

SESSION 20

STEP 12 Working With Others pp. 89 - 103

Step 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. *Trust in God and clean house and help... others. (98: 2; 97: 1)*

Take Step 12

I ON YOUR OWN: STUDY – What did the Big Book authors say?

- **READ** We read Chapter 7, Working With Others. Many will read Step 12 in the *12&12*.
- **WRITE** We write our daily reflections. We continue making our Step 9 amends. We do Step 10 spot-check inventories. We may work at annual or semi-annual inventories of all Steps.
- **TALK** We talk with our sponsor and new comers. We carry the message.
 - Heard in a meeting: “The *message* of Step 12 is not ‘You should get sober;’ but rather ‘*Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps....*’”
 - Heard in a meeting: “We carry the message; we cannot carry the drunk.”
- **PRACTICE DAILY PRAYER / MEDITATION.** We practice Step 11 conscious contact with the higher power of our understanding on a daily basis.

II WITH THE GROUP: PRACTICE – What does the Big Book say to me about my practice of step 12?

We may read and discuss Chapter 7, Working With Others. One or more members of the group might share their experiences with Step 12 of the Big Book.

Points of Focus and Reflection (Consider Chapter 7 quotes pp. 93-94 this workbook.)

1.) *Spiritual awakening as the result*

- What is my overall experience as a result of working the Steps?
- By doing my own work in Steps 1 through 11, have I developed a new way of thinking, feeling and acting, and connecting with others?
- Is it my experience that I have undergone a *profound alteration in [my] reaction to life?* (567: 4)
- Have I had a *personality change sufficient to bring about recovery?* (567: 1)
- What lasting changes have resulted from my spiritual awakening?
- Having awakened to the reality that I too am a good and caring person, can I invite others to see themselves as a loving higher power might see them, rather than from their own distorted or antagonistic outlook?

2.) *Carry this message*

- What is *this message* that is referred to in Step 12? (60: 0) See also 17: 3; 45: 2; 77: 0; 89: 1.
- In my experience, does this message include that there is hope, we are not alone, we can stay sober, and we can recover?
- Did someone carry the message to me?
- Why was an AA member able to reach me in a way that no one else ever had?
- What kind of service work am I doing today to carry the message?
- What are the step-by-step requirements for Twelfth Step work? (pp. 89-100)
- May I share who I am, where I have come from, and how it is for me now?

3.) *Practice these principles*

- What does it mean to me to *practice*? (60: 0) Does it mean ‘to keep trying’?
- What does it mean to practice *these principles* (60: 0) in all my affairs?
- Do I find life offering opportunities to repeatedly experience my old shortcomings, my old patterns and my old habits, but each time with new understanding?

III DAILY PRACTICE OF STEP 12 PRINCIPLES

- How may I deeply wish that others, including myself, may be happy, joyous, and free?
- How may I understand that sometimes the best way of loving and helping is to stop enabling someone else to drink?
- What is my attitude about sponsorship? What is my attitude about service?
- How may I practice spiritual principles, such as compassion, regardless of how I feel?
- If my disease is often expressed as self-centeredness, how may I express my recovery as selfless service?

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IV WORK STEP 12 ON A DAILY BASIS

We take Step 12 in the first paragraph on page 89.

A group reading of the last portion of Chapter 11, A Vision for You, is a fitting way to end these Steps by the Big Book group sessions. (164: 2, 3, 4)

[Heard in a meeting: “If we want to be happy, we serve others.”]

- "How may we alcoholics live *happy, joyous, and free*? (133: 0)
 - “**Happiness** is being free of suffering – free of our mind's tortured reactions to the things that may hurt or frighten us.
 - “**Joy** is taking grateful delight in another's happiness, including our own.
 - “**Freedom** is the reprieve from grasping onto our self-centered alcoholism, our self-absorption, just for today.”]

STEP 12 *PASS THIS ON* (94: 1) PRINCIPLES FROM THE BIG BOOK

...When all other measures failed, work with another alcoholic would save the day. (Bill's Story, 15: 1)

This is our twelfth suggestion: Carry this message to other alcoholics! You can help when no one else can. (89: 1)

. . .

- *When you discover a prospect for Alcoholics Anonymous, find out all you can about him. (90: 1)*
- *Realizing [you] are dealing with a sick person. ... Put yourself in his place. (90: 1,2) So cooperate; never criticize. (89: 3)*
- *Don't deal with him when he is very drunk.... (90: 3)*
- *If he does not want to see you, never force yourself upon him. (90: 4)*
- *You might place this book where he can see it in the interval. (90: 4)*
- *See your man alone [without...family], if possible. (91: 3)*

. . .

- *Tell him enough about your drinking habits, symptoms, and experiences to encourage him to speak of himself. If he wishes to talk, let him do so. (91: 3)*
- *...Give him a sketch of your drinking career up to the time you quit. But say nothing, for the moment, of how that was accomplished. (91: 3)*
- *When he sees you know all about the drinking game, commence to describe yourself as an alcoholic. (91: 4)*
- *Give him an account of the struggles you made to stop. (92: 0)*
- *Show him the mental twist which leads to the first drink of a spree. (92: 0)*

. . .

- *And be careful not to brand him as an alcoholic. (92: 1)*
- *If he sticks to the idea that he can still control his drinking, tell him that possibly he can - if he is not too alcoholic. But insist that if he is severely afflicted, there may be little chance he can recover by himself. (92: 1)*
- *Continue to speak of alcoholism as an illness, a fatal malady. (92: 2)*
- *Talk about the conditions of body and mind which accompany it. (92: 2)*
- *Even though your protégé may not have entirely admitted his condition, he has become very curious to know how you got well. Let him ask you that question, if he will. (92: 2-93: 0)*

. . .

- *Tell him exactly what happened to you. (93: 0)*
- *... Make it emphatic that he does not have to agree with your conception of God. He can choose any conception he likes, provided it makes sense to him. (93: 0)*
- *Let him see that you are not there to instruct him in religion. (93: 2)*
- *Outline the program of action.... (94: 1)*
- *Make it plain he is under no obligation to...see you again if he doesn't want to. (94: 1)*

. . .

- *Your candidate may give reasons why he need not follow all of the program. ... Do not contradict such views. (94: 2)*
 - *On your first visit tell him about the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. If he shows interest, lend him your copy of this book. (94: 2)*
 - *...Do not wear out your welcome. Give him a chance to think it over. (95: 1)*
 - *...You will be most successful with alcoholics if you do not exhibit any passion for crusade or reform. (95: 1)*
 - *Never talk down to an alcoholic from any moral or spiritual hilltop; simply lay out the kit of spiritual tools for his inspection. (95: 1)*
- . . .
- *Show him how they [the Steps] worked with you. (95: 1)*
 - *Offer him friendship and fellowship. (95: 1)*
 - *Tell him that if he wants to get well you will do anything to help. (95: 1)*
 - *...If he expects you to act only as a banker...or a nurse for his sprees, you may have to drop him.... (95: 2)*
 - *If he is sincerely interested and wants to see you again, ask him to read this book in the interval. (95: 3)*
 - *If he thinks he can do the job in some other way...encourage him to follow his own conscience. (95: 4)*
- . . .
- *Suppose now you are making your second visit to a man. He has read this volume and says he is prepared to go through with the Twelve Steps of the program of recovery. Having had the experience yourself, you can give him much practical advice. (96: 2)*
 - *Though an alcoholic does not respond, there is no reason why you should neglect his family. ... The family should be offered your way of life. (97: 3)*
 - *The minute we put our work on a 'service' plane, the alcoholic commences to rely on our assistance...claiming he cannot master alcohol until his material needs are cared for. Nonsense. (98: 1)*
 - *Burn the idea into the consciousness of every man that he can get well regardless of anyone. (98: 2)*
 - *When working with a man and his family, you should take care not to participate in their quarrels. (100: 2)*
 - *We are careful never to show intolerance or hatred of drinking as an institution. (103: 1)*
- . . .
- ***Be sober, considerate, and helpful, regardless of what anyone says or does. (99: 1)***

We may read Chapter 8, To Wives; Chapter 9, The Family Afterwards; Chapter 10, To Employers and Chapter 11, A Vision for You. These chapters teach us how to practice the Twelve Step principles in all our affairs.

Some of us may immediately begin working through the Steps again with the perspective that we have gained from our journey thus far.