

POWERLESSNESS ... "THE ESSENTIALS" ... RELATIONSHIPS ... FELLOWSHIPS
A "BIG BOOK" STUDY OF FOUR "THREADS OF RECOVERY"

October 11 through December 27, 2021

(Page cites from Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition, except as noted.)

FELLOWSHIPS - PART 3: "IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS". Chapters Eight, Nine and more.

Fellowship is the fourth "thread of recovery" we are discussing in this series. A fellowship is characterized by *shared common experience*. We have considered the unique fellowship shared by *the sponsor and the sponsee*. We have discussed the *shared common experience* fellowship of AA as a whole—our "*common peril*" and our "*common solution*".

A third kind of fellowship is the *shared common experience* of *restoration from brokenness*.

Brokenness, especially "Brokenness" in Chapters Eight and Nine.

"... the alcoholic illness ... engulfs all whose lives touch the sufferer's. It brings misunderstanding, fierce resentment, financial insecurity, disgusted friends and employers, warped lives of blameless children, sad wives and parents ..." (p. 18)

"... [person] who drinks others are involved—the wife who trembles in fear of the next debauch; the mother and father who see their son wasting away." (pp. 104-116)

"Years of living with an alcoholic is almost sure to make any wife or child neurotic. The entire family is, to some extent, ill." (pp. 122-128)

We have a purpose in our recovery—"to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us." We have a responsibility in our lives to "try to practice these principles in all our affairs." We work through our first nine steps. We admit the part we played in these broken relationships—make our amends for the wrongs we have done—begin to do our part in the *Fellowship of Restoration from Brokenness*. We live each day with God's restraint and guidance in Steps Ten, Eleven and Twelve—to be examples of, and encourage our spouses, families, friends and associates to adopt, a spiritual way of life. We take the lead in helping to grow the *Fellowship of the Restoration from Brokenness* "in all our affairs":

"Yes, there is a long period of reconstruction ahead. We must take the lead." (p. 83)

"The spiritual life is not a theory. *We have to live it.*" "

"Our behavior will convince them more than our words." "

Fellowship of Restoration from Brokenness, especially in Chapters Eight and Nine.

"... demonstration of our principles ... in our homes, occupations and affairs." (p. 19)

Chapter Eight, "To Wives":

"... no situation is too difficult and no unhappiness too great to be overcome." (p. 104)

"If God can solve ... alcoholism, He can solve your problems too." (p. 116)

"... we try to put spiritual principles to work in every department of our lives." "

"... faith and sincerity ... patience, tolerance, understanding and love ..." (pp. 117-118)

"Live and let live is the rule." (p. 118)

"... place the problem, along with everything else, in God's hands." (p. 120)

Chapter Nine, "The Family Afterward":

"... meet upon the common ground of tolerance, understanding and love." (p. 122)

"Showing others who suffer how we were given help ...:" (p. 124)

"... spirit of love and tolerance." (See p. 84) (p. 125)

"... growing consciousness of the power of God in our lives." (p. 130)

"... absolutely insist on enjoying life ... cheerfulness and laughter ..." (p. 132)

"... capitalize [trouble] as an opportunity to demonstrate [God's power]." (p. 133)

POWERLESSNESS ... "THE ESSENTIALS" ... RELATIONSHIPS ... FELLOWSHIPS:
A SUMMARY OF FOUR "THREADS OF RECOVERY"

We alcoholics are powerless over alcohol.

We are powerless over *our physical allergy*.

"... they cannot start drinking without developing ... craving." (p. xxx)

We are powerless over the *idea of the first drink*.

"... sense of ease and comfort ... succumbed to the desire again ..." (p. xxix)

"... alcoholics ... have lost the power of choice in drink ..." (p. 24)

We are powerless over our *inability to stop drinking once we start*.

"... he desperately wants to stop but cannot." (p. 110)

Our physical allergy—and our unstoppable craving if we drink—are unchangeable facts.

We need the spiritual awakening of the Twelve Steps and the "three essentials" of willingness, honesty and open-mindedness to deal with our powerlessness. (pp. 567-568)

Willingness.

"If you have decided you want what we have and are *willing* to go to length to get it—then you are ready to take *certain steps*." (p. 58)

Honestly.

"But many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be *honest*." (p. 58)

"We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not." "

Open-mindedness.

"Our ideas did not work. But the God idea did." (p. 52)

We become willing to be honest about our desires, letting God help us make healthy choices.

The Twelve Steps guide us in seeking, establishing and growing a healthy, helpful relationship with God, ourselves and with all others, as outlined in Step Five.

Healthy, helpful relationship with God.

"...one who has all Power—that one is *God*. May you find Him now." (p. 59)

Healthy, helpful relationship with *myself*.

"Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Your will." (p. 63)

Healthy, helpful relationship with others.

"... the happiness they found in giving themselves for *others*." (p. 159)

We begin by trusting God. We learn to trust ourselves. We can then serve others without fear.

Three "fellowships" grow in AA, and as a result of AA: fellowship with a sponsor; fellowship within the AA community; fellowship "in all our affairs".

Fellowship (*shared common experience*) with a sponsor and sponsee.

"... you can be uniquely useful to other alcoholics." (p. 89)

Fellowship (*shared common experience*) within the AA community.

"... a substitute ... vastly more ... fellowship in Alcoholics Anonymous." (p. 152)

Fellowship (*shared common experience*) "in all our affairs".

"Showing others who suffer how we were given help ..." (p. 124)

We enter the AA fellowship . We grow in the AA fellowship. We join in fellowship with others.

"I was always running away from God, but God finally caught me. I stopped running away from God and started letting God help me. Now, I can help others stop running away from God."

Anonymous

We "have discovered the joy of helping others to face life again ..."

(p. 164)