

## WEEK #16: Chapter 6 — INTO ACTION (Step 10)

[READ: Page 84, Paragraph 2]

I think as we left the first 9 Steps, it was clear that we were **halfway through this stage of our development**. Then we were about to enter another plane of continuous growth through the last three Steps. **A lot of times the last 3 Steps are called maintenance Steps**, I think because the word maintenance is mentioned here that we have tied that term on to them. It gives us the idea that we stay where we are. **But, we like to look at these last three Steps as continuous growth Steps; Steps that we can grow with for the rest of our lives.**

As we read the Step 9 Promises you'll see they all deal with the mind. None of them deal with the body. **We came here restless, irritable, discontented, filled with shame, fear, guilt, remorse, worry, anger, depression, etc. We work the steps, we receive the promises. Certainly we have undergone a change in our personality. We have undergone a spiritual awakening already.**

**Now if that's true then what is the purpose of the last 3 steps? Many people will tell us that the last 3 steps are to maintain our sobriety.** I will agree that they will help us stay sober. **But the word maintenance itself is a misnomer... to maintain something is means to keep it "as is".** Another natural law applies:

- Nothing in our universe ever stays "as is"
- Everything in our universe is in a constant state of change
- It's either growing or it's dying
- It's progressing or it's regressing
- It's going forward or it's going back

Like a tree, it's continuously growing and when it stops growing it starts dying. So our lives are the same way, we have to continue to grow and this is what these last 3 Steps are all about. They are about continuing to grow. Now the tremendous amount of spiritual growth we have made through the first 9 steps is we've got the promises. **But if we just tried to maintain this, eventually we start slipping back and we start having trouble with people, then with our self, then with God then we end up drunk all over again.** Now how do I know that? I see it happen in A.A. over and over and over and over again. That's what happens when people like us who had a good program go back and get drunk again, it's because we stopped growing. **We can't stop growing! If you do you start dying. Let's look at the last 3 steps. Not as just maintenance steps... Not just to keep us sober... but to see, that we must actually continue to grow in our relationship with God, with ourselves and with other human beings.**

Last week we talked about the **normal three dimensions of existence**:

- **The Dimension of the Spirit** (God, Higher Power, Creator)
- **The Dimension of the Mind** (mental)
- **The Dimension of the Physical** (our physical and sociological relationship with the world and everything in it)

We saw where the first 9 Steps had put us back together in these normal three dimensions of living. However, **twice in the Big Book Bill mentions a "Fourth Dimension of Existence"**: Once in his story and once in Chapter 2. The Fourth Dimension is a dimension of living far beyond the normal three. You can't explain it. You can't describe it. You can only feel it. And that's what the last 3 Steps do... they move us into another dimension of living.

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For just a moment, let's look back on page 8 in the Big Book and see a reference here of another dimension of living. Bill says, ***"I was soon to be catapulted into what I like to call the Fourth Dimension of Existence."*** In other words, a dimension of living far beyond the normal three dimensions. On page 25, where he talks about the spiritual experience, again he refers to a Fourth Dimension of Living: ***"The great fact is just this, and nothing less; that we have had deep and effective spiritual experiences which have revolutionized our whole attitude toward life, toward our fellows and toward God's universe. The central fact of our lives today is the absolute certainty that our Creator has entered into our hearts and lives in a way, which is indeed miraculous."*** Now just before that paragraph he says, ***"We have found much of heaven and we have been rocketed into a fourth dimension of existence of which we had not even dreamed."***

From this we see there is another dimension far beyond the other three. **I think we might be the luckiest people in the world, because most people will never realize there is another dimension of living. Even if they do realize it, most of them do not have the tools necessary to get them into that dimension of living.** We need to look at the fact that the last 3 Steps are most certainly not maintenance steps, because, as we said before, to maintain would mean to keep "as is". We can see that the last 3 Steps are growth Steps which will put us into another dimension far beyond the promises found on pages 83 - 84.

Now if we could stop at the end of Step 9 and if we could stop with those promises of Pages 83-84, we would be absolutely great for the rest of our lives. But that isn't the case since we can't stay there. The reality is one of two things will happen:

**We are going to have to continue to grow, or  
We are going to begin to regress back.**

Studying our text book, the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, we see that **Step 10 is the ongoing continuous practice of Steps 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9.** Remember these are the Steps that give us our personality change (growth). We didn't get any change from Steps 1, 2, or even 3. All the change came through the "action" Steps 4 through 9. So, **continuous practice of these "Action Steps" will bring about continuous growth.** The more we take Step 4 and see things and then discuss them with other people, the more we'll learn about ourselves, and if we ask God to remove these things that we find in Step 4 that "block us off", they will become less and less. Then as we make amends to other people, our relationships with other people will grow and get better. So, in the practicing of these "Action Steps", we will not remain the same, we will have to grow into the Fourth Dimension. Step 4 has prepared us for Step 10. That's why we said, if we didn't do a good Step 4, if we don't learn Step 4 process, we really can't do a good Step 10.

**What we're really doing is using those "Action Steps" that gave us all the growth in the first place and we are practicing them over and over on a daily basis for the rest of our lives.** Our growth will continue into another Dimension of Existence that we never even dreamed of, there is no way you can describe it. The only way you can know what it is, is to experience it.

**Working Step 10 will definitely put you into another Dimension of Living.**

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[READ: Page 84, Par. 3 - Page 85, End of Paragraph]

Everyone talks about the promises of Pages 83-84, but very few talk about the promises here on Pages 84-85. There are 12 promises after the Ninth Step and 12 more after the 10th Step. These are the promises we really were looking for when we came to the program.

### **WE HAVE CEASED FIGHTING ANYTHING AND ANYONE – EVEN ALCOHOL FOR BY THIS TIME SANITY WILL HAVE RETURNED**

Remember we said in **Step 2 - Came to believe that a Power Greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity**. Remember that insanity didn't mean we were crazy. We were insane in one area - when it came to Alcohol, we were insane to take that first drink. Let's look at how we see Alcohol now. Remember, that little piece that was missing? It's going to come home to us now. We've got it!

**This is the real double miracle of Alcoholics Anonymous.** Back on Page 45, it said the main objective (purpose) of this book is to enable us to find a Power Greater than ourselves which **WILL** solve our problem. We emphasized then, that it doesn't say, which will help us solve, or will enable us to solve... It says, **"WHICH WILL SOLVE YOUR PROBLEM."**

Somewhere between page 45 and page 85, I woke up one morning and I said, "There's something strange in my life today." And I asked myself, "How long has it been since you've wanted to take a drink?" And you know I couldn't remember. Somewhere between page 45 and 85, God reached in my head and He plucked out the OBSESSION TO DRINK ALCOHOL, and it's never returned since then. **God replaced the OBSESSION TO DRINK with the OBSESSION TO STAY SOBER.** This obsession is a good one. It will make me see the truth and that idea will be so strong that it will overcome the idea to drink.

**God did for me what I couldn't do for myself...  
I believe this is the real miracle of Alcoholics Anonymous.**

[READ: Page 85, Paragraph 1]

In this paragraph we see the word maintenance and it is done only on a **ONE DAY AT A TIME** basis. You can spend millions of dollars on this building we are in but can maintain it only **ONE DAY AT A TIME**, but sooner or later it's going to shut down on you anyhow.

**The rest of this paragraph shows us the proper use of the will.** It doesn't say anything about saying to God: God, where shall I work? or God, tell me who I ought to be married to. or God, show me a sign. It says, ***"How can I best serve Thee? Thy will, not mine, be done."***

**When the obsession to drink is removed entirely and if we have received these promises, for the first time in our life,**

**We are in a position where we can really serve God and our fellow man,  
AND, unless we are willing to do so,  
chances are we're going to end up losing what we have.**

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**I love the idea of exercising our willpower along this line all we wish.** In Step 3 we “made a decision to turn our will and our life over to the care of God as we understood Him.” In Steps 4 through 10, we removed enough self-will that our mind became pretty well normal and straightened up. **Now that we can use our will properly, they have given us our will back here at the end of Step 10.** But, I'd like you to notice the perfect sequence of the Big Book. They give us our will back on page 85, but they restored our sanity on page 84. We would have been in a hell of a shape if we had gotten our will back before we got sanity back.

**[READ: Page 85, Paragraph 2]**

**We are talking here in this paragraph about a sixth sense of direction.**

**Most of what you and I know, we learn through our normal five senses of direction.** For instance, everything I know today on a conscious level, I learned through hearing, through seeing, through tasting, feeling or touching. That's the only way we human beings have of learning anything. We gather information from those five senses and that information then lodges in our mind at a conscious level, and then we use that information to run our lives.

**For those of us who learned from just those five senses and ran our lives on that information, we almost destroyed ourselves.**

**If God dwells within all human beings, and I'm convinced He does, and if God has all knowledge and all power, and I'm convinced He does, then that means that you and I have within ourselves all the knowledge and all the power that we could ever possibly need to solve any problem that we could ever have -- If we could learn to tap into that Power.**

**There's another sense of direction somewhere inside ourselves that if we could tap into that, then we'll have another sense of direction referred to as a sixth sense of direction, which is all knowledge and all power.** Human beings have known forever that the way to do that is through prayer and meditation. Most of us alcoholics have problems with prayer and meditation. Even though I was raised in church, I found when I came to A.A. I knew very little about prayer and nothing at all about meditation. I had two prayers, one was, "Now I lay me down to sleep" and the other was, "God, get me out of this damn mess and I swear I'll never do it again." The only other prayer I knew was "God, if you'll do this, I'll do that." I always tried to bargain with God. Today I realize that God has the controls and doesn't need to bargain with me at all.

**Let's see if we can find a way to tap into that unsuspected inner resource of strength, and see if we can continue our spiritual growth through Step 11 next week.**

## **WEEK #16: Chapter 6 — INTO ACTION *(Step 10)***

### **BIG BOOK WORKSHOP HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT**

- 1) Continue to read page 85, last paragraph to the end of Chapter 6, and try doing your new work around Step 10 in your daily life and see if you can catch your character defects and try to correct them as you live your new life One Day at a Time.
- 2) Be prepared to discuss the material.

### **WORK ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS "INTO ACTION – Step 11"**

**[PAGE: 86]**

1. What do you watch for?
2. Do you practice this Step on a daily basis?
3. Do you follow the procedures pages 86 & 87 which outline your daily morning meditation and the way you progress throughout the day?

**[PAGE: 87]**

4. Has your attitude about a Power greater than yourself changed?

**[PAGE: 88]**

5. Do you believe **"It Works – It really does!"**?

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### Step 11

Step 11 is the culmination of all the previous Steps. We have taken all the other Steps so that they can lead us to Step 11.

Step 1 had to be taken so we could take Step 2, because we couldn't see the solution until we understood the problem.

Steps 1 & 2 gave us what we needed to make a decision. The decision was Step 3, to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him. This decision was an important turning point.

Next we had to carry out the decision. There were certain things that blocked us from God, and we could not get on with turning our will and our lives over to the care of God until we removed those things that were blocking us off from God. Therefore we took the action Steps: Steps 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and then 10, which is the continuation of Steps 4 thru 9.

As a result of the actions of Steps 4 through 10 we removed, with God's help, the things that were blocking us from God. Now we can carry out the decision we made in Step 3. Steps 3 and 11 are the pillars of the Steps. We could say that the Steps have two crucial points, the turning over of our will in Step 3 and the receiving of God's will in Step 11. This amounts to changing the direction of a human life. This is not to say the direction can be changed by these two Steps alone, because the others are necessary before we can complete these two.

When we change the direction of a life, we change the life. We said in Step 3 we were willing to turn our direction over to God, who had always been there even when we were blocked from Him. Our lives become different as a result of this process. Anyone who can begin to use Step 11 effectively has had a spiritual awakening. He or she has "tapped that unsuspected inner resource" of strength. (Big Book, p. 569-570) This shows that the Steps have worked for this person.

After Step 11, comes the 12th and final Step, which tells us to carry this message to other people.

Step 11 takes a lot of work. First, it takes the work of the first 10 Steps, and then it takes continuous practice over a long period of time.

### HOW OUR WILL INTERACTS WITH GOD'S WILL

| In Step 3:  | In Step 11:   |
|---|---|
| We <u>give up our</u> directions  | We <u>receive God's</u> directions  |
| We turn our will and our lives over <u>to</u> God as we understand Him. | We receive God's will in our lives, and the power to carry it out <u>from</u> God as we understand Him. |