

“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.)

Introduction to the Study.

The A.A. Twelve Steps guide me into a healthy relationship with my “new Employer”.

My relationship with my new Employer becomes *desirable*, *possible* and *fulfilling*.

Steps One, Two and Three make my relationship with my new Employer *desirable*.

I am now aware of the powerlessness and unmanageability of my life “employed” by my “self-will run riot”. I accept my need to believe in a Power greater than myself that could become my new Employer. I decide to act, to learn how to work for, to seek the care of, my new Employer.

Steps Four through Nine make my relationship with my new Employer *possible*. I work the steps in faith. I learn to face, and to be rid of, the things in me that block me from my new Employer. I get a new attitude, a new relationship with my new Employer. I am willing to “let go” of my objectionable things. I “let God” grant me strength. I take responsibility for my wrongs. I become accountable to amend them. I develop a better relationship with myself and others.

Steps Ten, Eleven and Twelve make my relationship with my new Employer *fulfilling*. I trust my new Employer more as I “work” for my new Employer, daily, with myself and others.

My *belief* strengthens; my *faith* grows; my *trust* increases in *humility*, *responsibility* and *hope*.

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 even 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.

Step Nine. “Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.” (p. 59)

“... my entire willingness to approach these individuals, admitting my wrong. Never was I to be critical of them. I was to right all such matters to the utmost of my ability.” (p. 13)

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

“Now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past ... sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of our effort to live on self-will ...” (p. 76)

“If we haven’t the will to do this, we ask until it comes.” “

In Step Nine, I ask God in faith for willingness to make direct amends to each person I harmed. My relationship with my new Employer improves. I become a good example to others of God’s Power. I receive relief from the bondage of self of my guilt, regret, remorse, shame and fear.

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In Step Eight, I ask my new Employer for the willingness to be responsible for my wrongs and the harm they caused others. I “own” my harmful behavior. I become willing to make amends.

“... tolerance, pity, and patience ... God save me from being angry.” (p. 67)

“... some misgivings ... feel diffident about going to ... them on a spiritual basis.” (p. 76)

In Step Nine, I trust my new Employer to grant me willingness to be accountable to people I harmed; to amend the damage I did; to “pay what I owe” in terms of fair restitution. (Humility)

“... interested in a demonstration of good will than our talk of spiritual discoveries.” (p. 77)

My amends action demonstrates my spiritual awakening. I don’t brag about it. (Responsibility)

As I take the “trust risk” of Step Nine, God removes three “defect[s] of character” from me:

1. Blaming others. 2. Denying my own responsibility. 3. Lying to myself and others. (Hope)

Categories of Direct Amends.

Examples of Willingness Application.

“Business acquaintances and friends.” “... desire to set right the wrong.” (pp. 76-77)

“Man we hated.” “... in a helpful and forgiving spirit ...” (p. 77)

“Creditors.” “... lose our fear of creditors ...” (p. 78)

“Criminal offense.” “... but we are willing.” (p. 79)

“Other people are involved.” “... he ought to be willing ...” (p. 79)

“Domestic troubles.” “... place the outcome in God’s hands ...” (p. 80)

“At home.” “... God willing, it shall not be repeated.” (p. 81)

“... plenty we should do at home.” (p. 82)

“Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love and Thy Way of life.” (Step Three Prayer, p. 63)

“I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows.” (Step Seven Prayer, p. 76)

“Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us.” (Our “Real Purpose” Statement, p. 77)

Now, in Step Nine, I “bear witness” to others of the presence and the Power of my new Employer in my life. I become “useful” to God and others. I become more “fit” in my relationship with God and myself, better able to be of service to God and others!

Step Nine surprises me with more relief from my “bondage of self”; more spiritual awakening:

My feeling of *guilt* is relieved when I make amends and “right my wrong”;

My feeling of *regret* is relieved when I make my amends and “let go” of my past wrongs;

My feeling of *remorse* lessens when I amend and commit to not repeating my wrongs;

My feeling of *shame* lessens as I realize I did wrong things, but I am not a wrong thing;

My *fear* of others finding out what I did wrong goes away because I have admitted it!

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Observations on Step Nine: the Risk, the Action (“Works”) and the Benefits.

1. In Step Nine, I feel “diffident” as I prepare to meet people I have harmed, admit my wrongs to them and offer not only an amend but a restitution, where appropriate. This is a new behavior for me. I feel at risk, apprehensive, perhaps even unsafe in some cases.
2. However, Steps One through Eight have prepared me to take this risk. I have come to *believe* in my new Employer, the God of my understanding. I have grown in *faith* that my new Employer has the Power and the Love to help me with the willingness to take the risk of Step Nine. I step out into the uncertainty and risky feeling of my first direct amends.
3. I have come to *believe in* and have *faith that* God’s Power, God’s Love and God’s care is greater than my understanding, but not greater than my ability to experience and come to *trust*. As I make more of my direct amends with my new Employer guiding me and helping me be willing, my pride and fear become less as my *belief, faith* and *trust* in God grows. I learn to *trust* God with the outcome of an uncertain situation—a new behavior on my part.
4. In Step Nine, I accept my limitation, the risk, of not knowing how the other person will respond to my amend. I trust God with the outcome, so that I do not let my fear of the uncertainty distract or divert me from my primary purpose.
5. In Step Nine, I have an *awareness* and an *acceptance* to help me trust the risk to *act* to make my direct amends. I am *aware* that my new Employer is “by my side” in my amends process. I *accept* that I can *trust* God with the outcome of the amend so I can feel safe in making the amend. *My relationship with God has become desirable and possible.*
6. As I *trust* my new Employer to help me with my *willingness, honesty* and *open-mindedness* to make my direct amends, three of my major character defects are removed from me:
 1. Blaming others—I am able to set aside what they did to me with a *forgiving spirit*.
 2. Denying my responsibility—I am able to be *responsible* for what I did wrong and be *accountable* to amend the harm I did.
 3. Lying to myself and others—I am able to *let go of my need to lie* about what I did.
7. My new God-given *willingness, honesty* and *open-mindedness* benefit me in other ways as I proceed with my Step Nine amends. I am more aware of and more grateful for my *humble* “desire to seek and do God’s will” ... “to move out from [myself] toward God and others” (12x12, pp. 72, 76). I am grateful for my new-found sense of purpose and *responsibility*. I am filled with more *hope* in God’s care for me as I carry out each amend, regardless of the other person’s response to my amend.
8. I learn to live without my need for others’ approval—to live free of my fear of disapproval.

Next Time, Step Ten: “Continue each day in Hope to Trust the Care of my new Employer.”