

“WE HAD A NEW EMPLOYER.”
Humility, Responsibility and Hope in Our New Relationship with Our “New Employer”

A Big Book Study of Spiritual Recovery from Alcoholism
in a Twelve-Step Workshop, from April 1 through June 24, 2024.

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

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

- April 1. Study Introduction / Step One: *Admit I can't take the first drink—one day at a time.
Accept that I am unmanageable when “self-employed”.*
- April 8. Step Two: *Come to believe I need spiritual help or be doomed to “alcoholic death”.
Stop doubting my need to “find work” with a “new Employer”.*
- April 15. Step Three: *Decide with humility to “go to work” for my new Employer.
“When we sincerely took such a position ...” benefits followed.*
- April 22. Step Four: *Use self-examination to have faith in the “care” of my new Employer.
My “new Employer” relieves me of my anger, fear and inconsideration.*
- April 29. Step Five: *Learn to trust another person who also has a new Employer.
I “get a new attitude, a new relationship” with my “new Employer”.*
- May 6. Step Six: *Ask for willingness to “let go” of my resistance to my new Employer.
I become willing to “let go” of the “obstacles in [my] path”.*
- May 13. Step Seven: *Let my new Employer guide me to live without my shortcomings.
I ask my new Employer to “grant me strength” to do His “bidding”.*
- May 20. Step Eight: *Trust my new Employer to help me take responsibility for my wrongs.
My new Employer prepares me to sweep away “debris” from my past.*
- May 27. Step Nine: *Trust my new Employer to help me accountably make direct amends.
My new Employer strengthens me to amend my wrongs done to others.*
- June 3. Step Ten: *Continue each day in hope to trust the care of my “new Employer”.
My new Employer removes my dishonesty, resentments and fears daily.*
- June 10. Step Eleven: *Seek each day in hope to know and do the will of my new Employer.
My relationship with my new Employer grows stronger each day.*
- June 17. Step Twelve: *Each day, try in hope to help other alcoholics find a new Employer;
try in hope to be a good example to others of my new Employer.*
- June 24. Review: *I become Humble, Responsible and Hopeful working for my new Employer
as my belief strengthens, my faith grows and my trust ever-increases.*

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Introduction to the Study.

“First of all, we had to quit playing God. It didn’t work.” (p. 62)

“When we sincerely took such a position ... we had a new Employer.” (p. 63)

In Alcoholics Anonymous, the Twelve Steps take us from unhealthy, worsening relationships with our selves, and others, into a healthy relationship with a “new Employer”.

We discover how this relationship with our new Employer becomes *desirable*, *possible* and *fulfilling*. We experience our *belief* strengthening; our *faith* growing; and our *trust* ever-increasing. We learn how to experience *humility*, exercise *responsibility* and grow in *hope*.

Steps One, Two and Three make our relationship with our new Employer *desirable*—
we discover a need and an opportunity to decide to work for our new Employer.

Steps Four through Nine make our relationship with our new Employer *possible*—
we come to work for, and learn to enjoy working for, our new Employer.

Steps Ten, Eleven and Twelve make our relationship with our new Employer *fulfilling*—
we are enriched in spirit, mind and body as we work for our new Employer.

What are the characteristics of my new Employer?

- knows more than I do about my spiritual needs, and my other needs, as well;
- has a plan of spiritual success for me and a proven path for me to follow;
- cares for me—wants to help me succeed on my path of spiritual restoration;
- “can remove whatever self-will has blocked [me] off from Him”;
- when I disagree with my new Employer, my new Employer still cares for me.

I learn to have a healthy relationship with my new Employer:

- in which my new Employer is in charge—and I am not in charge;
- in which I learn to have and enjoy humility, responsibility and hope;
- in which I learn to deal with all uncertainty in my life in a healthy way;
- in which I learn to live in forgiveness, love, tolerance and serenity.

In Step One, Alcoholics Anonymous presents information to me that convinces me that my former employer, “alcoholic me” and my “self-will run riot”, is not a healthy “employer”.

In Step Two, Alcoholics Anonymous presents information to me that convinces me that I should stop doubting the possibility that a new spiritual Employer would be good for me.

In Step Three, Alcoholics Anonymous offers me an opportunity to decide to go to work for my new spiritual Employer—though it is hard to fire yourself when you are self-employed!

In Steps Four through Nine, I learn how to trust my new Employer, myself and other people. I learn what in me hinders me from being a “good employee” for my new Employer. I learn to let my new Employer truly take charge of the care of my life. I learn to let my new Employer help me forgive those who have harmed me, take responsibility for my wrongs and be accountable to amend the harms I have done to others.

In Steps Ten, Eleven and Twelve, I *continue* each day to trust my Employer, to *seek* each day to do the will of my Employer and to *try* to help others find their “new Employer”.

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Step One. “We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.” (p. 59)

It is one thing to admit that I am powerless over alcohol—that my life is unmanageable. It is a far greater thing to believe I am powerless on my own to overcome my powerlessness! It is very difficult, downright humbling, to “fire yourself” when you are self-employed! I won’t consider the desirability of a “new Employer” until I become willing to “fire myself”.

Hopelessness.

“We, of Alcoholics Anonymous, are more than one hundred men and women who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body.” (p. xiii)
“Many do not comprehend that the alcoholic is a very sick person.” “
“... an alcoholic of a type I had come to regard as hopeless.” (p. xxv)
“... we were maladjusted to life, that we were in full flight from reality ...” (p. xxvi)
“Men and women drink ... because they like the effect produced by alcohol.” (p. xxviii)
“... they cannot start drinking without developing the phenomenon of craving.” (p. xxx)
“I still thought I could control the situation ...” (p. 5)
“The remorse, horror and hopelessness ... should I kill myself?” (p. 6)
“Certainly I was interested. I had to be, for I was hopeless.” (p. 10)

Obsession, Illusion, Delusion.

“... lose all control ... once he starts to drink ... dishonest and selfish ...” (p. 21)
“... the main problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind ...” (p. 23)
“... *most alcoholics ... have lost the power of choice in drink.*” (p. 24)
“... obsession ... persistence of this illusion ... the delusion [of control] ...” (p. 30)
“... thinking dominates an alcoholic ... desperate experiment ... first drink?” (p. 35)
“... but he failed to enlarge his spiritual life.” “
“... insanely trivial excuse for taking the first drink.” (p. 37)
“... will power and self-knowledge would not help ...” (p. 42)
“To be doomed to an alcoholic death or to live on a spiritual basis ...” (p. 44)
“... these bedevilments ...” (p. 52)
“... the hideous Four Horsemen—Terror, Bewilderment, Frustration, Despair.” (p. 151)

I humbly admit I can’t take the first drink—one day at a time. I humbly admit that my life is unmanageable as long as I live in my obsessive illusions and delusions of control.

I do not admit my need for a “new Employer” until I admit that, on my own will-power alone, I am powerless over my obsessions, illusions and delusions. In my pain and suffering, I become willing to consider, to desire, a “new Employer”—God’s “protection and care”. (p. 59)

“First of all, we had to quit playing God. It didn’t work.” (p. 62)

“When we sincerely took such a position ... we had a new Employer.” (p. 63)

Next Time: Step Two—“Came to believe” I need spiritual help from a “new Employer”, or “be doomed to an alcoholic death”