“... illuminating every twist of character, every dark cranny of the past.” (p. 75)

“... be quiet for an hour, carefully reviewing what we have done ... we ask:

- if we have omitted anything ...

Lied.

- is our work solid so far ...

Honest.

- are the stones properly in place ...

Focus on me, not them.

- have we skimmed on the cement put into the foundation

Told partial truth.

- have we tried to make mortar without sand?”

Omitted prayer. (p.75)

*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.*

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

Humility and Trust in Step Six.

“If we can answer to our satisfaction, we then look at *Step Six*. We have emphasized willingness as being indispensable. Are we now ready to let God remove from us all the things which we have admitted are objectionable?” (p. 76)

Step Six grows my **humility**, my “desire to seek and do God’s will.” I learn to **trust** God to change or “remove” the “ideas, emotions and attitudes” (p. 27) in me that I have now admitted are “objectionable”. *I come to **trust** in God’s strength and ability.*

I admit that “**selfishness—self-centeredness** is the root of [my] troubles.” (p. 62) I admit that I have been “driven by a hundred forms of fear, **self-delusion**, **self-seeking**, and **self-pity** ...” (p. 62) I ask God to “relieve me of the bondage of **self**.” (p. 63) I discover in my resentment inventory where I have “been **selfish**, dis-honest, **self-seeking** and frightened”. (p. 67) I discover in my fear inventory that I am afraid “because **self-reliance** failed [me].” (p. 68) I discover in my sexual conduct inventory where I have “been **selfish**, dishonest, or inconsiderate” in my relations with others. (p. 69)

“Self-reliance was good as far as it went, but it didn’t go far enough.” (p. 68)

My defects of character, disclosed to me in Step Four, grow out of my un-limited, un-directed, un-guided self-will. In Step Five, my inability to change, to reduce or eliminate my defects of character by myself is disclosed to me—my defects of character become “objectionable” to me, instead of inevitable or virtuous. They seem to be objectionable because they cause problems in my life and in the lives of others.

*But the real reason my defects of character are objectionable is that they disable my **humility**. They block me from desiring, seeking, receiving and **trusting** the help I need from God.*

“Can He now take them all—every one?” (p. 76)

Am I willing to **trust** God to guide “my will and my life”, my choices and their consequences? Do I have enough **humility** to **trust** God—to *be in relationship with God*?

I prayed in Step Three for God’s “Power, Love and Way of Life”. Now I **trust** God to remove my defects of character. I **humbly** realize I cannot “wish them away” on my own. My **humble** “desire to seek and do God’s will” is strong enough to set aside my selfish resistance, my denial, defiance and doubt, and **trust** the unknown process of “letting go” of my objectionable defects of character. I **humbly** desire to seek, receive and **trust** God’s help.

*“Can” does not question God’s capability—it questions my **humble** willingness to **trust** God.*

“If we still cling to something we will not let go, we ask God to help us be willing.” (p. 76)

I pray to **trust** God enough to help me become **humble** enough, *in relationship with God*, to risk **trusting** that God can, and will, help me “let go” of my objectionable things, my defects of character, that are blocking me from God.

*In Step Six, I pray in **trust** that God has the Power to help me **humbly** “let go” of my “objectionable things”, my defects of character, that are blocking me from the help I need from God for my “personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism”*

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Observations on Humility and Trust in Step Six.

1. AA disclosed to me that my drinking was “objectionable”. Stopping drinking gave me physical sobriety. Stopping drinking DID NOT give me **humility** or **trust**—DID NOT give me the “personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism”.
2. In Step Three, I admit enough of my selfishness, the “root” of my troubles, to ask God to “relieve me of the bondage of self” so I can do God’s will. In Steps Four and Five, I **humbly** admit to “objectionable” defects in my character that are blocking me from the help I need from God for my “personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism”.
3. Before Steps Four and Five, I used anger to feel powerful; I used resentments to feel in control—to justify my unforgiving, inconsiderate treatment of others. I denied and “stuffed” my fears. I defied any attempt by any one to help me. I doubted God. I “knew it all”.
4. In Step Three, asking God to “relieve me of the bondage of self” was a decision based on faith in the unknown that God “*could* and *would* if He were sought”. In Step Six, I **humbly** make a decision in **trust** that God *can* and *will* help me be willing to “let go” of my defects.
5. Step Six helps me recognize my lack of **trust**—in God, myself and others. I **humbly** realize I need help from God and others. I grow in my willingness to **trust** that help is available to me.
6. **Trust** in God is believing God’s strength, truth and reliability. In Step Six, I **trust** God to help me become willing and **humble** enough to “let go” of the objectionable things in me.
7. I **humbly** admit I cannot meet or fulfill my God-given desires for physical safety, emotional and financial security, and sexual comfort with my self-reliance alone. My self-will was even insufficient to keep me from taking the first drink! I need to **trust** a Power greater than me.
8. My willingness to **trust** God to help me begins when I **humbly** admit I don’t have all the answers. Until my defects of character become “objectionable” to me, I don’t need help.
9. In Step Six, I **humbly** stop denying my character defects; I **humbly** stop defying my need for help; I **humbly** stop doubting God and start to really **trust** God to help me, to change me.
10. In Step Six, I **humbly trust** God to help me stop denying my selfish motives; to **humbly trust** God to help me stop doing the wrong thing, the objectionable thing, the selfish thing.
11. In Step Six, I **humbly** realize I cannot tell the truth until I stop lying; I cannot be trusted until I stop cheating; I cannot become giving until I stop stealing. I **trust** God to help me not resent what I cannot control; to not fear what I don’t understand; to stop being Inconsiderate—to be motivated by interest in others.
12. In Step Six, I take my sixth risk in the Spiritual Awakening of my recovery from alcoholism. I risk **trusting** God to help me be **humble** and willing to “let go”—to stop desiring, feeling, thinking and doing the things that are blocking me from God’s direction and strength.

“Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.” (p. 59)

Next Time: Responsibility and Trust in Step Seven.