

“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. 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 discloses to me everything I need to know for today.

Consider what it means to “be alcoholic”. We are, first of all, human. We are more than just alcoholic. If I only let myself be defined as “alcoholic”, I fail to see the rest of me. As an alcoholic, I have all of the normal human characteristics—ideas, attitudes and emotions—hopes and dreams—joys and fears—excitement and sadness—gains and loss. As an alcoholic, I have at least one human characteristic stronger than others—extreme self-will. God has been giving human beings guidelines to use God’s gift of self-will for centuries.

God has given us alcoholics the Twelve Steps as a set of guidelines to use to align our self-will with God’s will. When I decide to learn to apply the Twelve Steps in my life, I am deciding to do more than not drink. I am deciding to learn how to use my God-given self-will in line with God’s will for me and others. This process begins with my willingness to accept what God is **disclosing** to me, beginning in Step One, and throughout all of the Twelve Steps.

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)

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”.

*The **disclosures** in Steps One through Six contain **limitations** of my “self” and **opportunities** for my spiritual awakening—disclosures to me of God’s truth about me.*

In Step One, God discloses to me my **delusions** about my powerlessness over alcohol (a limitation) and the unmanageability of my life (*gift of desperation*—a spiritual opportunity).

In Step Two, God discloses to me my “lack of power” (a limitation) and that a **Power** greater than me could restore me to sanity (a spiritual opportunity).

In Step Three, God discloses my need to learn to let God “build with me and to do with me” as God will (a limitation) and to “offer myself” to God’s **care** (a spiritual opportunity).

Now, in Step Four, God discloses “**the flaws in [my] make-up**” which block me from seeking and receiving God’s care.

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The Disclosure of “the flaws in [my] make-up” which block me from God’s care.

Step Four: “Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.” (p. 59)

“Next we launched out on a course of vigorous action, the first step of which is a personal housecleaning, which many of us had never attempted. Though our decision was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face, and to be rid of, the things in ourselves which had been blocking us. Our liquor was but a symptom.” (p. 64)

This is a major disclosure—there are **things in me, “flaws in [my] make-up, blocking me** from seeking and receiving the help I need from God’s care. Offering myself to God in my Step Three prayer of decision is a “vital and crucial step”, but it is not enough. Now I must learn how to let God “build with me and do with me” as God will.

“First, we searched out the flaws in our make-up which caused our failure. Being convinced that self, manifested in various ways, was what had defeated us, we considered its common manifestations.” (p. 64)

“**Resentment** is the ‘number one’ offender. It destroys more alcoholics than anything else.” “

“... this business of resentment is infinitely grave. We found that it is fatal.” (p. 66)

“For when harboring such feelings, we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the Spirit. The insanity of alcohol returns and we drink again. And with us, to drink is to die.” “

“**[Fear]** was an evil and corroding thread; the fabric of our existence was shot through with it.” (p. 67)

“We reviewed our fears thoroughly. We asked ourselves why we had them ...” (p. 68)

“We reviewed our own conduct over the years past. Where had we been selfish, dishonest or **inconsiderate** ... Whom had we hurt? Where were we at fault?” (p. 69)

.....
I write down on paper my answers to the questions presented to me in the **Resentment, Fear** and Sexual Conduct-**Inconsideration** inventories on pages 64-70.

God is disclosing more to me than my selfish resentments, real and un-real fears and lack of consideration for others. *God discloses to me my resistance to seeking and receiving God’s help, God’s care, to help me begin to change these **flaws in my make-up:***

“... others were wrong was as far as most of us ever got.” (p. 66)

“God save me from being **angry** ... we avoid retaliation or argument.” (p. 67)

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

“We trust infinite God rather than our finite selves.” “

“We ask [God] to remove our fear, and ... what [God] would have us be.” “

“We subjected each relation to this test—was it selfish or not?” (p. 69)

“We asked God to mold our ideals and help us live up to them.” “

“We hope you are convinced now that God can remove whatever self-will has blocked you off from Him.” (p. 71)

God discloses to me in Step Four what help I need—and to what degree I still resist God’s help!

Next Time: The disclosure of the “obstacles in our path”—Step Five.

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