

## **The Promises of the Twelve Steps: Our Proof of Spiritual Progress.**

An Alcoholics Anonymous “Big Book” Twelve-Step Study Workshop-  
“Threads of Recovery” on Zoom at noon CST from January 6 through March 31, 2025.

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

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

### **Study Overview.**

This study of the Twelve Steps will cover each Step as presented in Alcoholics Anonymous. We will “look back” from the promises on p. 63 to the very beginning of the book to see the proof of our Spiritual Progress in Steps One, Two and Three.

We will discover on pp. 63 to 75 how our Spiritual Progress continues up to the proof of the Promises on p. 75 with Steps Four and Five.

We will discover on pp. 75 to 84 how our Spiritual Progress proceeds even further up to the proof of the Promises on pp. 83-84 with Steps Six, Seven, Eight and Nine.

We will discover on pp. 84 to 164 how our Spiritual Progress grows even more with the proof of the Promises of Steps Ten, Eleven and Twelve.

We will conclude the series on March 31 with a “Thread of Recovery” of Prayers and Promises that illuminate and disclose the Proof of our Spiritual Progress in our recovery.

### **Step Two: “Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”** (p. 59)

The Promises on p. 63 which introduce, and induce, us to take the Step Three Prayer include this somewhat puzzling statement:

**“As we felt new power flow in ...”** (p. 63)

*This promise is confusing and even mysterious at first. It seems more full of questions than answers. What “power” are we talking about? What am I supposed to “feel”? What does “flow in” even mean? Where is the “new power” flowing from? How can this promise be proof of my spiritual progress?*

I struggled in my Step One work to admit, accept and acknowledge that I am “powerless” over my alcoholism illness—and many other things, as well. I have “self-will run riot”. I have similar struggles in Step Two admitting, accepting and acknowledging my need for seemingly passive help from a so-called “Power greater than myself”.

Fortunately, our Big Book includes ample information in the first 62 pages to guide me to “come to believe”—to “peel the onion” of my skepticism and doubt. I lack sufficient power to overcome my alcoholism on my own. I need help from a Power greater than myself.

*My spiritual progress continues from my Step One admission of my powerlessness and unmanageability. The Step Two information in our Big Book “works me”. I begin to “feel” the promise of “new power” flowing in, mentally and emotionally, as proof of my spiritual progress:*

*“... more than human power is needed to produce the essential psychic change.”* (p. xxix)

*This was a reluctant beginning point for me ... the “power” was “more than human”.*

*“... though perhaps he came to scoff, he may remain to pray.”* (p. xxxii)

*I came to AA “to scoff”—a cynic and a skeptic. I thank God I remained to pray, beginning with “God, please help me not take a drink today” in the morning; and “God, thank you for helping me not take a drink today” in the evening.*

*“I had always believed in a Power greater than myself.”* (p. 10)

*This was true for me, except for two years in the 1960s when I tried to be an atheist!*

*“... declaration that God had done for him what he could not do for himself.”* (p. 11)

*This “declaration” was one of the first things I heard related at my early AA meetings.*

**The Promises of the Twelve Steps: Our Proof of Spiritual Progress.**

An Alcoholics Anonymous “Big Book” Twelve-Step Study Workshop-  
“Threads of Recovery” on Zoom at noon CST from January 6 through March 31, 2025.

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

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

**Step Two: “Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”** (Con’t) (p. 59)

“... God personal to me ... I didn’t like the idea.” (p. 12)

*This was my experience. I wanted a god to “fix” things, but not get too personal!*

“He said, ‘Why don’t you choose your own conception of God?’ “ (p. 12)

*My first “conception” of a “higher power” I could try to trust was my first home group.*

“There is a solution ... to accept spiritual help.” (p. 25)

*My hope in the promise of spiritual help is proof of my early spiritual progress.*

“... vital spiritual experiences ... displacements and rearrangements ...” (p. 27)

*My friend Jim C. paraphrased this quote at every home group meeting!*

“All went well for a time, but he failed to enlarge his spiritual life.” (p. 35)

*“Failure” in AA is defined here—much worse than taking a drink! This is proof that I am not seeking help from a Power greater than myself.*

“... no ... mental defense against the first drink ... must come from a Higher Power.” (p. 43)  
*This was true when I was a newcomer—and it is still true for me today.*

*So far, my willingness to seek and accept the help of a Power greater than myself to overcome my drinking is slowly growing. I feel my “new power flow in” mostly from my new trust in my sponsor, my home group and the other AA meetings I attend.*

*As time passed, my proof of spiritual progress became greater and more evident as I slowly began to realize that my new “feeling” of Power was indeed coming from the God of my understanding through my sponsor, my home group and the other members of AA!*

“To be doomed to an alcoholic death or to live on a spiritual basis ...” (p. 44)  
*I finally came to believe this was a real choice for me.*

“... find a Power greater than yourself which will solve your problem.” (p. 45)  
*I came to believe that my “problem” was “self-will run riot”. (See p. 62)*

“... am I even willing to believe that there is a Power greater than myself?” (p. 47)  
*Well, when they put it that way ... !!!!!*

“... flatly declare ... have come to believe in a Power greater than themselves ...” (p. 50)  
*As my friend Pete says, “I borrowed your hope until I could have my own hope.”*

“... Presence of God ... the most important fact of their lives ...” (p. 51)  
*“Presence of God” means that I actually feel the proof of the “new power”!*

“... we had to stop doubting the power of God.” (p. 52)  
*My personal relationship with God, my proof of my spiritual progress, may on certain days, still begin with me at least not doubting God—so that the promise of new power flowing in can continue to be true in my life today.*

**“When we drew near to Him, He disclosed Himself to us!”** (p. 57)

*I feel the proof of the Presence. I receive the promise. I participate in my spiritual progress.*

**Next Time, Step Three: “We had a new Employer ...”**