

## **Spiritual Awakening and Personality Change in the Twelve Steps of AA**

*A Twelve-Step Study of Alcoholics Anonymous (the "Big Book")*

July 3 through September 25, 2023. Facilitator: Bill H., St. Louis, Mo.

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

*The Twelve Steps of our Spiritual Awakening change our personalities from selfish "ideas, emotions and attitudes" into God-centered "ideas, emotions and attitudes". We grow spiritually in our "personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism ..." (p. 567)*

### **Spiritual Awakenings, Spiritual Experiences and Personality Changes.**

"The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection." (p. 60)

We each have unique **Spiritual Awakenings** and **Personality Changes**. *Each is valid!*

Each Step is an un-changing spiritual principle. Water freezing is an un-changing principle that is part of a change process, water changing from liquid form to solid form. Likewise, we apply the un-changing spiritual principles of the Twelve Steps to our changing individual lives so that God can enlarge our **spiritual awakenings** and **personality changes**.

*We try to apply the un-changing spiritual principles of the Twelve Steps to our ever-changing lives each day with willingness, honesty and open-mindedness.* (See App. II, p. 568)

#### **"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps ..."**

My **personality changes** in my **spiritual awakening** in the first eleven steps include: *delusion* and *dishonesty* changing to **honesty**; *defiance* and *denial* changing to **willingness**; "*playing God*" as a *know-it-all* changing to **open-minded**; **willing** to be **honest** about uncovering the "*flaws in our make-up*"; **open-minded** enough to discover my motives, the "*nature of our defects*"; **willing, honest** and **open-minded** enough to ask God to help me "*let go*" (discard); more **trust** and hope, less *fear*, in the uncertainty of God's will for me; **responsible** for my *wrongs* that harmed others; **accountable** to others in my amends to them for *my wrongs*; **willing to continue to seek** "to improve our conscious contact with God" all day every day.

"The spiritual life is not a theory. *We have to live it.*" (p. 83) *I desire to grow my spiritual life. Step Ten keeps me in the "spiritual life" each day, so I don't drift back into "self-will run riot". Step Ten is my spiritual "course correction" that I **continue** to practice throughout my day. Step Eleven is my spiritual "course direction" that I use to **seek** God's will for me each day.*

### **Step Twelve, Part 1: the "working with others" step.**

**"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics ..."**

"... imperative to work with others ... faith without works was dead ... " (pp. 14)

"This is our *twelfth suggestion*: Carry this message to other alcoholics! You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others fail." (p. 89)

"God will constantly disclose more to you and to us. Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick. The answers will come, if your own house is in order. But obviously you cannot transmit something you haven't got. See to it that your relationship with Him is right, and great events will come to pass for you and countless others. This is the Great Fact for us." (p. 164)

*When I try to carry the message of my **spiritual awakening** to another alcoholic, I apply the spiritual principles that have **changed** my **personality** to more God-centered living.*

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### **Chapter 7, "Working with Others". Pages 89 through 103.**

*My **personality** has **changed**. I was a self-centered, non-caring, inconsiderate person. I am becoming a more God-centered, caring, considerate person.*

My **spiritual awakening** begins in the desperation of my "self-will run riot". My **personality change** continues in hope as I seek to apply the spiritual principles in my life, especially when I try to carry the message of my **spiritual awakening** to other alcoholics.

I begin each day affirming my **spiritual awakening** and **personality change** with three prayers:

"God, please help me not take a drink today."

"God, please help me be of service to another alcoholic, and all other people, today."

"God, please help me not become part of their problem today."

*"Others won't care how much we know until they know how much we care."*

*My **spiritual awakening** and **personality change** are evidence of God's help in my life.*

God discloses the help I need to be healthy in my relationships, *beginning with my relationships with alcoholics*. I try to "carry" my message of **spiritual awakening** to alcoholics in love and tolerance because of the love and tolerance my sponsors have shown me!

### **Application of "personality changes" in my first visit with a newcomer, pp. 89-96:**

"So cooperate; never criticize. To be helpful is our only aim." (p. 89)

"If he does not want to stop drinking, don't waste time trying to persuade him." (p. 90)

"... one of a fellowship who, as part of their own recovery, try to help others ..." "

"... describe yourself as an alcoholic ... struggles ... a fatal malady." (pp. 91-92)

"... talk to him about the hopelessness of alcoholism ... you offer a solution." (p. 92)

"*Tell him exactly what happened to you.* Stress the **spiritual feature** freely." (p. 93)

"... he does not have to agree with your conception of God." "

"... believe in a Power greater than himself ... live by **spiritual principles**." "

"You should not be offended if he wants to call it off, for he has helped you ..." (p. 94)

"Never talk down to an alcoholic from any moral or spiritual hilltop ..." (p. 95)

"Do not be discouraged if your prospect does not respond at once." (p. 96)

### **Application of "personality changes" in my on-going "sponsorship", pp.96-103:**

"... do not insist upon it if he prefers consult someone else." (p. 96)

"Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery." (p. 97)

"The only condition is that he trust in God and clean house." (p. 98)

"... sober, considerate, and helpful, regardless of what anyone says or does." (p. 99)

"Both ... must walk day by day in the path of spiritual progress." (p.100)

"Your job now ... where you may be of maximum helpfulness to others ...". (p.102)

"...we have stopped fighting anybody or anything. We have to!" (p.103)

"And then he discovers that by the divine paradox of this kind of giving he has found his own reward, whether his brother has yet received anything or not." (AA 12x12, p. 109)

***Next Time Step Twelve, Part 2: the "family relationship" step.***