

“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 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 Eight. “Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.” (p. 59)

“We made a list of people I had hurt ... I expressed my entire willingness to approach these individuals, admitting my wrong. Never was I to be critical of them.” (p. 13)

“My [new Employer], I am now willing ... Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen.” (Step Seven, p. 76)

As I work and pray Step Seven, I realize I have gone from “nowhere” spiritually in Step One to “now here” spiritually with my new Employer. My belief and faith in God have grown.

In Step Eight, I trust my new Employer to help me grow spiritually with more willingness. I seek, and receive, God’s strength to let me honestly take responsibility for the wrongs I have done and to prepare me to deal with the uncertainty of how those I have harmed will respond to my direct amends. “If we haven’t the will to do this, we ask until it comes.” (p. 76).

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Step Eight. “Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.” (p. 59)

In Step Seven, I have enough faith in the God of my understanding to ask my new Employer to “grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen.” (p. 76)

What is my new Employer’s *bidding*? It is simply God’s *will* for me; God’s *desire* for me; what my new Employer “would have [me] be” (p. 68); “to do the right thing” (p. 70).

I now trust God enough to ask for God’s strength to “be” what God “would have me be”; to do what God bids me to do. Faith in my new Employer grows into trust in my new Employer when I do the work I’m guided to do that I may not want to do! In the beginning, it was not my will to take responsibility for the wrong things I did and the harms I caused others!

“We have a list of all persons we have harmed and to whom we are willing to make amends. We made it when we took inventory.” (p. 76)

“We admitted our wrongs honestly ... willing to set these matters straight.” (p. 67)

“We ask Him to remove our fear ... what he would have us be.” (p. 68)

“We must be willing to make amends where we have done harm ...” (p. 69)

When I work Step Eight, with help from God’s strength, I do two things:

1. I complete my list that I began in Step Four of people I have harmed.
2. I ask my new Employer to strengthen me with willingness to take responsibility for the wrongs I did—to prepare me to make direct amends. (*Humility*)

Step Eight Example: Column One.	Column Two.	Column Three.
<u>Person harmed.</u>	<u>“I was wrong when I ...”</u>	<u>Willing - Yes or No.</u>
Dad	Criticized, shamed, lied.	Yes
Mom	Terrified her, lied.	Yes
Brother	Insulted, embarrassed.	Yes
Boss	Lied, cheated, stole.	Maybe
Wife	Terrified her, cheated, stole trust.	Partly
Children	Abandoned, frightened, stole trust.	Yes

As I ask God for willingness to take responsibility for my wrongs and the harms I caused others, I strengthen my belief, faith and trust in my relationship with my new Employer. My spiritual awakening grows. I feel less guilt, regret, remorse, shame and fear. (*Responsibility*)

In Step Six, I ask God for willingness to “let go” of my “objectionable” defects, i.e., *lying*.
In Step Seven, I ask God for willingness to let God remove them from me, i.e., *self-deception*.
In Step Eight, I trust my new Employer as I ask for the willingness to be honest with myself, to be responsible about the wrong things I did, and for the willingness to make amends. (*Hope*)

“Faith without works is dead.” (p. 76)

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Observations on the first Eight Steps of “We had a new Employer”.

1. When my Step One “life” becomes unavoidably unmanageable to me, I look for help beyond myself—at least temporarily. I don’t yet realize that I will need to find a “new Employer”.
2. When I look from my post-Step One perspective, I see the hope of Step Two represented in others. I do not yet realize that the others who have gone before me in spiritual recovery have “gone to work” for a new Employer, a Power greater than themselves.
3. When I make my decision in Step Three to learn how to “go to work for” my new Employer, I may not realize yet the power of the spiritual principles of the Twelve Steps that will come into my life and change the way I feel, think and do practically everything in my life.
4. As I do the personal inventory “work” my new Employer has me do in Steps Four and Five, I begin to receive God’s care and relief from my “bondage of self”. In my resentment, fear and sexual conduct (inconsideration) inventories, I learn what my new Employer wants me to stop doing in preparation for what my new Employer will have me “be”, before I do what God would “bid” me do—such as “God save me from being angry”.
5. Since Step Five, I feel I am “walking hand in hand with the Spirit of the Universe”. My *asking* my new Employer for willingness in Steps Six, Seven and Eight draws me closer in my relationship with my new Employer, the God of my understanding. This spiritual closeness empowers and enables me to move forward in my spiritual recovery as I take responsibility for my wrongs and prepare to make my direct amends with *belief, faith* and *trust* in God.
6. No matter how difficult Steps Eight and Nine appear to be to me, I ask my new Employer to “grant me strength” as I pray for the willingness to be responsible for the wrongs I did and the harms I caused others. I pray for this willingness individually for each person on my list “until it comes”. (Step Eight, p. 76)
7. I discover that the primary benefit of willingly taking responsibility for my wrongs in Step Eight is in the freedom I begin to receive as I “let go” of my guilt, regret, remorse, shame and fear. All of these have been blocking me from seeking and receiving the spiritual help I need from God, my new Employer. As these melt away, my spiritual awakening grows.
8. I pray for willingness to be responsible for the wrongs I have done and the harms I caused to each person on my list. I realize that my sobriety and my spiritual awakening are not merely consolation prizes for my alcoholic suffering but are the restoration of a life I always wanted.
9. During Step Eight, I realize that my current and former “suffering” will end and be used later by my new Employer as a source of illumination for me and an example of help for others.

Next Time, Step Nine. Trust new Employer to help me accountably amend my wrongs.