

“GOD WILL CONSTANTLY DISCLOSE MORE TO YOU AND TO US.”

A Big Book Study of What God Discloses to Us in Each of the Twelve Steps.
A Spiritual Awakening of Limitation, leading to Opportunity, resulting in Liberation.
A “Threads of Recovery” Workshop—October 3 through December 26, 2022

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

Introduction to the Study.

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

(p. 164)

To me, this is one of the most powerful humility statements in Alcoholics Anonymous. Today, I am content with “we realize we know only a little”. I don’t have to know everything to live a sober, safe, secure and serene life. God has already disclosed many things to me. God will continue to disclose more. God discloses to me everything I need to know for today.

A disclosure is simply “a fact that is made known”. When God discloses something to me, it already is a fact. Everything God discloses to me through my AA recovery, or by any other means, is already a fact. Prior to God’s disclosure, I was unable, or unwilling, to see it.

God discloses things to me in at least three ways: circumstances in my life; other peoples’s experience; and inspiration. My first recovery “disclosure” was the “gift of desperation” born of my own circumstances that produced a desire in me to try AA. I continue to receive disclosures of God’s will for me through other peoples’ experience, strength and hope. As I grow in recovery, more of God’s disclosures to me are in the form of inspiration.

One “thread of recovery” in AA is the process of disclosure: “Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now.” (p. 58)

As I become willing to relate to the facts and experiences AA members disclose about their lives, I am able to receive, admit and accept similar disclosures about me and my life.

Since Alcoholics Anonymous is a process of continuous disclosure, not everything is disclosed at once. Often, one thing is disclosed while another is only hinted. For example:

“To show other alcoholics *precisely how we have recovered* is the main purpose of this book.” (p. xiii). The purpose of the book is disclosed. “*How we have recovered*” is hinted at but not yet disclosed.

“It is the purpose of this book to answer such questions specifically.” (p. 20)
The purpose of the book is again disclosed, but the details are left for later disclosure.

“Further on, clear-cut directions are given showing how we recovered.” (p. 29)
The fact that there will be “clear-cut directions” is disclosed. What those directions are will be disclosed later.

“Well, that’s exactly what this book is about. Its main object is to enable you to find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem.” (p. 45)
Once again, a more specific purpose of the book is disclosed, but “how” to find this Power greater than myself will be part of a later disclosure.

Each of the Twelve Steps includes disclosures about my limitations, opportunities and spiritual liberation from my “bondage of self”. In this study, we look at one disclosure in each step which leads to other disclosures in subsequent steps—as we “enlarge [our] spiritual life”.

Each of the disclosures in Steps One through Six contain both a **limitation** of my “self” and an **opportunity** for my spiritual awakening.

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Step One: “We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.”

Discloses my *Delusion* as limitation of “self” and opportunity for my spiritual awakening.

I did not believe that I was powerless over alcohol—and everything and everyone else! That was a **delusion**. I do not have power over alcohol, circumstances and other people.

My delusion was that I did not believe something about me that was, and is, true.

“We learned that we had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics. This is the first step in recovery. The **delusion** that we are like other people, or presently may be, has to be smashed.” (p. 30)

The problem with my **delusions** is that my **delusions** tell me I don’t have **delusions**!

I grew up in an alcoholic home. I swore I would never drink. Yet, at that first fraternity party in 1960, I drank a beer just to “fit in”. My physical alcoholic craving kicked in; I drank until I threw up, blacked out and passed out. I woke up the next day with a terrible hangover, embarrassed and ashamed. Yet, I remembered how “good I felt” after those first few drinks. I chased that “good feeling” for twenty-one years. I was in **delusion** about my physical allergy to alcohol and my mental obsession with the “good feeling” alcohol produced.

My drinking cost me two marriages, the loss of my relationship with my children, the respect of my family, loss of jobs and my health, jail and prison time and near-death episodes.

In AA, I learned that I “cannot start drinking without developing the phenomenon of craving” (p. xxx); I “lose all control of [my] liquor consumption, once [I] start to drink (p. 21); that “the main problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind”. (p. 23)

*God used AA to disclose my **delusion** to me—powerless to control my drinking and unable to manage my own life—truths about me that I believed in my **delusion** to be untrue.*

My friend Harold L. describes “The Five BIG Delusions” that block him from the God of his understanding. With his permission, I use his description here as an excellent example of how God discloses things to me in my recovery in pieces small enough for me to handle:

- Delusion 1. I am not an alcoholic, despite all the evidence to the contrary.
- Delusion 2. I am an alcoholic, but I am not responsible for my choices—I’m a victim.
- Delusion 3. I am alcoholic and responsible, but overcoming my past is impossible.
- Delusion 4. I am “spiritually disqualified”—God wants nothing to do with me.
- Delusion 5. No real purpose exists for my life—work the 12 Steps just to survive?

These pieces of my **delusion** about me as an alcoholic are disclosed to me as I admit the truth about me on pp. 30-31. My mind begins to open. I consider other **delusions** I may have—other facts, truths, about me that I don’t believe which are, in fact, true. With this more open mind, I am able to stop **deluding** myself and accept the following two truths about me:

“Our liquor was but a symptom”. (p. 64)

“Selfishness—self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles.” (p. 62)

*God discloses my **delusion** to me in Step One. My **delusion** was limiting my “self” and my spiritual awakening. This disclosure is my opportunity to begin my spiritual awakening.*

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Additional Disclosures from Alcoholics Anonymous regarding my Step One DELUSIONS:

“... truths about me that I believed in my delusion to be untrue.”

1. “... the alcoholic is a very sick person.” (p. xiii)
 2. “... had been relieved of his drink obsession by a ... spiritual experience ...” (pp. xv-xvi)
 3. “... Dr. Silkworth’s description of alcoholism and its hopelessness ...” (p. xvi)
 4. “... the body of the alcoholic is quite as abnormal as his mind.” (p. xxvi)
 5. “... the action of alcohol on these chronic alcoholics ... an allergy ...” (p. xxviii)
 6. “These allergic types can never safely use alcohol in any form at all ...” “
 7. “... having lost their self-confidence ...” “
 8. “... unless this person can experience an entire psychic change ...” (p. xxix)
 9. “Doctor ... I must stop, but I cannot!” “
 10. “He ... believed that for him there was no hope.” (Hank P.) (p. xxxi)
 11. “... deciding his situation hopeless ...” (Fitz M.) “
 12. “... I was interested. I had to be, for I was hopeless.” (Bill W.) (p. 10)
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HELP.

We all need help.

For years, I did not believe I needed help.

I was living with the delusion that I could live well by making my own choices and managing the consequences of my choices without help from anyone, especially God!

I believed my delusion that I did not need help.

I believed something about me that wasn’t true—that was, in fact, true.

Today, I thank God that I no longer live with the delusion that I don’t need help.

I may not seek help from God, or others, as soon as I need to all the time.

But I do seek help.

I know today that needing help, seeking help and receiving help are not weaknesses or defects of character.

Seeking help is part of being a whole, healthy, humble and responsible human being.

Today, I thank God that I no longer live with the delusion that I don’t need help. Amen.

Next Time: The DISCLOSURE of POWER (and lack of power) in Step Two.