

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.”

Set aside prayer: “God, please enable me to set aside everything I think I know for an open mind and a new experience. Help me become willing as the result of my spiritual awakening to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all my affairs.”

Principle	Theme	Action	Defect	Result
Service	Joy of living	Helping others/right living	Selfishness	Spiritual awakening

Purpose	Process	Experience	Result	Promise
to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us	Be of service and carry the message. Say 1st, 2 nd & 3rd steps. Say the 3 rd , 7th step prayer. Practice steps 10,11 & 12; List the specific instructions for helping others	The more we think of others, and the less often we think of ourselves, the more happy, joyous and free we become.	A meaning and purpose, inner peace, emotional sobriety.	Connection to self and others and sense of place and belonging in the world.

Big Book: Spiritual Experience: 14:2; 27:4: 3-11; 567, 568
Chapter 7, Working with others.
From: Page 89, Thru: Page 103.
Appendix 2 (“Spiritual Experience”) AA BB pgs. 569-570
12&12: Step 12

Additional chapters in the AA Big Book:
To The Wives pp 104-121
The Family Afterward pp 122-135
To Employers pp 136-150
A Vision for You pp 151-164

Prayer: [Twelfth Step Prayer]

Dear Higher Power, My spiritual awakening continues to unfold. The help I have received I shall pass on and give to others, both in and out of the Fellowship. For this opportunity I am grateful. I pray most humbly to continue walking day by day on the road of spiritual progress. I pray for the inner strength and wisdom to practice the principles of this way of life in all I do and say. I need You, my friends, and the Program every hour of every day. This is a better way to live.

Principle: Service: which provides an opportunity to get out of ourselves and think of others.

Promises:

When you and those you help work the 12 steps every day and don't give up:

You will evolve spiritually; those you help will evolve spiritually, amazing things will happen; God will give you blessings that are better than anything you can imagine; you will live in a new and wonderful world. Best of all, you receive these promises no matter what your current circumstances are.

When you work with others, your life will have meaning. You will see them recover. You will see then help others. You will not be lonely and neither will they. You will create true companionship. You will gladly help even more people.

You are uniquely qualified to help others who have the same problems that you have overcome.

If you keep practicing the 12 steps in your life, healing will come for everyone involved.

Written Inventory:

Using a dictionary, define the meaning of the words of 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." Then after each dictionary definition write your own definition in your own words. what you learn about the difference between what you thought it meant and the dictionary says it means?

Process: This STEP logically separates into 3 parts. Spiritual experience; carrying the message and practicing these principles.

1. The SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE.

The terms "spiritual experience" and "spiritual awakening" used here and in the book ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, mean, upon careful reading, that the personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from alcoholism has manifested itself among us in many forms.

Do NOT get the impression that these personality changes, or spiritual experiences, must be in the nature of sudden and spectacular upheavals. Happily for everyone, this conclusion is erroneous.

Among our rapidly membership of thousands of alcoholics such transformations, though frequent, are by no means the rule. Most of our experiences are what the psychologist William James calls the "educational variety" because they develop slowly over a period of time. Quite often friends of the newcomer are aware of the difference long before he is himself.

The new man gradually realizes that he has undergone a profound alteration in his reaction to life; that such a change could hardly have been brought about by himself alone. What often takes place in a few months could seldom have been accomplished by years of self-discipline. With few exceptions our members find that they have tapped an unsuspected inner resource which they presently identify with their own conception of a Power greater than themselves.

Most emphatically we wish to say that any alcoholic capable of honestly facing his problem in the light of our experience can recover provided he does not close his mind to all spiritual concepts. He can only be defeated by an attitude of intolerance or belligerent denial.

We find that no one need have difficulty with the spiritual side of the program. Willingness, Honesty and Open Mindedness are the Essentials of Recovery. But these are indispensable.

Questions:

Have I had a “spiritual awakening” as a result of working these steps?

Can I describe how this “spiritual awakening” (*personality change*) came about?

How did it change me? For example: Have I undergone a profound alteration in my reaction to life?

Have I developed a new way of thinking, feeling and acting and connecting with others?

Has my awareness of God’s presence changed since I started to practice this program? Please describe.

2. CARRY THE MESSAGE TO OTHERS

This means exactly what it says. Carry the message actively. Bring it to the man who needs it. We do it in many ways:

- a. By attending **every** meeting of our own group.
- b. By making calls when asked.
- c. By speaking at group meetings when asked.
- d. By supporting our group financially to make group meetings possible.
- e. By assisting at meetings when asked.
- f. By setting a good example of complete sobriety.
- g. By owning, and loaning to new men, our own copy of the Big A.A. Book.
- h. By encouraging those who find the way difficult.
- i. By serving as an officer or on group committees or special assignments when asked.
- j. By doing all of the foregoing cheerfully and willingly.

- k. We do any or all of the foregoing *at some sacrifice to ourselves* **with definite thought of developing unselfishness** in our own character.

Questions:

What message am I trying to carry to those who are suffering from addiction or compulsive behaviors?

What are some different ways of carrying the message?

Which ones do I personally participate in?

What do I gain through service to others?

What inspires me to “carry the message” to others?

What are the step by step requirements for 12th step work?

What is my personal style of sponsorship?

How is it important for recovery for us to identify with each other and share our experience strength and hope?

What is the difference between attraction and promotion?

How is selfless service the antidote to my disease of selfishness and self-centeredness?

3. WE PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS.

This last part of the **Twelfth Step** is the real purpose that all of the twelve steps lead to - *a new way of life, a design for living*. It shows how to live rightly, think rightly and to achieve happiness. **How do we go about it?**

- a. We resolve to live our life *one day at a time* - - just twenty-four hours.
- b. We pray *each* day for guidance that day.
- c. We pray *each* night - - thanks for that day.
- d. We resolve to keep our heads and to forego any anger, no matter what situation arises.
- e. We are patient.
- f. We keep calm, relaxed.
- g. Now and most important: whatever *little* ordinary situations as well as *big* situations arise, we look at them calmly and fairly, with an open mind, then act on them in exact accordance with the simple true principles that A.A. has taught and will teach us.
- h. STEP TWELVE: A spiritual awakening is THE RESULT of working, DOING, and LIVING, ALL of the 12 Steps! Then you have this message to carry to others. There is no message unless you have done the first 9 Steps and are living the

last three. You can't give what you don't have. You must practice these principles in ALL your affairs.

In other words, our **sobriety** is only a correction of our worst and most evident faults. Our living each day according to the principles of A.A. will also correct all of our other lesser faults and will gradually eliminate, one by one, all of the defects in our character that cause frictions, discontents, and unhappy rebellious moods that lead right back to our very chief fault of drinking.

Don't trudge the Happy Road to Recovery; Walk with your head high, knowing that through you, God will help others to RECOVER as you have. May God bless and be with you.

Questions:

What is my understanding of the principles of the program?

How can I practice these principles in all my affairs?

Which principles would I like to improve upon?

Are practicing these principles important to my continued spiritual growth?

How have the spiritual principles of the program contributed to my spiritual awakening?

What does "understanding is the key to right principles and attitudes, and right action is the key to good living..." mean? to you?

Am I willing to continue to grow spiritually, seek conscious contact with the God of my understanding and be of service to others?

Practical Application:

We can ask ourselves the following questions:

- Am I doing the things that reflect a trust in God? For example, am I saying my Step 11 prayers and meditation? Am I living by right principle, or am I doing anything dishonest, wrong or selfish?
- Did I clean house thoroughly? Am I cleaning house daily now? Was my 4th step thorough? Am I doing daily written Step 10s? We are in trouble if we held back anything that should have gone into our Step 4 inventory. Similarly, if we hold back on a Step 9 amends that, other things being equal, we could do now, we can be in desperate trouble. Some hesitate to make a Step 9 amends using the justification that they have yet to become willing. When this is really a deliberate delaying tactic, the result can be deep unhappiness.

- Am I helping others? Do I have service commitments? Am I working with newcomers on a regular basis?
- Am I willing to carry the message to other addicts, and practice these principles in all my affairs?

Conclusion:

It is suggested that we read these Big Book Chapters below to conclude our Step Study:

Chapter 8, "To Wives" (BB-Pg. 104).

Note the principles and guidelines for dealing effectively with your relationship with your significant others.

Chapter 9, "The Family Afterwards" (BB-Pg. 122).

Note the principles and guidelines for dealing effectively with your relationship with your significant others.

Chapter 10, "To Employers" (BB-Pg. 136).

Familiarize yourself with the information in this chapter so that you will understand how it might be helpful to those you come in contact with who have the responsibility of personnel management. Do you have any disagreement with the information in this chapter? Should your employer have a copy?

Chapter 8, "To Wives" (BB-Pg. 104);

Chapter 9, "The Family Afterwards" (BB-Pg. 122);

Chapter 10, "To Employers" (BB-Pg. 136);

Chapter 11, "A Vision for You" (BB-Pg. 151).

These chapters are designed to teach us how to practice these principles in all our affairs. They contain spiritual truths which apply to all of us.

Read and highlight this chapter looking for the principles. As you read, keep in mind that it is practicing principles in your community and your fellowship. It is a vision for you.

A reading of the last paragraph of "A Vision for You" on page 164, is a fitting way to complete our Big Book Step Study 'Process.'

"Abandon yourself to God as You Understand God... Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows... Clear away the wreckage of your past.... Give freely of what you find and join us.... We shall be with you in the 'Fellowship of the Spirit'... and you will surely meet some of us... as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.

May God Bless You And Keep You - Until Then".....

Step 12 Inventory Addendum:

Read pages 196 and 263 in "As Bill Sees It." Reflect on and discuss the idea that the basic anecdote for fear is a spiritual awakening.

Read pages 449-551 in the "Big Book." Discuss and reflect on how "acceptance is the answer to all of our problems."

Read in "As Bill Sees It," pages 3, 5 and 163. Write about how working the program has brought joy to your life.

Read in 'Came to Believe,' pages 46, 47 and 48, 'The Belief will come' and in "As Bill Sees It," page 331. Discuss what needs to be done to be most effective in helping those who still suffer.

AA 12x12

In the summary, pages 8-9. Please list a few of these issues that speak to your heart the most and why.

On pages 107 through the top of page 109, it summarizes steps 1-11. Reflect on this capsulated version of the first 11 steps and share what your feelings and beliefs are regarding "the big picture" of recovery that is so succinctly described in this section.

On pages 109-111, what are the other types of 12 step work we can do besides carrying the message to others directly? Have you ever encountered the "over-management" issue either in yourself or others? Are you able to keep principles before personalities?

Read from the bottom of page 111 through page 113, and share what you feel is the difference between two-stepping and twelve-stepping? Have you faced calamities in your recovery where you were able to receive the grace of God sufficient to sustain you through the catastrophe? Please share anything specific that might encourage another member. If you relapsed during a calamity, what did you learn from that experience that helps you today and might help someone else as well? Are you now 12 stepping?

Optional

Read to the end of the chapter and over a period of time, answer this question: Am I now able to rest in true ambition--the deep desire to live usefully and walk humbly under the grace of God? Could this also be a good question for our daily 10th step?

OA 12x12

The OA 12x12 can be particularly helpful on step 12. It may help a great deal to really study this step deeply especially if you ever feel prone to relapse or have been in relapse. It not only summarizes all 12 steps, but gives many cautions and information regarding issues that are specifically true of compulsive eating.

If we experience the obsession with food again, once having been relieved of it, where can we find our freedom again? (page 100)

Where does the greatest joy of recovery come from? (p. 101) How do you experience this joy and on what level do you experience it? Is it a new experience or do you find it deepens over time? Have you lost that joy and regained it? Please share what helped!

List at least 10 simple actions to take to extend the hand and heart of OA to those who still suffer? (p. 101) What are your favorites?

What does page 102-103 caution us about sharing outside help in carrying the message?

How does caretaking and trying to "fix" others vary from true 12 step work?

List the steps and corresponding principles from page 103-106.

From page 106, write a brief prayer that incorporates the thought that "we are the message"!

As an addition to step 10, review regularly the question - "If I am the message, what kind of message am I carrying?" Do this in a constructive way! Progress not perfection!

References: Please forgive any omissions!

AA Big Book

AA 12 & 12

OA 12 & 12

The Little Red Book

Herb K. (2010) *Twelve Steps to Spiritual Awakening: Enlightenment for Everyone*. Capizon Publishing ISBN 978-0-9659672-4-2

Herb K (2005) *Twelve-Step Guide to Using the Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book*. Capizon Publishing ISBN 0-965962-2-0

Hamilton B. (1996) *Twelve Step Sponsorship: How it Works*. Hazelden ISBN 13:978-1-56838-122-0

<http://twelvestepjournaling.com/alcoholics-anonymous/aa-12-step-worksheets#.VHuJ4bR0wdU>

<https://www.marijuana-anonymous.org/how-it-works/understanding-the-12-steps>

<http://silkworth.net/literature/unofficial12stepguide.html>
<http://www.soberrecovery.com/forums/narcotics-addiction-12-step-support/54630-sponsor-sponsee-step-writing-guide-worksheets.html>
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