

## **“Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path.”**

“Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us.”

“Love and tolerance of others is our code.”

A Big Book Study of Spiritual Recovery from “Self-will Run Riot” to Service and Serenity.

A Twelve-Step Workshop from January 1 through March 25, 2024

Facilitator: Bill H., St. Louis, Mo. USA

(All page numbers from Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition, unless otherwise noted.)

The term “path”, and other analogies and metaphors, are used in our Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve Steps to describe our *journey of spiritual growth* from “what we used to be like”, through our “spiritual awakening”, to “what we are like now”—our “way out”. (See p. 17)

Each step guides us to get on, and stay on, “our path” of recovery from alcoholism. The Twelve Steps, “our path”, enlarge our spiritual life with awareness, acceptance and action. Our *spiritual awakening* is something that happens *in us*, as we learn how to let it happen *for us* and to stop doing things that block it from happening *to us*. *We decide to learn to do what it takes to live and grow on “our path” of recovery from alcoholism, our journey of spiritual growth.*

In Step Four, I take action to write and pray through my self-examination inventories:

I am *aware* of and *accept* my resentments. I *act*—pray—to live in forgiveness. (p. 67)

I am *aware* of and *accept* my fears. I *act*—pray—to trust God and outgrow fear. (p. 68)

I am *aware* of and *accept* my inconsiderations. I *act*—pray—to be considerate. (p. 69)

### **Step Five. “Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”** (p. 59)

Key elements of “followed our path” are embedded in this summary of Step Five:

“Admitted” - as in Step One, be *aware* of and *accept* more truth about myself.

“... to God, to ourselves, and to another human being” - healthy order of relationships.

“... nature of our wrongs.” - the “wrong” parts of me that block me from God’s care.

In Step Five, I seek help from a “path-finder” with experience on the spiritual path—one who has a “map through the minefield”. My spiritual “path-finder” helps me become *aware* of and *accept* the motives beneath my “wrong” thoughts and actions, my “objectionable things”.

“Having made our personal inventory, what shall we do about it? We have been trying to get a new attitude, a new relationship with our Creator, and to discover the obstacles in our path ... the weak items in our personal inventory. Now these are about to be cast out. This requires *action* on our part.” (Italics mine) (p. 72)

The new or improved *actions* I do in Step Five are:

“... a new attitude, a new relationship with our Creator ...” I continue to *pray*;

“... discover the obstacles in our path.” My “path-finder” helps me “*discover*”;

“... about to be cast out.” My “path-finder” helps me *admit* “objectionable things”.

*In Step Five, I seek help from God and another person, my spiritual “path-finder”. My “spiritual re-alignment” improves and I stay on my new “path” of spiritual growth and recovery: I continue with my prayers from Step Four. (See pp. 67-70)*

*I use my written inventory of resentments, fears and inconsiderate treatment of others.*

*I focus on my answers to the questions regarding “our own mistakes”, “our fault”,*

*“where were we to blame”, “wasn’t it because self-reliance failed us”, “where had we been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate” and “if we have been thorough”. (pp. 64-70)*

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**The Step Five Preparation**. I choose a qualified spiritual “path-finder” to assist my  
“spiritual re-alignment” and help me “navigate” my new path.  
**“If we skip this vital step, we may not overcome drinking.”** (pp. 72-73)  
Egoism (pride) - “They only thought they had lost their egoism ...” (p. 73)  
Fear - “They only thought they had lost their ... fear.” “  
Humility - “But they had not learned enough of humility ...” “  
Honesty - “But they had not learned enough of ... honesty ...” “  
*Egoism (pride), fear, lack of humility and lack of honesty all block me from seeking help!*

**“We must be entirely honest with somebody ...”** (pp. 73-74)  
Intimate (Trust) - “... told someone else *all* their life story.” (p. 73)  
Confidential (Trust) - “... close-mouthed, understanding ...” (p. 74)  
*In Step Five, I trust God and another person. I acknowledge that self-help is insufficient.*

**“... we talk to the right person.”** (pp. 74-75)  
Trust - “... be able to keep a confidence ...” (p. 74)  
Empathy - “... fully understand and approve what we are driving at ...” “  
Tolerance - “... not try to change our plan.” (p. 75)  
Understanding - “... realize that we are engaged on a life-and-death errand.” “  
*God helps me choose the “right person” to be my spiritual “path-finder” in Step Five.*

**The Step Five “Work”**. I trust God and my spiritual “path-finder” to guide my Step Five work:  
“We pocket our pride and go to it, illuminating every twist of character, every dark  
cranny of the past.” (p. 75)  
*As best I can at the time, I share all the information from my Step Four inventories  
of my resentments, fears and inconsiderate treatment of others. I acknowledge my  
part of the difficulties and problems in each of my relationships. I share (act) in Step Five  
to improve my awareness and acceptance of what in me needs God’s help to change.*

**The Step Five Promises**. “Once we have taken this step, withholding nothing:  
we are delighted. We can look the world in the eye.  
We can be alone at perfect peace and ease. Our fears fall from us.  
We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator.  
We may have had certain spiritual beliefs, but now we begin to have a spiritual  
experience.  
The feeling that the drink problem has disappeared will often come strongly.  
We feel we are on the Broad Highway, walking hand in hand with the Spirit of  
the Universe.”  
*“Both you and the new man must walk day by day in the path of spiritual progress.”* (p. 100)

**Next Time: Step Six—ready to let go of “objectionable things” blocking my spiritual path.**